

Video begins with interviewer and Mr. Cook looking at a book.

Interviewer: You were going to copy that picture for us.

Cook: And tell him the names.

Interviewer: Right

Cook: That's what I had to do.

Interviewer: Now can you tell me who these people are real quick? (Looking at a picture of soldiers hold a SS flag).

Cook: You want to take pictures?

Interviewer: I'm recording it I've got it on right now.

Cook: Oh

Interviewer: That way I'll know who's who in sports here.

Cook: I can kind of remember.

Interviewer: Thanks Mr. Cook I appreciate it.

Cook: That's Husto Corio from 8506 (pointing at a soldier the left front row beside the flag in the picture).

Interviewer: Yes sir.

Cook: And you see the whole in the top of his helmet a bullet went straight through front to back.

Interviewer: Didn't touch him.

Cook: Well rang his bell.

Interviewer: Could you get that helmet away from him? No now is he the one that I was told slept with his helmet? He wouldn't give it up after that?

Cook: I don't remember that.

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: And this fellow is still alive and his name is Reed but I can't remember his last name (point to a soldier in the very back of the photo). I'll call or write to you guys and give you his last name.

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: That's Jim Flannigan (pointing to the soldier holding the flag).

Interviewer: Yes sir.

Cook: The C Company 502.

Interviewer: Great

Cook: He's still alive.

Interviewer: Yes sir.

Cook: This is myself here (pointing to the last soldier in the back on the right side of the photo).

Interviewer: There's Mr. Eugene Cook.

Cook: And this is a guy named Shiniberry (pointing to the soldier on the end at the right of the photo).

Interviewer: Yes sir.

Cook: He was G Company 505.

Interviewer: Uh huh

Cook: And he was later killed in Holland.

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: Now the rest of the people I've never been able to track.

Interviewer: Don't know who they are?

Cook: No

Interviewer: Now were you a Sargent at this point?

Cook: No I was a private.

Interviewer: Oh you were a private when this was taken.

Cook: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: Now how much longer were you in after this?

Cook: I crushed through to Burgess Garden through the war.

Interviewer: But weren't you a Staff Sergeant when the war ended?

Cook: Yeah yeah I was I stayed over a little bit longer and I took let's see I went to part of the first armored.

Interviewer: Yes sir

Cook: After the war, then I took the trains back into Poland and New Mania and Bulgaria took displaced persons back and some prisoners of war. I spent six months doing that.

Interviewer: Shuttling and separating

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: That must have been quite a task separating the displaced persons and the

Cook: Well other people did most of that they would just give us groups.

Interviewer: So you were part of the escort infantry was used pretty much as escort?

Cook: Yeah in combination there was Russian and U.S. army both on the trains.

Interviewer: So did you work have interactions directly with the Russians?

Cook: Oh yeah

Interviewer: Now how was that?

Cook: Pretty tough it really was because we only had like one interpreter for the whole train.

Interviewer: Now was there any animosity between you?

Cook: No

Interviewer: It was pretty friendly.

Cook: Only once

Interviewer: Once really.

Cook: I had gone to Switzerland and Switzerland you could only take \$50 in and I sold my watch to get more money down there. No it wasn't my watch I sold yes I did I sold my watch to get the \$50 that's what it was.

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: Then I promptly spent it down there.

Interviewer: Oh no

Cook: But anyway at the end of that I wrote my mother and I said "sold my watch send me another one cheap one." And she sent me a Mickey Mouse watch a real Mickey Mouse.

Interviewer: A real Mickey Mouse with Mickey on the face.

Cook: I got on this god damn train later on and this Russian wanted to buy it and I sold it to him I sold it and got 150 U.S. dollars.

Interviewer: Wow

Cook: So

Interviewer: That was a sizable sum in 1945.

Cook: Yeah big money.

Interviewer: Sure

Cook: And the next day I'm sleeping there and I feel this poke in my chest and this god damn Russian is sitting there with a machine gun. And the trouble is the watch had stopped and he was you know don't shoot.

Interviewer: Not for 150 bucks.

Cook: He did not wind it.

Interviewer: Oh is that all it was? He didn't know how to because it was the old stem winding.

Cook: Well these guys had never seen a watch you know.

Interviewer: Now the Russian that you dealt with did he look I mean was he Asiatic or Eastern European? What did he look like?

Cook: Well more Eastern European.

Interviewer: More Eastern European.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Did you have any contact with the Asiatic Russian troops.

Cook: Yeah in Normandy we had people there that were very Asiatic and I'm not sure where in the hell they came from. But we had a lot of Poles in Normandy.

Interviewer: Right

Cook: Polish guys we had some of these guys that almost looked Japanese.

