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Palazzina,
Civitella,

25th January, 1945.

STATEMENT OF:-

BERNINI Giuseppe, Palazzina, Civitella.	Male. 44 Years.
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Who saith,

I am the brother of BERNINI Vittorio. He was 33 years of age and had lived with us at this address for the past fifteen years. He was a married man with four children the oldest being eight years.

About 04.30 hours on Thursday, 29th, June, 1944, my brother and I started work on the farm. I saw that the surrounding country was full of Germans but at that time they did not interfere with us. My brother left me to cut corn in a neighbouring field while I carried on with my work near the farmhouse.

Between 05.30 hours and 06.00 hours two Germans came to the house and ordered all of us to go with them to the bridge which is about 200 metres. They took everybody from the house including the women and children.

These Germans were dressed in soft caps and khaki coloured clothing. They were armed with machine guns and hand grenades.

When we arrived at the bridge, I saw about 30 men, women and children gathered together with about thirty German soldiers. My brother was also present.

Some of these German soldiers wore camouflaged smocks and steel helmets while others were dressed similarly to the first two.

As we waited at the bridge I saw many other Italian civilians brought there by German soldiers until there were about 70 to 75 persons present. We were kept there for about an hour when the women and children were sent away. About 45 minutes later we were questioned as to whether we had any German documents. Nobody could produce any.

A machine gun had been set up on the bridge and with two German soldiers in front of us we were ordered to march past the machine gun leaving the gun on our left. I was in front of the party, about twenty-one in all, when I heard the gun open fire. I looked round and saw my brother fall to the ground with several others. I ran as fast as I could at right angles to the gun in a northerly direction. I heard rifles fired at me and had not gone very far before I was hit in the back and nose by bullets. I threw myself to the ground and shunned death.

From where I lay I could hear the Germans talking and laughing and heard the sounds of bodies being put into a nearby hole filled with water.

After about an hour I made my way to a house of

/a house of

one of my neighbours who treated and dressed my wounds.

The next afternoon I returned to the bridge and found the dead body of my brother, he was wounded in the head and chest.

On Friday, 30th June, 1944, my brothers body was taken to the cemetery at CIVITELLA in a German truck driven by German soldiers. In this truck were several other bodies. The two Germans assiste us in the transportation of the bodies.

My brother was buried in CIVITELLA cemetery on Saturday, 1st July, 1944.

Neither my brother nor I were artisans and we had never rendered them any assistance.

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

(SGD) PIERRE GIUSEPPE.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by MUSICARO Alberto, Interpreter, in the presence of SGT CHARLES both of 78 Section, SIB, on the 23rd January, 1945, at CIVITELLA, ARZICO.

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

MUSICARO Alberto
MUSICARO ALBERTO.