

Monte S. Savino,
Arezzo.

5 December 44.

STATEMENT OF:-

CARATELLI Palmira, Via Nuova, Monte Sa. Savino, Arezzo.	Female. Aged 50 years.
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Who saith,

I am a widow and have lived in Monte S. Savino nearly all my life.

I have a farm at CORNIA and owing to the war I went to live there in May 1944. My daughter VALERI Gina, 19 years and manservant DELL' INNOCENTI Elvino, 34 years went with me. They were killed by the Germans on the 29th. June 1944.

About 0700 hours on Thursday, 29th. June 1944, SESTINI Rosa, 58 years, came into my bedroom and said that she could hear a lot of rifle fire. She said that the firing appeared to come from a valley which is directly south of CORNIA. I went to a window of my house that looks into this valley but as I could see nothing and the firing had stopped we attached no importance to the occurrence.

Shortly after, my daughter Gina came and told me that she had seen Germans in the street. I again went to the window and saw two German soldiers in the street. The soldiers both wore steel helmets and I think one a greatcoat. One of these I took for an Officer as he wore a grey-green uniform similar to those worn by Italian Officers. His jacket had four pockets and he wore a broad leather belt around his waist from which there was fastened a leather shoulder strap. The epaulettes on his jacket were white. There were also some white markings on his collar but I cannot remember what. He wore riding breeches and jack boots.

My daughter and I hastily packed a few things and tried to leave the house. This, however, was impossible as German soldiers were by this time barring all exits. We were afraid because we had heard that the Partisans had attacked the Germans about four days previously at MONTE AL TUZZO, which is about four kilometres south of CORNIA.

About ten minutes later the Officer whom I had seen from the window and two German soldiers entered my house. One of these soldiers walked up to a bedroom door and broke it open. The other walked round till he found some food. These two soldiers conversed in perfect Italian.

I approached the German Officer and asked him to let us go but he just turned his back and ignored me. We women were then all taken to one room. Altogether there were seven of us:- SESTINI Rosa, 58 years, SESTINA Gesuina, 54 years, PICCHIONI Livia, 34 years, BURALI Vanda, 15 years, BURALI Tito, a boy of 14 years, myself and my daughter.

I tried to leave the room but the soldiers were

outside and they/....

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/the soldiers were

outside and they forced me to go back.

The Officer came into the room and walked straight up to me. I thought he was trying to frighten me as he had a pistol in his hand and he held this about one metre from my stomach. He never spoke. Suddenly I saw a spurt of flame from the pistol and felt a burning pain in my stomach. I jumped at the Officer but he fired again and I felt more pains in my stomach. I can remember dropping to the floor but no more.

When I opened my eyes I saw the other six people lying about the floor of the room. All were seriously wounded and lying in pools of blood. BURALI Vanda who was lying next to me was also conscious. She was seriously wounded in the stomach and her legs were nearly shot off. Vanda died about ten hours later. The house was on fire and the flames, when it got towards evening, were coming into the room.

I lay till about 2130 hours, when PASQUINI Dante and LAZZARONI Settimia came. At first they refused to move me but after a while they went and brought two large shovels. By pushing these shovels under my body they were able to drag me outside. They then took me to a room that had not been burnt. I cannot remember exactly what happened after that.

The following day, Friday, 30th. June 1944, about 1300 hours, I was carried from CORNIA on a stretcher to an ambulance which was waiting at the bottom of the hill. From there I was taken to the hospital at MONTE S. SAVINO, where I was attended by Dr. CELATA Antonio. I was in the hospital about one month and afterwards attended for daily treatment. The Doctor told me that I had ten or twelve bullet wounds in the stomach. No bullets were recovered as they had all passed straight through my body.

The Officer I mention was about one metre eighty-five centimetres tall, stout build, fresh to red complexion, fair to ginger hair. He had the appearance of a gentleman.

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

(Sgd) CARATELLI Palmira.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by L/Cpl DI DUCA, B., Interpreter, in the presence of Sgt Clewlow, both of 78 Section, SIB, on Tuesday, 5th. December 1944, at MONTE SAN SAVINO.

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

B. DI DUCA.