



WILLIAM EARL JOHNS

(Bengeo, 1893 - London, 1968)

'1916' - *Combat between British and German fighters*

dated, lower right: 1916

watercolour and bodycolour

240 x 340 mm

Provenance:

Phillips Ipswich, September 25, 1997, Pictures & Works of Art including the Baird Collection, lot 480

Dating from 1916, this drawing of a World War I dogfight by W.E. Johns, author of the *Biggles* novels, is among the earliest depictions of flying and aerial combat.

Commissioned into the royal flying corps, in 1918 Johns was shot down over the Western Front.

In 1932 he launched the magazine *Popular Flying*, in which his Biggles stories, eventually to number close to a hundred, first appeared.