Swissair news

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UNDER SUSPICION

by

WILLY

One day, about four or five years ago, soon after our return from a holiday on the Continent, my telephone rang at about 10 o'clock in the morning. "This is", said a crisp voice, "Chief Superintendent X of the Criminal Investigation Department. We think you may be able to help us with some enquiries we are making. When would it be convenient for me to come round to see you?" And then, as an afterthought: "You do own a car with the registration number SUV 16, don't you?" "Yes", I said, "have I been speeding or what is this all about?" Whereupon the crisp voice replied: "You do not seem to understand. We are the Criminal Investigation Department and are not concerned with trifles like speeding." This sounded most ominous. An appointment was fixed for 5 o'clock in the evening, which at least proved to me that the C.I.D. did not look on me as likely to elope between the time of their telephone call and the moment fixed for the interview.

I wondered all day what the C.I.D. might want from me and looked out of my window a few minutes before 5 p.m. At 5 sharp one of those black Wolseley cars drew up in front of the house, from which emerged a well dressed slim gentleman with a short clipped moustache, bowler hat and all. He was very friendly, when I showed him in and commented on the sun tan I still had from my holidays, on the weather and on the nice room we were in. We each lit a cigarette and then it suddenly came: was I, he quite casually asked, in a position to account for my movements on 7th September, a date about three weeks back. That was a very easy one for me, as I was still on the Continent on that date and was easily able to prove, by showing the stamped entry in my passport, that I had come back to the U.K. on 10th September. However, knowing this and knowing that I could produce my passport at any moment by just opening a drawer, I did not do this at once. I now really wanted to know what this was all about.

Gradually it transpired that on 7th September a woman of ill repute had been murdered in a lane somewhere in Hertfordshire and that two small boys had seen a car in the vicinity, the registration number of which started with SU. That meant that the police had to go through all the SUA's, SUB's, and so on and on, tens of thousands of them. As my car's number was SUV 16, I was, quite naturally, on the list of possible suspects too. However, when I told the Chief Superintendent that I was not in the habit of murdering women of ill repute in Hertfordshire lanes, he said laughingly: "I didn't think you were, really." I showed him my passport, whereupon he drew up a protocol, copying the entries in my passport, which I duly signed. That was that and it became time for a cup of tea. My visitor then told me how incredibly difficult it was to conduct such an investigation and how differently people reacted when he had to call on them. One good lady, the wife of a colleague of his he had to ask the same questions, became very irate and turned, as he told me, very sour indeed. As for myself, I had not felt insulted in the very least. Why should I? The man was doing his duty and doing it, moreover, efficiently and courteously. But, as far as I know, the man who did commit this murder in a lane in Hertfordshire has still not been caught. I changed cars soon afterwards, but not, I should add, because SUV 16 had in any way any sinister meaning for me. On the contrary: I have many happy memories connected with it . . .

SWISSAIR NEWS

Another Caravelle for Swissair

Swissair have leased a Caravelle jet from Air France for a two-year period and the aircraft is now operating on European services. The Caravelle — the carrier's eighth — is flying in Swissair markings and its registration is HB–ICR.

Last October Swissair received its fourth DC–8 — a fan-engined series 53 — for its North Atlantic routes. In February a Convair 990A Coronado was delivered, bringing Swissair's Coronado deliveries to eight. Two of the 100-seater fan-jets are leased to Scandinavian Airlines System.

Please Note

The new Trident has been hailed as a "genuine" 600-m.p.h. aircraft and several newspapers have either stated or inferred that it was the first airliner in this class.

For several months Convair 990A Coronados have been regularly taking over some of Swissair's flights between London-Zurich and London-Geneva. They will be on these routes even more regularly from late spring, in place of Caravelles.

The high-speed cruise figure for this aircraft is more than 620 m.p.h. There is unlikely to be a faster airliner than this before the Concord takes its bow.

FORTY YEARS AGO: FLIGHT TO PERSIA (IRAN) BY WALTER MITTELHOLZER

On 18th December 1924, the Swiss flyer Walter Mittelholzer made his first transcontinental long distance flight, which brought him in 71 hours of flying time from Zurich to Bushir on the Persian Gulf. He flew a Junkers plane A 20 type with a BMW motor of 250 h.p. and made the 11,000 km. flight without any mishap. The Swiss Museum of Transport in Lucerne has in its collection in the Section Aviation a valuable memento piece from this very popular Swiss flyer: It was in the 'thirties when Mittelholzer was flying a pursuit plane from Milan (Italy) to Duebendorf (Swld.) right over the Alps. On the flight in heavy fog the plane crashed into a mountainside in the Glaris Alps, but Mittelholzer, though badly hurt, succeeded to finally reach the village of Matt in the Sernftal where he received aid. The 120 h.p. "Rhone Motor" engine of the ruined plane with a part of the split propeller was later taken from the mountain and can now be seen in the Aviation Hall.

(Swiss Transport Museum.)