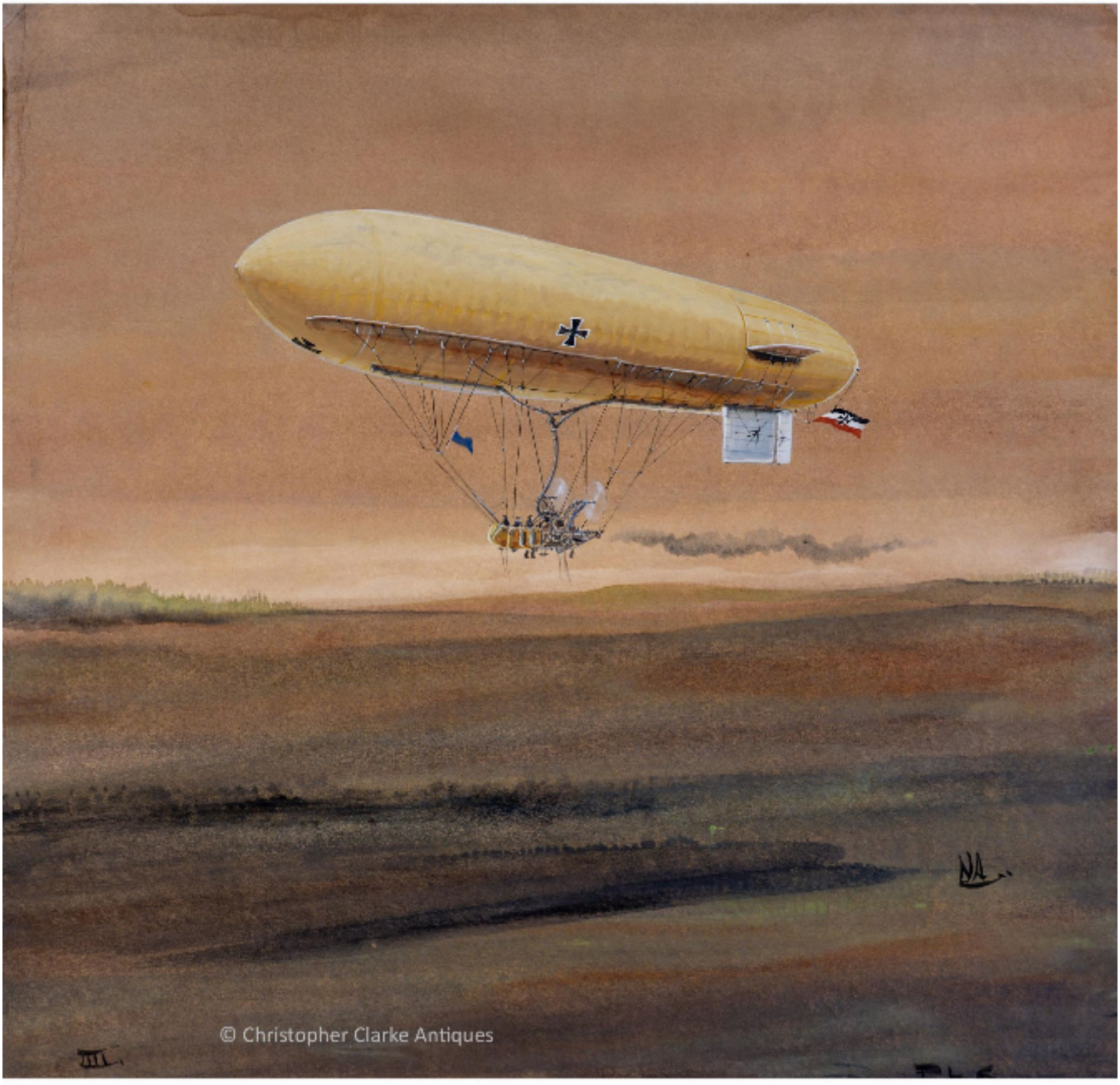
Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture & Travel Items

The German Airship PL6 by Norman Arnold

Norman Arnold

Sold



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REF: 83956

Height: 30.47 cm (12")

Width: 31.48 cm (12.4")

Description

A watercolour and gouache on board study of the German PL6, the 6th Parseval semi-rigid airship by Royal Flying Corp officer Norman Arnold.

The whole of the back of the board is covered with pencil notes and drawings by Arnold, giving detail on the PL6. This suggests that the illustration was done for intelligence purposes on enemy aircraft. The linear drawing to the top indicates the positions of the air valve, air balloonets etc. Other drawings show the different parts of the gondola from the propellor and motor to the ballast bags and pulleys. The motor of 100-140 HP, speed of M.P.H. 34 and ceiling of 4000 feet are noted. is given and that the 'Unique Feature Was Sliding Rig' with an illustration showing the nose in 3 different positions whilst the gondola remains horizontal. There is even a drawing of the pilots instruments on the dashboard. The title of 'German Airship P.L.6., Navy .9.5 - 18, Training Section Tondern' along with 'Designer 'Major August Von Parseval' are written to the centre of the back of the board. In July 1918, 7 Sopwith Camels launched from HMS Furious attacked and destroyed the German's main airship base at Tondern (now Tonder, Denmark).

The Parseval airships were built by the Luft-Fahrzeug-Gesellschaft company. The PL6's first flight was in June 1910 and could take 4 crew and 12 passengers. The PL6 was used commercially and for pilot training before the war. It was rebuilt after crashing in 1912 to update to the specifications of the latest PL12. Before the war a number of Parseval airships were sold to other countries including Britain.

The painting is initialled 'NA.' to front towards the bottom right where 'PL6' is noted. The bottom left corner is inscribed 'III'. The amount of information to the back of this picture is fascinating. Although it is seen now as a well painted illustration of an airship, it reminds us that the picture was first made for very practical purposes. Circa 1918.

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