

Civitella,
Arezzo.

15 November 44.

STATEMENT OF :-

BARTOLUCCI Gino,
Civitella,
Arezzo.

Who saith,

I am a blacksmith and have lived in CIVITELLA
all my life.

About 1730 hours on Sunday 18 June 44, I saw in
the PIAZZA, CIVITELLA, three German soldiers.

They all wore Field Service caps and light coloured
jackets and trousers. One of them had two pistols in his
belt and two of them had two stars on each shoulder.

One of them fired three flares from a Verey pistol
which he was carrying, into the air. I was nervous and went
home but I saw several children crowding round and enjoying the
sight and the Germans appeared to be quite friendly.

About 2130 hours the same evening, I was at home
with my wife and family when I heard the sound of some more
shooting. We thought it was the same Germans firing and did
not worry about it and went to bed.

Early next morning I saw many people leaving the
village and on enquiring the reason was informed that some
Germans had been shot the previous evening in the DUPO LAVOIO
CLUB.

Fearing reprisals, I took my wife and family to
a farm of a friend, about two kilometres from CIVITELLA and
stayed there about nine days. We then returned to CIVITELLA
as things appeared to be quiet. I saw no Germans in CIVITELLA
until 29 June 44.

On the morning of that day at about 0645 hours
I was on my way to church when my wife came running up to me
and told me the Germans were coming, and we returned home with
the rest of my family.

A short while afterwards I heard the sound of
shots and looking through the back window of my house saw
LAMMIONI Giovanni Battista laying on his back in the road appar-
ently dead. I did not examine his body but formed my opinion
from the position in which he lay; his eyes were closed, he
did not move and his arms were outstretched. I saw no wounds
on his body.

I went to the front window and saw about twenty
Germans fixing up machine guns on tripods in the PIAZZA facing
the church. After a few minutes civilians started to stream

out of the/....

/started to stream out of the church of S. MARIA ASSUNTA with their hands above their heads.

There was a loud banging on my door and I went downstairs with my wife and family. My wife opened the door and was confronted by a German soldier who pointed a rifle at her.

The German soldier was wearing a camouflaged smock reaching nearly to his knees, gathered at the waist by a belt. He was wearing dark coloured trousers and a steel helmet. He also carried a revolver.

Seeing me he grabbed me by the lapel of my jacket and dragged me out of the house. At the same time he shouted in Italian "Via le donne". I am certain that he was an Italian by his speech.

My wife and daughter went off down the street and I was dragged by this soldier into the PIAZZA and lined up with another twenty to thirty Italians who were standing near the cistern.

Men and women were still coming out of church with their hands above their heads and after they had walked a little way into the PIAZZA the men were forced into the line by German soldiers while the women and children were hustled away out of the streets.

In all, there were now about twenty five Germans in the PIAZZA all dressed alike in camouflaged smocks, steel helmets, belt and dark coloured trousers. There were three machine guns fitted up and other Germans were laying behind them. All carried rifles or pistols.

A German soldier appeared to be in charge. I describe him as being , 180 centimetres tall and big built. He was dressed exactly the same as the other soldiers but carried a revolver and a machine gun rifle. He was speaking now and again to the other soldiers in German in a manner which sounded as though he was giving orders but as far as I could see he carried no badge of rank.

Whilst standing in the PIAZZA we were all searched by the German soldiers who took our wallets and wrist watches from us and placed them in their pockets. My wallet containing five hundred lira was taken from me by a German soldier who similarly placed it in his pocket.

After we had been searched the German to whom I have just referred, shouted in Italian "Five". Five Italians were then led away towards the back of the school, where I could now see machine guns fitted up with German soldiers in position behind them.

When the Italians reached the back of the school,

I saw, from/.....

/of the school

I saw, from my position, some German soldiers form them into a line facing towards the town wall.

