

About 6-30 p.m., on Sunday, 20th December, 1936, in company with Superintendent Brett, D.C.C. of Chichester, I went to Mill Farm, Selsey, which is occupied by Mr. Wakely. I there saw Mde. Schmeder. I questioned her as to her arrival in this country and asked her to account for landing at Selsey, she explained that she took off from Villacoublay, Paris, in her plane about 12-30 p.m. that day for a flight, she had got up to about 2,000 meters and flew towards the sea, had got lost in the clouds and whilst still flying ran out of petrol, but had hoped to land safely. She further explained that she was surprised to learn that she had landed in England.

Later the same evening we went to a field west of Mill Farm where I saw a Morane 2 seater monoplane, it was facing south, the undercarriage, propeller, engine struts and engine cowling were damaged. I did not make a thorough search of the inside of the machine owing to the darkness. I then returned to Mill Farm where I again interviewed Mde. Schmeder, in answer to questions she said she was the holder of a French Pilot's Instructors Licence No. 028, issued at Paris. I examined her International Log Book but there was no entry for flight to England that day, I asked her why and she explained that she had no intention of coming to England when she took off in France.

I also asked her if she had any other passengers in the machine when she left the aerodrome, I asked her this three different times and she said, "No". She produced a certificate of Airworthiness No. 03287 which showed that the plane had been re-examined and passed at Paris on 20th September, 1936.

About 3 p.m. on Monday, 21st December, I saw Mde. Schmeder, she was crying and said to me "I got out of the plane with the boy, a lot of people came and I got into the machine again. I started it and flew up. I was going to take him to the road. The papers tell lies".

At 7-35 p.m. the same day I saw her again. She said, "I did not intend to shoot him, I was going to shoot myself. I helped him from the plane and when I saw the people coming I left him, started the engine myself and flew away, I wanted to go high over the sea and drop and drown myself. He was quite all right when I left him. He told me I would not start the plane and I said, I must, I must. I knocked my head with the tool hard, the hammer".

Mde. Schmeder was greatly distressed when I first saw her and her condition was the same the whole of the time until she left by train for London. At 9 a.m. on Wednesday, 23rd December, 1936, she was handed over to Det. Inspr. Hatherill of New Scotland Yard, and conveyed to Chichester by Supt. Brett, D.C.C., later the same day I made arrangements for the removal of the plane. It was dismantled and removed to Yapton Aero Club, Ford, Sussex, under the supervision of Det. Const. Eagle.

(Sgd.) J.R. Widdicombe.
Det. Insp.
24. 12.36.

John:

New Scotland Yard.
6th. September 1937.

Statement of Sybil Maude Hill, Woman police constable, 54'A' Division,
Metropolitan Police, who saith:-

I accompanied Detective Inspector Hatherill on the 23rd. December 1936 to Mill Farm, Selsey, when Madame Schmeder was arrested and travelled with them to London. She was in my custody when taken from Bow street Police Court to Holloway Prison that day. On the 30th. December 1936 and the 5th. and 6th. January 1937, I escorted her between Holloway Prison and Bow Street Police Court and also was with her on her journey from Holloway to Boulogne on the 25th. January 1937. During this time Madame Schmeder appeared to be suffering from nervous shock and complained of insomnia but on no occasion did she even hint to me that she might be pregnant. She certainly had no miscarriage whilst in my custody.

(Signed) Sybil Maude Hill.
Woman Police Constable 54 'A'
Warrant Number 292.