

Civitella,  
Arezzo.

8 November 44.

STATEMENT OF :-

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| BONICHI Alba, | Female    |
| Civitella,    | 18 years. |
| Arezzo.       |           |

Who saith,

I was born in CIVITELLA and have lived here all my life. My father BONICHI Eliseo, aged 52 years, was killed by the Germans on 29 June 44. He was employed as a bricklayer and had lived here all his life.

On the evening of Sunday 18 June 44 about 2130 hours, I went outside the house to look for my father who was in the DOPOLAVORO CLUB. I was about one hundred metres from the club when I heard a burst of machine gun fire which appeared to come from the club. About the same moment there was a scramble in the club doorway and a few seconds later my father came running up to me. He said "Run home, someone has been shot in the club". Then I and my father ran home. He explained that German soldiers had been in the club at the time and that civilians had entered and fired automatic weapons but he did not stay to see who had been shot. We went to bed that night about 2330 hours.

We remained in CIVITELLA but my mother BONICHI Irene left at 0900 hours on Tuesday 20 June 44, and went to the farm of AGRESTI Giorgio, whose farm is about one and a half kilometres west of the village. My mother returned after about four days. About 1600 hours on 20 June 44, a lorry came to the village with about twelve or thirteen German soldiers on it. Amongst these there was one Officer, a Medical Officer. They collected the two bodies from the club then went to the cemetery. There were about twenty women beside myself who went to the cemetery to pay our respects. After the Germans had buried these bodies they fired rifles over the grave. The whole of this time the Officer stood beside me. He had stiff epaulettes on his jacket, with something on them but I cannot remember what. I am sure nevertheless that he was a captain. I could most certainly recognise him if I saw him again. We returned to the village about 1715 hours and I went straight home.

On Tuesday 27 June 44, two German soldiers came round the village asking for radio sets and typewriters. I saw these Germans from a distance. All I can say is that they were dressed the same as all German soldiers. They did not interfere with us at all.

On Thursday 29 June 44, I was in bed about 0700 hours when I was awakened by a lot of shouting and shooting. I looked out of my bedroom window and saw a lot of German soldiers in the street. They were all armed and some were firing their weapons in the street. I grabbed my clothes and did not bother to dress, ran downstairs where I met my father. Someone was by this time banging on the front door. My father decided to open it and told me to go into the garden. I went to the back

garden and waited/....

/to the back garden and waited a moment or so for my father but as he did not appear I went back into the house for him. I met him trying to come out of the house, blood was streaming from his mouth and it was only with great difficulty he managed to keep on his feet. I caught hold of my father and assisted him into the garden. He tried to talk to me all the time but I could not understand. It was only a mumble that came from his mouth. By this time of course, I was crying and hardly knew what to do. He collapsed as we got to the garden and I was trying to drag him when a German soldier appeared. He had come round behind the houses. This soldier fired two shots at my father but both missed. I shouted at this soldier that my father was already wounded and asked him to leave us alone. As I turned round to my father I saw that another German soldier was standing over him. He had of course come out of our house. He pointed a rifle at my father and shot him twice as he lay there helpless. I ran to my Dad and put his head on my lap but he died in a few seconds in my arms. The two shots had entered his chest in the region of his heart. The German soldier stood for a moment or two then walked away without saying a word. I then went into the house to get a sheet to put over my father. German soldiers were there and they were throwing things all over the place as though they were looking for something. They would not let me have a sheet for my father and chased me outside.

I then went into the garden and hid in some bushes. Here I found that a number of women and a man had already taken refuge, hoping to avoid the Germans. After a while a German soldier came looking around the garden. He eventually found us and he ordered the man BALUCANI Italo to go with him. Italo refused, then the soldier struck him several blows with his rifle and forced him to go. They went into my house and I heard what I thought was a pistol shot, then a burst of machine gun fire. About five minutes later, together with the other two women who were hiding, I decided to go into the house. The other women were, BALUCANI Eva, 52 years, the wife of Italo and his daughter Ida who is 25 years of age.

There was a German soldier in the house and he told us to go outside and saw us through the house into the front street. As we got outside the people were coming out of the church, and I looked for mother BONICHI Irene, 46 years, but could not see her. The German soldiers then came up and told me to leave the village. It was about this time that I got separated from the BALUCANIS. I left the village, going in the direction of POGGIALI, and as I got a little way down the road, I saw the bodies of two men, but was unable to recognise them as they were covered with blood. After I had gone about one kilometre down the road I met my mother. She asked about my father and I told her how he had died.

We then made our way to a wood which is about two and a half kilometres west of the village and we lived here for two days.

We returned to CIVITELLA on Saturday 1 July 44. I got back first at about 0630 hours, my mother at about 1000 hours the same morning. When I got back I found my father's body already in church. I also found that someone had made a coffin for him. I went to the church about 1000 hours in the morning and helped to put my father in his coffin. The rest of the day I spent helping people in the village.



/it was about 2000 hours the same evening when my father was taken to the cemetery on a handcart with two other bodies. My mother was too ill to attend but I went down. There was no priest present at the cemetery when we laid my father at rest.

That evening my mother and I went to POGGIALLI to the Orphanage where we remained for eight days. From there we went to MONTE SAN SAVINO where we remained until 17 July 44, when we returned to CIVITELLA which was then occupied by the British.

My father was not a Partisan and he had never assisted them in any way. He was not interested in politics or any political party. He had been a Fascist and was in the Italian Army until September 43, but after the collapse of MUSSOLINI he had not bothered about anything Fascist.

I cannot say much about the German s who came to the village on 29 June 44, as the majority wore a type of camouflage jacket and steel helmets. I was too afraid to take much notice. The man who shot my father was dressed differently. He had a jacket with buttons down the front and wore a large leather belt with a shoulder strap. He wore a large cloth cap with a big badge in the front and he was tall and dark. That is all I can remember.

This statement has been read over to me. It is correct and true. I herewith append my signature.

(Sgd.) BONICCHI Alba.

Statement written down in Italian and signature witnessed by DI DUCA Bragia, interpreter, in the presence of Sgt. CLEMLOW, both of 78 Section S.I.B on Wednesday 8th November, 1944 at CIVITELLA, AREZZO.

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

DI DUCA Bragia.