

Cornia,
Civitella,
Arezzo.

5 January 45.

STATEMENT OF:-

Don Natale ROMANELLI, Male.
Verniana, Aged 38 years.
Monte San Savino,
Arezzo.

Who saith,

I have been the priest of CORNIA for the last ten years. Prior to the 29th. June 1944, I lived in CORNIA with my mother TAVANTI Emilia, aged 63 years and my sister ROMANELLI Emma aged 35 years. With us were my two brothers and their families, also three evacuees from AREZZO, MARINELLI Oreste, aged 55 years, MARINELLI Giovanna aged 50 years and their daughter MARINELLI Ada aged 21 years.

My sister Emma had been paralyzed from birth and was incapable of moving about. She spent all her time sitting in a specially constructed chair.

About 0730 hours on Thursday, 29th. June 1944, I left my home to go to VERNIANA to say Mass in the Church. When I left my house all the members of my family were alive.

I had travelled about one kilometre along the road when I heard the sound of rifle and machine gun fire coming from the valley below me. I looked down, but was unable to see much because I found that a smoke screen had been laid in the valley.

Just then MUGNAI Brazio, came along the road and advised me to return to my home because the Germans were burning the houses in the vicinity. He had heard the sounds of shooting and screaming from the direction of BURRONE.

I returned to CORNIA and warned everybody of what was taking place and advised them to leave the village. Most people did so but my mother refused to do so saying that she was too old for the Germans to harm. She also refused to allow my sister to go away but carried my sister into a nearby room, which was normally used for drying chestnuts. She thought that she would be safe in there.

I walked to some high ground about half a kilometre away to try and see what was happening. I could see that CIVITELLA was burning, but being fired upon I had to leave my place of observation. I made my way in the direction of GEBBLIA and hid in the woods.

About 0830 hours I heard an armoured car passing along the road towards CORNIA. About an hour later I again heard this car travelling along the road from CORNIA to GEBBLIA. As it passed me I heard grenades bursting and machine gun fire coming from its direction. I also heard bullets whistling over my head.

About an hour later I again heard this armoured car travelling along the road from GEBBLIA to CORNIA.

About 1030 hours, I heard the sound of a motor cycle

travelling along the/....

/a motor cycle

travelling along the road towards CORNIA and about 1200 hours I heard a number of people walking along the road from GEBBIA to VALLEBONA and heard voices talking in Italian and German.

About 1800 hours the same day as things had remained quiet for some time I returned to CORNIA and found many houses including my own on fire.

I saw the body of PONTENANI Rosa, aged 52 years, lying dead in the road. She was nude. I walked away without examining her body as this is contrary to my religion.

In a hut adjoining my house I saw the body of my sister ROMANELLI Emma. There were five or six bullet wounds in her right side and there were bullet marks in her chair which was overturned besides her as she lay on the floor. I can only conclude that she was shot as she sat in her chair which overturned. She could not move without assistance owing to her infirmity.

Next day, Friday, 30th. June 1944, I found, in a nearby house the body of my mother TAVANTI Emilia. She was dead. One of her legs was badly burned, also both her hands. In the same house I saw the dead bodies of ORSOLINI Rina, aged 17 years, or 18 years, and MUGNAI Olga, aged about 35 years. Around these bodies had been piled the furniture of the house. This had been set on fire and all the bodies showed signs of burning.

Later, I officiated at the burial services of the following people who were residents of CORNIA and who died on the 29th. June 1944.

(1)	ROMANELLI	Emma	Aged 32 years.		
(2)	PONTENANI	Rosa	" 50	"	(Approx)
(3)	MUGNAI	Giuseppe	" 70	"	"
(4)	MUGNAI	Olga	" 40	"	"
(5)	ORSOLINI	Rina	" 19	"	
(6)	TAVANTI	Emilia	" 64	"	
(7)	DEL CUCINA	Antonio	" 45	"	(Approx)
(8)	DEL CUCINA	Gaetano	" 14	"	
(9)	DEL CUCINA	Ilva	" 12	"	
(10)	DEL CUCINA	Elsa	" 5	"	
(11)	RONCOLINI	Antonio	" 53	"	
(12)	AMADEI	Giulia	" 47	"	(Approx)
(13)	MANTOVANI	Maria	" 72	"	
(14)	AMAZZONI	Dante o	" 50	"	
(15)	HARBI Dushmi	Kn. Di Ismail	" 30	"	(Approx)
(16)	BERNARDONI	Zelindo	" 55	"	
(17)	VENTURINI	Alfredo	" 45	"	
(18)	ESTRELLI	Ranieri	" 34	"	
(19)	MASSINI	Valentina	" 38	"	(Approx)
(20)	FICAI	Adelmo	" 15	"	
(21)	BERNINI	Emilio	" 53	"	
(22)	PICCHIONI	Livia	" 36	"	
(23)	BURALI	Tito	" 12	"	
(24)	BURALI	Wanda	" 15	"	(Approx)
(25)	BESTINI	Gesuina	" 63	"	"

continued/....

(26)	BURALI	Ranieri	Aged 58 years.	
(27)	LAZZERONI	Fietro	" 45	"
(28)	SESTINI	Rosa	" 54	"
(29)	DEGLI'INNOCENTI		" 37	" (Appr)
(30)	VALERI	Gina	" 18	"
(31)	ARRIGUCCI	Odorlindo	" 43	"
(32)	ARRIGUCCI	Quintilio	" 37	"
(33)	BIAGIOTTI	Giulio	" 60	"
(34)	MALENTACCHI	Nello	" 61	"

All these people died as a result of the German reprisals on the 29th. June 1944.

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

(Sgd) DON NATALE ROMANELLI.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by FABBRONI Vasco, Interpreter, in the presence of Sgt Charles, both of 78 Section, SIB, on Friday, 5th. January, 1945, at CORNIA.

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

Fabbroni Vasco
 FABBRONI VASCO.