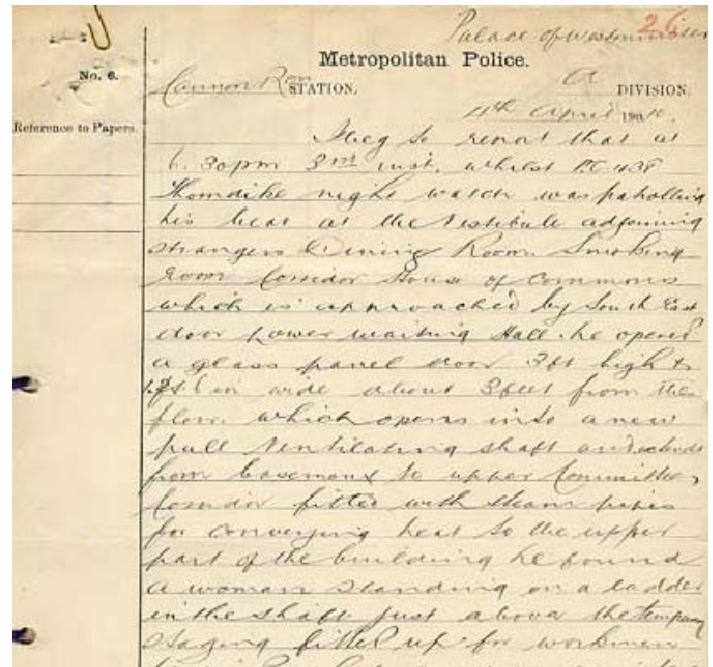


Document G: Actions

Police Report: Emily Davison found in ventilation shaft, 4th April 1910.

Emily Wilding Davison (1872-1913), was a militant member of the WSPU, which she joined in November 1906. She was arrested several times for various offences, such as window breaking. Whilst in prison she went on hunger strike for periods lasting a few days to several months. This document refers to an incident when she was arrested for hiding in a ventilation shaft in the House of Commons. When asked what she was doing there by the Policeman who discovered her, she replied 'I want to ask a question in the House of Commons'.

It was not the last time that Emily's name appeared in Police reports and other documents within this file refer to her: on the 19th April she is reported for having thrown a hammer through the division lobby window, a document of the 30th mentions the result of her trial, and on June 26th she is found on a staircase near the Reading Room of the Commons.



Emily Davison died on 8 June 1913, as the result of fatal injuries she had received 4 days earlier. She had rushed onto the race course at Epsom during the Derby and had attempted to hold the Bridle of the King's horse.

Palace of Westminster

Metropolitan Police

Cannon Row Station 4th April 1910

I beg to report that at 6.30pm 3rd inst. whilst PC 438 Horndike night watch was patrolling his beat at the vestibule adjoining Strangers Dining Room, Smoking Room Corridor, House of Commons which is approached by South East door lower waiting hall. He opened a glass panel door 3 ft high x 1ft 6" in wide about 3 ft from the floor which opens into a new pull ventilation shaft and extends from basement to upper Committee Corridor fitted with steam pipes for conveying heat to the upper part of the building. He found a woman standing on a ladder in the shaft just above the temporary staging fitted up from workmen. He said 'What are you doing here?' she said 'I am a Suffragette and my ambition is to get into the House to ask a question'. PC asked else if anyone else was in the shaft, she said 'No, I am entirely on my own'. The PC called me. I asked her how she got into the building, she said I came into the House by Victoria Tower about 3pm on Saturday when the House was open to visitors. I asked her why she went into the shaft, she said 'I want to ask a question in the House of Commons tomorrow'. Her hat and jacket were found on top of a ladder in the shaft about 10ft from the doorway in which she had entered. Her face and hands were black and her clothing very dirty, she asked to have a wash which she had. She then gave the name of **Emily Davison**, 4 Clement's Inn, Strand, teacher. I told her she would be detained until her statement proved to be verified and accompanied her to Cannon Row Station where she was detained until 9.30pm and liberated.

The following was found written in pencil on a window pane '3rd 1910. Patience 36 hours here. Will they ever go. I am so thirsty. Nearly 36 hours have gone and I found water Thank God E W Davison April 10 Rebellion against Tyrants in obedience to God.'....

Source:

Police Report: Emily Davison found in ventilation shaft, 4th April 1910. (HC/SA/SJ/10/12/26)

Parliamentary Archives (www.parliament.uk)

Document G: Actions

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