

Aachen, October 19, 1944:

At 0900 hours "L" Company reported it was at the east end of Lousberg Hill. "I" Company was on the southern end of Salvator (Hill), with "K" Company clearing out the enemy strong points directly on the hill. By late afternoon, the southern end of Lousberg had been cleared, and the attack on the higher slopes was halted for the night. The 2nd Battalion had pushed clear through Aachen to sections of Lousberg, and it too buttoned up for the night. Though the trap was practically sprung, German elements still fought efficiently, and had to be driven out of each position.

Aachen, October 20, 1944

Against heavy resistance, the 3rd Battalion made slow, but steady against gains in the Lousberg (Hill) area. Another captured hospital yielded its share of wounded soldiers and civilians which were evacuated by the Military Government Officer. Over 400 Prisoners were captured by noon. The 2nd Battalion spent most of the day reducing the strong points into which the Technical School had been converted by the enemy. The German garrison being squeezed into a restricted area, and the end was in sight.

Aachen, October 21, 1944

Both Battalions made additional gains in the Lousberg sector. At about 1100 hours, the first sign came that the German commander of the Aachen forces was willing to accept unconditional surrender. Lt. Reynolds, Lt. Boehme and a German staff Officers contacted Colonel Wilck, and the German Commander, in a formal ceremony, handed over his garrison to Brig. Gen. George W. Taylor, Asst. Cmdr., 1st Division. Some 1600 soldiers, the remnants of a garrison, were marched back to the rear to join approximately 1800 other Aachen garrison captives now in PW enclosure. For purposes of record, a digest of the last speech of the German Colonel is in this report.

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"Dear German Soldiers!

I am speaking to you on a most painful occasion. I was forced to surrender because we had run out of ammunition, food and water; the therefore saw further fighting was useless. I was acting against orders, for I was supposed to fight to the last man.

At this time I have to remind you that you are German soldiers, please, and to behave as such. I also wish you the best of health, and a speedy return to the Fatherland after the cessation of hostilities in order to help rebuild Germany. I was refused by the American authorities to give a "Sieg Heil" and "Heil Hitler", but we can all still do that in our minds.

Gerhard Wilck

Colonel, Comdg.

Aachen Forces

However, the day to day record was plain. Though the German garrison had fought courageously and skillfully, it had been beaten by a combined American force of half its size.

Little remained there but clearing the battered city of hostile elements which had not heard of the German commander's surrender. Towards late afternoon "C" Company was released to return to the 1st Battalion, and arrangements made to return the 3rd Battalion to "An der Huels" area, and the 2nd Battalion to the barracks in the vicinity of Brand. Tanks and tank destroyers were sent back for maintenance. Night found the American flag waving over the first captured German City.