Interviewer: Now were they with were they part of the Russian services?

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: I bet they were Mongols.

Cook: They were probably Mongols.

Interviewer: The Russians took the Soviets took a lot from the Steps in the east.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: And pressed them in.

Cook: We had them

Interviewer: They were normally front line shock troop type.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: A lot of them as I understand didn't even speak Russian.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: So you ran into some of those guys as well.

Cook: Oh yeah

Interviewer: Now how about

Cook: But only in Normandy.

Interviewer: Oh only in Normandy and nowhere else.

Cook: No we ran into later we ran into Romanians and people like that. But the Far East I never saw after Normandy.

Interviewer: Now how were you received by the other nations? Were people pretty well friendly I mean the Germans obviously weren't.

Cook: Absolutely now through Normandy and Holland, well particularly in Holland, there was an open arms type of city they give us a lot of help.

Interviewer: Their still like that the Dutch some of the nicest people on earth.

Cook: Yeah they would tell you where the Germans were where to go where not to go how to get around.

Interviewer: I bet that saved a lot of lives.

Cook: It sure did. Bastogne wasn't like that we didn't hardly have contact with the natives.

Interviewer: There really weren't many of the Belgium's left in that area by the time you the 101<sup>st</sup> got in there were there?

Cook: No in Neville there were I can't remember 10 or 12 men Belgium men that were in basements.

Interviewer: Yes sir

Cook: And I understand afterwards, the day after we left Neville went back to Flaw, the Germans took these guys and were interrogating them and I guess they didn't talk.

Interviewer: Yes sir

Cook: And they took half of them and shot half of them.

Interviewer: Now who shot?

Cook: The Germans shot.

Interviewer: The Dutch?

Cook: The Belgium.

Interviewer: The Belgium.

Cook: Now this is Bastogne.

Interviewer: Because they wouldn't talk.

Cook: But among them they shot the school teacher of the town and they shot the guy the father of the guy who is now mayor of Bastogne. And then they shot a priest.

Interviewer: Now

Cook: So many figures were shot there.

Interviewer: Now these Germans were they the normal Vermont or were these Nazis?

Cook: No they were SS.

Interviewer: These were SS troops.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: So they were the hard core.

Cook: Yeah they were all there was all tanks came into there.

Interviewer: So it was a Panzer division?

Cook: Yeah Panzer second Panzer as I remember.

Interviewer: Very good

Cook: And a lot of them.

Interviewer: Okay well I appreciate it.

Cook: Somewhere here I had a picture of that but I don't know where the hell it went. That's a stables.

Interviewer: Yeah I wanted to see about those as well.

Cook: That's where A Company lived in England that's interesting.

Interviewer: Okay so your company was housed in these stables?

Cook: Yeah uh huh four to a stable. And that was a picture of the stable as it looked then. These are

Interviewer: Back in the 40s

Cook: Yeah these are

Interviewer: These are from your revisit?

Cook: 94 I think something like that.

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: There's so many pictures in this book. I had a picture here the tablet of these four guys that were shot up in Neville.

Interviewer: Yes sir

Cook: Where in the hell could it be. I went back there and found the tablet and it was behind a barn completely covered over in disuse and in bad shape.

Interviewer: A memorial?

Cook: Yeah it was a Belgium memorial now.

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: And there was a stone mason in that town and I went over at his house.

Interviewer: Where was the C47? Is that a recent photograph?

Cook: I think that's at Fort Benning no no this is at Fort Campbell.

Interviewer: Oh okay

Cook: During the week of the Eagles.

Interviewer: Yeah I recognize the monument right there in front of the Pratt Museum.

Cook: And they still have that.

Interviewer: Yes sir.

Cook: I got on that airplane and went up front and there was a log on the bovid and that plane dropped my battalion into Normandy.

Interviewer: The one that is in front of the Pratt Museum?

Cook: No this was up there just for the week of the Eagles and I think it came out of Georgia.

Interviewer: One that they brought in.

Cook: The one that they brought in yeah.

Interviewer: And that would have been 2000 two years ago.

Cook: It was before that.

Interviewer: Or was it an old

Cook: 96, 98

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: They brought in the B1, A1.

Interviewer: Now was there any way to tell if your particular company was dropped by that?

Cook: No no I checked

Interviewer: Just that they dropped the 506<sup>th</sup>.

Cook: Yeah this is the tablet we found and got refurbished and resurrected. And these are the men of Neville that the Germans killed for collaboration (looking at a photo of a stone).

Interviewer: So these are the Belgians' that were killed.



Cook: Yeah yeah

Interviewer: Because they were providing you with information.

Cook: Well the Germans accused them of it.

