

Civitella,
Arezzo.

20 November 44.

STATEMENT OF:-

TAVARNESI Aldo, Male.
Civitella, Aged 26 years.
Arezzo.

Who saith,

I am an engineer and except for a period of six years, when I was a soldier in the Italian Army, I have lived in CIVITELLA all my life.

About 1600 hours on Sunday, 18th. June 1944, I was in the Piazza, CIVITELLA. I there saw two German soldiers. Both were dressed in light coloured trousers and shirts. One had the insignia of an eagle with outstretched wings on his right breast. This insignia was made of light grey cloth. Both had their caps folded up in their pockets, I could see them jutting out.

They fired two Verey lights in the air but I did not stop to see anymore. I left the square and had only gone a short way when I saw another Verey light flare in the sky, which from its direction had been fired from the square.

I had previously seen some Germans stationed near the Madonna about a kilometre from CIVITELLA and later in the evening I saw two of these Germans in CIVITELLA. They wore no distinguishing marks on their uniforms but were dressed in light coloured shirts and trousers with Field Service caps.

I was indoors later and heard no shooting. My house is in a different part of the town to the Dopolavoro Club.

As my age group had been recalled to the Italian Army, I did not go out but during the afternoon of the 20th. June 1944, I saw from a window twelve or thirteen German soldiers with an Army truck arrive for the funeral.

The truck was a covered in MERCEDES BENZ, slightly larger than an English 150wt Dodge. There were no markings on this truck.

The soldiers were dressed in grey-green jackets and trousers with Field Service caps and a few wore light coloured colonial uniform with Field Service caps. In the front of their caps they had a red spot surmounted by a grey circle.

The soldiers in grey-green uniform, had, on each side of the collars of their jackets on the front an oblong with the shortest ends at the bottom and top. Inside this oblong were three and in some cases four cloth bars, horizontal. This insignia was a shade lighter than their uniforms.

About half an hour later I was sitting in the Piazza when the Germans returned. They drove around the

square and stopped/....

/drove around the

square and stopped. I heard someone shout in German and immediately ran away. After a search by the Germans I eventually gave myself up and was escorted by the Germans to the bottom of the town.

About half an hour later LAMMIONE Luigi arrived and took my particulars and spoke to a German Sergeant. This Sergeant was dressed in grey-green uniform with an eagle with outspread wings on his right breast. He was wearing a Field Service cap with a red spot surmounted by a grey circle in the front of it. His epaulettes were edged with silver. This Sergeant afterwards spoke to an Officer.

This Officer I describe as being 165 centimetres tall, blond hair thinning on sides, 35 years, clean shaven, long pointed nose, one false tooth on the right top. He was dressed in light coloured jacket and trousers and was carrying a Field Service cap in his hand. He was wearing three silver coloured 'pips' on his shoulders and his epaulettes were surmounted by silver braid. I would recognise this Officer again if I saw him.

In my presence this Officer told LAMMIONE Luigi that he wanted the names of the Partisans by noon next day. (21st. June 1944). He made no threats.

I was allowed to go and I made my way home. A little later I saw a 626 Fiat motor lorry carrying about thirty German soldiers. I heard other lorries following it and hid in the attic of my house. From there I saw the Germans jump off the lorry and scatter through the town. Later I heard shooting. These Germans were dressed in camouflaged smocks, steel helmets and carried pistols. Each had four stick grenades in his belt. They all wore steel helmets, on the front of which was painted an eagle carrying a crooked cross. I saw in a smaller car two Officers with the Secretary of the Commune BADI AL PINO. They were giving orders and appeared to be directing operations.

It was getting dark at this time, but I believe that one of the Officers was either a Major or Lieutenant Colonel. He was wearing an Officers' peaked cap. This had silver braid round the edge of the peak and a silver cord across the front. He was also wearing an elaborate braided lanyard.

Later, I saw the junior officer checking the identity papers of a group of Italian civilians. These Italians were sent away after the check.

About 0730 hours on Thursday, 29th. June 1944, I was at home when I heard a lot of shooting and heard the sounds of two grenades exploding. I hid in the attic and from heard continuous small arms fire. I was finally forced to leave there by the flames from the house next door which was

was burning fiercely/....

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was burning fiercely. From my house I moved after a period of about three hours into the house of my brother which I did without moving into the street.

After a while things went quiet and I emerged into the street. I saw that my shop was on fire and with assistance I extinguished the flames.

Outside my house I saw the bodies of MARSILI Emilio and TIEZZI Leonello, both bodies had bullet wounds in the head and chest.

I later saw the bodies of MORFINI Carlo, a professor, aged about 80 years and BONICHI Eliseo. The professor's face was smashed but I could recognise him and the other man's body had several bullet wounds in it. I also saw many other bodies but did not recognise them.

I went into the woods and did not return to CIVITELLA to live until after its liberation by the British.

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

(Sgd) TAVARNESI Aldo.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by MAGINI Livia, Interpreter, in the presence of Sgt Charles, both of 78 Section, SIB, on Monday, 20th. March, 1944, at CIVITELLA.

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

Livia Magini

LIVIA MAGINI.