

56
Civitella,
Arezzo.

3 November 44.

STATEMENT OF:-

LAMMIONI Maria Assunta,	Female.
Civitella,	Aged 34 years.
Arezzo.	

Who saith,

I am the widow of LAMMIONI Giovanni Battista who was forty-eight years old. We came here from AREZZO in June 43. We have four children, David a boy 15 years, Luigina, a girl aged 11 years, Maria Rosaria, a girl aged 9 years and Paolo, a boy one year old.

On Sunday, 18th. June 1944, between 1700 and 1730 hours, I was in my home with the children when I heard three shots fired. I went to the doorway and saw two German soldiers standing in the street. There were three flares in the sky. My husband came up in a moment or two and told me to keep inside in case of trouble. My husband remained with me until about 2045 hours when he left to listen to the wireless somewhere. The time, I think, was about 2130 hours when I heard some bursts of machine-gun fire. Shortly afterwards, I heard someone calling my husband and telling him to go into the house, I questioned him as to his whereabouts when this firing took place. He said he had been to the house of Signor SABATINI listening to the news on the wireless. Immediately he heard the firing he ran home. Whilst running down the street he passed some civilian who said he had been wounded. My husband did not stop and consequently could not give the name of this wounded man. That evening we did not know what had happened at the Club.

The following morning, Monday, 19th. June 1944, the village was astir at 0500 hours and everyone was making preparations to leave. We were informed of the killing of the Germans and everyone seemed to think that the partisans were responsible. My husband and I decided to leave and after hastily packing a few things and dressing the children, we left the village about 0530 hours. We went to a farmer, GIARDI Fortunato, whose farm is about one and a half kilometres north of CIVITELLA. We remained at this farm until Wednesday, 21st June 1944, and left at 1100 hours for our own farm, MARFIANO, which is about two kilometres north of CIVITELLA. We remained there until 1800 hours, Saturday, 24th. June 1944, when we left for CIVITELLA. We got back here at 1900 hours the same evening.

Everything was quiet in CIVITELLA from then on, although everyone seemed to be living in fear of what might happen.

On Tuesday, 27th. June 1944, a German soldier came to my house asking for a wireless or a typewriter. I cannot describe the soldier apart from saying that I thought he was an officer as he was wearing a leather belt and shoulder strap. There were some signs on his shoulder straps but I

cannot remember what/....

/straps but I

cannot remember what they were. I explained to him that I had neither but he was joined by another German soldier and together they searched my house. The first soldier had a piece of paper with a list of names on it. He questioned me about several and I gathered they were people who had wireless sets or typewriters. They then left my house and I saw there was a third soldier driving a large white car. I watched and saw them take the wireless from the priest, Don Aloide LAZZARI's house, and afterwards heard that they had taken all the wireless sets that they could find.

On Thursday, 29th. June 1944, all my family were up early in the morning, about 0500 hours, as we heard the British were not far off and we had some things that I wanted to hide from the Germans. I got the children ready for church and two went at 0530 hours, Luigina and Maria Rosaria. About this time we could hear German voices shouting outside the village and my husband went to see what was happening. He returned after a short while and said that the Germans were coming up the hill towards the village and shooting as they came. He told me not to worry as they would not touch the women and children and that he was leaving at once. It was then about 0730 hours. He kissed me goodbye and told me to get the children from the church then everything would be all right. I then went and got the children from the church and went back to my home. The sound of firing then was all over the place. I decided to go to the house of my brother-in-law, LAMMIONI Dante, for company. I had just arrived at his house with my children when I heard someone shouting that my husband had been shot. I wanted to go to my husband but the people in the house prevented me from doing so. I tried to see him from the window and that is all I remember because I fainted. When I recovered there was someone banging on the door. When it was opened I saw three soldiers who may have been Germans, but whom, I think were Italians as they spoke fluent Italian with what appeared to be a Tuscany accent. I cannot describe these soldiers very well apart from saying they wore steel helmets and camouflaged jackets. They also had a kind of mask on the lower part of their faces. These soldiers told everyone to get outside, but seeing me with a year old child they said I could stay. The other people, including my three children, were taken outside. These soldiers were joined by another seven and they then commenced to go through all the drawers, taking what they wanted and throwing the remainder on the floor. When they had finished searching they started cutting the bed mattress open and throwing what appeared to be petrol on it. I tried to leave the house when I saw this but these soldiers only laughed at me and my child and started setting fire to the house. At this time they refused to let me leave. After a short while only one soldier and I remained, but he still refused to let me leave with my child. By this time the house was well ablaze. I had to go on my knees to this fiend, begging for the life of my child alone, telling him that they had already murdered my husband and that I did not know where my other children had been taken.