Interviewer: They weren't providing the Germans with what they wanted basically.

Cook: Yeah okay

Interviewer: I've heard about that.

Cook: These are reunion just

Interviewer: These are reunion pictures.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Ole St. Mary Glees

Cook: Yeah this is Robert O'Neal a little town that we took.

Interviewer: Now is this the anniversary jump?

Cook: 90, 89

Interviewer: This is the jump in 89?

Cook: Yeah yeah

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: That's Chris back in Normandy.

Interviewer: Yes sir

Cook: Well there's a lot of pictures in here mostly reunion pictures. Not anything of interest. I have a bunch more photographs at home next year I'll bring the rest of them.

Interviewer: Are you coming up to For Campbell this summer?

Cook: No

Interviewer: You're not going to make that?

Cook: No

Interviewer: Now what is this marker? Oh that's at the U.S. Cemetery in Normandy is it not?

Cook: No no this is in some museum and I can't tell you where it's up on the island in Holland. The reason I went in this place I was just being noisy but all of these fellows are in my company and they were all killed at the same time by on the same time and same date.

Interviewer: So these were all B Company guys?

Cook: B Company yeah in fact that's our First Sergeant there (looking at a photo of monuments in a cemetery). They were going across a field

Interviewer: With a Dutch name.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Now these I recognize I've been here.

Cook: Oh yeah

Interviewer: And these are friends?

Cook: Yeah I have some good pictures of them well that's about all I have.

Interviewer: Well I certainly appreciate it I can't thank you enough for sharing these pictures and reflections with us.

Cook: I used to have some better ones at home I know I do. Yeah I we make a point of decorating the graves every year and I thought I had well there's once for General Don Carter.

Interviewer: There's an old paratrooper there.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Mr. Eugene Cook (looking at a photo of a soldier reading a newspaper).

Cook: They put this paper out in 94.

Interviewer: Yes sir

Cook: And they had interviewed all the natives and the Germans everybody. It's a tremendous history book this newspaper well the only American that got interviewed was myself.

Interviewer: By one of the newspaper reporters?

Cook: Yeah so O.B. Hill brought that paper up and said you know this guy, that's why we're laughing.

Interviewer: Quite a surprise.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: There was another shot here a black and white of a jump I was gonna ask you about.

Cook: Oh that's after the war.

Interviewer: I saw a drop is that a training drop?

Cook: Yeah that's the 82<sup>nd</sup> air borne.

Interviewer: Oh that's 82<sup>nd</sup> drop?

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Okay

Cook: That well having said that I'm not sure yeah I think it is 82<sup>nd</sup>.

Interviewer: I don't know how we'd even be able to begin to tell.

Cook: But that is a training mission we went to. A deployment not a deployment but what do you call it?

Interviewer: It's easier to tell because you've got a nice drop zone.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Its level you know it's not full of hedgerows or flooded fields.

Cook: But this was out in probably Utah or Nevada you see.

Interviewer: Yes sir yeah that doesn't look a bit like Normandy.

Cook: Or Fort

Interviewer: Or Holland for that matter.

Cook: Or Fort Brag or Fort Campbell.

Interviewer: No it sure doesn't. That's a training drop as well?

Cook: Yeah and I had some in fact this one I said the guy don't know how to jump out of an airplane. He must have got a hell of a jolt when he opened that.

Interviewer: I'll tell you he's inverted.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: He's gonna have a hard time when that shoot opens it will break his collar bone.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Good Lord. There's better technique

Cook: Yeah that's good technique you can see the guy here that I had known here (looking at a photo of soldiers jumping out of an airplane). This one you can see the shoot in the door.

Interviewer: Yes sir now where did these pictures come from? Are these some that you've been given over the years?

Cook: Yeah I think this was I think at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

Interviewer: Yes sir.

Cook: That's the Atlantic Ocean there.

Interviewer: Could be that's a good shot that's a very good shot (looking at a photo of parachute jumpers).

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: So is that one that you have in your hand as well.

Cook: There was a guy

Interviewer: That's poster quality.

Cook: Well I'll tell you there was a guy I can't even remember his name by god name was Stephenson and he put out a bunch of like jackets and shirts and this is what he used for his insignia. This was probably 20 years ago.

Interviewer: I'm not surprised that's a beautiful photograph.

Cook: Yeah yeah

Interviewer: Beautiful photograph.

Cook: Stephenson

Interviewer: No drop bags either.

Cook: No

Interviewer: That's a Hollywood jump.

Cook: Yeah

Interviewer: Makes a big difference doesn't it?

Cook: Yeah yeah okay

Interviewer: Alright well that's wonderful thank you very much.

Cook: Yeah okay it's about time for a beer.

Tape ended.