

134

Civitella,
Arezzo.

Thursday, 23 November, 1944.

STATEMENT OF :-

FEMALE
FALSETTI Gemma, 47 years.
Civitella,
Arezzo.

Who saith,

I am the widow of FALSETTI Settimio. He was 49 years of age. We have both lived in CIVITELLA all our lives where my husband was employed as a farmer. I have four children, Ida a girl aged 20 years, Dina, 17 years, Angiolino a boy aged 16 years, and Elda a girl of 10 years.

On the morning of Monday, 19 June, 1944 about 0500 hours I heard a lot of people running about in the village. I left my home to enquire as to the reason for this and was told that some Germans had been killed in the DOPOLAVORO CLUB, CIVITELLA, the previous evening. This was the first time I knew of any shooting, and when I told my husband we decided to leave the village at once.

My husband and I collected a few things together and with the children went to the farm of ALBERELLI Tito, which is about one kilometre south of the village.

We remained at this farm until the evening of Saturday, 25 June, 1944, when we returned to CIVITELLA.

On Thursday, 29 June, 1944, I went to church at about 0700 hours with my children, Ida, Angiolino and Elda. I had been in church a while when I heard some rifle fire. After a while people started to come into the church and there was a lot of whispering and talking. The sound of firing increased and then the priest (DON ALCIDE LAZZERI) told us it would be the Germans retreating. He also told us not to interfere with them and let them take whatever they pleased.

The service had just finished when a German soldier walked into the church. This soldier was dressed in a camouflaged jacket and steel helmet and he was carrying a rifle of some kind. He started shouting and waving his rifle at everyone, so we gathered that he wanted us to go outside.

I went out of the side door of the church with the Nuns and my children, then into the latrines at the rear of the school.

There were about eleven people in these latrines and we stopped here until about 1100 hours. During this time we heard a lot of firing but did not know what was happening.

When I left the latrines and came into the village I saw a lot of houses burning and some lying in ruins in the street. I went with the nuns up to the hospital for company as the village was deserted. At the hospital door I saw the first bodies, those of four old men.

I wondered then what had happened to my husband,

who, I had/....

/ whom, I had left

at home when I went to church. I went to my house and found that the place had been ransacked although it had not been set on fire.

My husband was not at home, and I could not find him in the village so I thought he must have gone to the farm to work.

I then went to the woods with my children so that they would be safe and also to look for my husband.

I could not find him however so about 1500 hours I again returned to CIVITELLA to look for him there. It was useless however so that evening I returned to my children and slept in the wood.

The next morning I went to the house of my sister ALBERELLI Maria who has a farm just outside the village.

My sister told me that my husband had been killed and that his body was in a field on her farm. I got a sheet and went to my husband. I found him and easily recognised him. He had one bullet wound in the head.

With the assistance of some men I got my husband's body back to the house of my sister. Here I had a coffin made for him and buried him in the cemetery at CIVITELLA about 1800 hours on Saturday, 1 July, 1944.

My husband was not a Partisan and he had never helped the Partisans.

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

(Sgd,) FALETTI Gemma.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by Pte. DI DUCA Bragia, interpreter, in the presence of Sgt. CLEWLOW both of 78 Section S.I.B. on Tuesday, 23 November, 1944 at CIVITELLA, AREZZO.

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

DI DUCA Bragia.