At first he laughed at my plight and made to leave the building, then he seemed to change his mind and told me to 'Via.' With difficulty, I managed to leave the house

with my child/....

/leave the house

with my child without being burnt. When I got out of the house it was the opposite side to which my husband was lying. I made to go round towards him when I saw my brother-in-law lying in the street. He had been shot and was lying in a pool of blood. He was shouting:- "Goodbye Armida." (Armida was his wife). A soldier who spoke perfect Italian then shouted to one of his comrades:- "This fat pig is not dead yet, shoot him again." I then heard some more shooting and knew that my brother-in-law had been shot again. I got near to where my husband was lying when some German soldiers came and told me to go away. I noticed that everyone was going in the direction of POGGIALI and so I followed. On the way, I saw about ten bodies, one of which I think was that of a woman. All these bodies were lying in pools of blood. At POGGIALI I went to the orphanage and found the place full of women and children all from CIVITELLA. About 1300 hours the same day, accompanied by GIOVANNETTI Elda, I returned to the village to search for the body of my husband. An hour later as we were approaching CIVITELLA, a man shouted to us from the ruins and asked us who we were. At first we were afraid and tried to hide but as this man repeated his question we answered him. He then told us to carry on into the village. Here, we found that the man was a Carabinieri from FLORENCE called TAVARNESI Delvo, whose family lived at CIVITELLA. I knew that my husband was dead and someone had told me that my brother-in-law LAMMIONI Luigi had been wounded and was in hospital. I went there and Luigi told me that all that was left of my husband was his hat and a pool of blood. He also told me that his wife Marietta and two daughters Giuliana, aged four years and Maria Luiga, aged two and a half years had been burnt alive in their home.

I left the hospital about 1500 hours and went to the spot where my husband had been shot. All I found was his hat and a pool of blood. On returning home I found three bodies lying outside the front door. One of the bodies was that of my brother MENONETTI Torquato, aged 28 years. The lower part of his body was burnt, he had a bullet wound through his heart, but I was able to recognise his features. The next body, that of the priest Don Alcide LAZZARI, was severely burnt, only his head, shoulders and arms remaining. I also recognised him by his features. The last body, that of CALDERELLI Ibo, was so severely burnt that his trousers and boots were the only means of identification. These, I was familiar with as he was my next door neighbour. My house had been completely destroyed by fire.

On visiting my parents' house I found the body of my father lying on the floor. He had several bullet wounds in the head and was lying in a pool of blood. This was too much for me so I returned to the orphanage at POGGIALI.

The following morning, about 0700 hours, I returned to CIVITELLA, to continue the search for the body of my husband. About 1030 hours BARTOLUCCI Rosa told me that my husband's body was in the blacksmith's shop. On entering the shop I saw the body of my husband which had several bullet wounds in the chest.

About 1130 hours, with the assistance of some other

women. I carried/....

/of some other

women, I carried the body to the church. I later obtained from Signora SABATINI some boards from which I made coffins for the following:- my husband, LAMMIONI Giovanni, my father MENCHETTI Luigi, brother MENCHETTI Torquato, brother-in-law LAMMIONI Dante, sister-in-law LAMMIONI Marietta, and niece LAMMIONI Giuliana, aged four years.

About 1700 hours on Saturday, 1st. July 1944, the body of my husband was put in a coffin and taken to the local cemetery on a handcart. There was no priest present at the funeral.

I returned to CIVITELLA with my family on Sunday, 2nd. July 1944, to try to recover some property from my home. We had only been there a few minutes, however, when some German soldiers arrived and told us to leave the village at once. I cannot describe these soldiers as I was too afraid to take much notice. That evening, I went to MARFIANO with my family where we remained until CIVITELLA was occupied by the British on, I think, 2nd August 1944.

I know nothing about the Germans who committed this atrocity although I think they were assisted by a few Italians in German uniform.

My husband was not a partisan and did not take any interest in their activities. He did not belong to any particular party, although he had once been a Fascist.

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

(Sgd) LAMMIONI Maria Assunta.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by MAGINI Livia, Interpreter, in the presence of Sgt Clewlow, both of 78 Section, 3IB, on Friday, 3rd. November, 1944, at CIVITELLA, AREZZO.

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

Magini Livia

MAGINI Livia.