Then one German soldier with a pistol stepped forward and placing his pistol against the back of the head of the man on the right of the line, DON LAZZERI Alcide, pressed the trigger. He fell to the ground obviously killed instantaneously. The German then passed along the line, behind the Italian from right to left. He repeated his action to each of the Italians in turn. All the Italians fell to the ground as they were fired at. They made no movement as they lay on the ground.

The Germans in the PIAZZA then sorted us out in fives and we were led over towards the back of the school. I was in the second lot of five and we marched right behind the five men in front of us.

We were stopped at the back of the school by the Germans about five paces away from the first five.

I kept my head down and stared at the ground because I was afraid to look, but I could not help but see the bodies of the first men laying there between the machine guns. They were:- DON LAZZERI Alcide, LENCHELETTI Torquato, SABATINI Paolo, PASQUI Giuseppe and TAVIRNESI Agostino. They were all bleeding from the head and were obviously dead.

The Germans then lined up the five men in front of us facing the town wall. I then saw the same German stand behind the Italian on the right. He raised his revolver to the back of the Italian's head and then I saw TIEZZI Daniele, who was one of the five men in the line, turn to his left and run.

One of the Germans fired a burst at him with a machine gun but I did not think he was hit. He fired another burst but TIEZZI Daniele kept on running until he was out of my sight. The German with the revolver then walked behind the other four remaining Italians and fired one shot into the back of each man's head. At the time he fired, his revolver was touching the man's head.

As he fired, so the Italian fired at, dropped and made no movement. I was about three metres away from them at this time.

After he had shot those four, our five were pushed into line amongst the bodies of those who had been previously shot

I was second from left, on my right was LAMMIONI Dante, on my left SCARLETTI Dario. I do not remember the other two.

I saw once again the same German with a revolver stand behind the Italian on the right. He raised his weapon. I heard an explosion and the Italian fell. Once again he raised raised his revolver. There was another explosion and

the Italian fell./....

/another explosion and
the second Italian dropped to the ground.

Then LAMMIONI Dante, overcome, fell on his back on the ground, covered his eyes with his hands and commenced groaning and crying in terror. The German with the pistol stood over him and fired three shots into the region of his heart. There was no further sound or movement from LAMMIONI Dante.

It was then my turn. The German stood behind me and I saw, out of the corner of my eye, him raise his revolver to the back of my head. I put my hands to the sides of my face and as he fired, I, anticipating the shot, turned my head to the left. I felt the muzzle of the revolver against my hand and heard the report. I immediately felt a burning pain in both my hands, my face, mouth and throat and realizing that I was still alive dropped voluntarily to the ground and lay there feigning death.

What had happened, I discovered afterwards, was that the shot had passed through my left hand, with which I had covered my face, through my throat and cheek and had gone through my right hand.

I lay there without moving until the Germans went away. As I lay there I heard many shots fired, all single distinct shots and heard many bodies fall beside me.

When the Germans had gone I opened my eyes and saw around me the bodies of many men all shot through the head.

I was very weak and can only remember four of them, PASQUI Giuseppe, PASQUI Alfredo, Menchetti Torquato and BERNARDONI Melindo. The last named man I knew to be a resident of CORNIA.

I crawled over the town wall and made my way into the woods and was helped by a friend who treated my wounds. I gradually made my way to the house of VOLPI Amerigo and stayed there nearly a month, being treated by Dr. GAMBASSINI.

About ten days after I got there I was picked up by the Germans and made to work for them for a day carrying logs despite my wounds.

I returned to CIVITELLA some days after it's liberation by the British.

My house was completely destroyed. My left thumb is paralyzed, and owing to the nature of my wounds I cannot eat solids only soft foods.

I have read over this statement. It is correct and true. I herewith append my signature.

(Sgd.) BARTOLUCCI Gino.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by MAYER Massimo, interpreter, in the presence of Sgt. CHARLES, both of 78 Section S.I.B. on Wednesday, 15th November, 1944, at CIVITELLA.

I certify that the above translation from Italian is correct and true and to the best of my ability.

(Sgd.) MAYER Massimo.