

Fifty years later, battle still vivid for war vets

"This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever famous American victory." — Sir Winston Churchill, addressing the House of Commons following the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.

By BETH HENDERSON
Staff Writer

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the battle that many believe won World War II. More than 600,000 American forces were engaged in the Battle of the Bulge, which lasted for four cold weeks in December

1944. Two Greenwood residents — Granville Martin Jr. and Harold Smith — were among the troops. Good friends now, the two didn't know each other during the days of intense fighting in Germany and Belgium.

Martin and Smith will be among hundreds to gather Wednesday and Thursday in Jackson as the Mississippi chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge commemorates the battle.

A national ceremony is scheduled Dec. 15-18 in St. Louis.

Fifty years later, both Martin and Smith hold vivid memories of the battle.

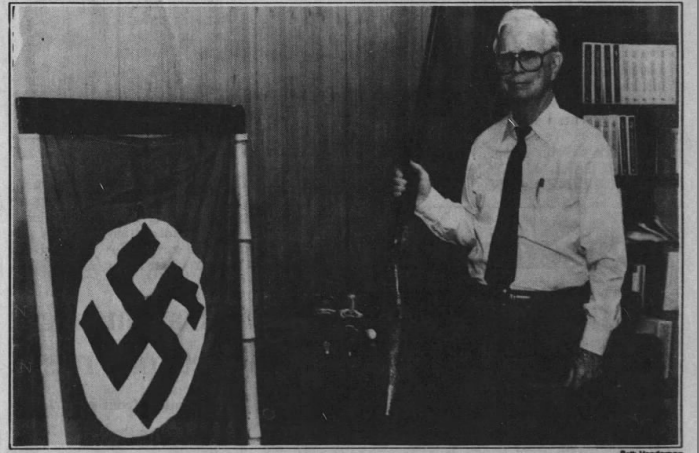
Just days prior to the famous

American victory, powerful German armies plunged headlong into the rugged mountains and dense forests of the Ardennes, determined to break the American line of defense and trap the Allied forces in Belgium and Luxembourg.

Hitler's armies met fierce opposition the minute they engaged the thinly spread American line, paying a heavy price for every inch of ground they gained.

The battle raged for days before Allied reinforcements arrived to help keep the Germans from breaking through.

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GRANVILLE MARTIN OF GREENWOOD DISPLAYS SOME GERMAN PARAPHERNALIA. He will be among hundreds in Jackson this week to commemorate the Battle of the Bulge.

1994-12-06 Vets Recall Battle of the Bulge PART ONE

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