

## F/Lt William White DFC –An Artist in the RCAF

A resident of Ottawa, Thomas Ritchie served as a navigator with 433 Squadron RCAF. During 2013, he attended an estate sale where he noticed a number of pencil drawings and recognized their quality and that their subject was Bomber Command. Mr. Ritchie did some research, determining that the artist was F/Lt William A.T. White and locating documents related to his wartime service. After confirming their significance, Mr. Ritchie donated the drawings to the museum. It is not known whether the drawings were completed during F/Lt White's wartime service or after his return to Canada. Artwork such as this, created by someone who actually served with Bomber Command, is both rare and very special.

The twenty drawings are arranged in a way that tell the story of a Bomber Command operation. The Lancaster in most, but not all, of the drawings is 'UM-Q'.



F/Lt William Andrew Telfer White DFC enlisted in the RCAF at Vancouver on 20 May 1942 and was posted to 3 Manning Depot, 6 EFTS, and 4 SFTS. He received his pilot's wings on 28 May 1943 and went on to fly Lancasters with 626 Squadron (Squadron Code 'UM'), completing thirty-three combat operations.

F/Lt White was awarded the DFC, the citation reading,

"Flight Lieutenant White has attacked some of the enemy's most heavy defended and important targets in Germany including Stuttgart, Essen, Cologne and Dusseldorf. He has always displayed a fine fighting spirit and has pressed home his attacks regardless of enemy opposition. On one occasion in December 1944, following an attack against Dusseldorf, his aircraft was attacked by a Messerschmitt 109. During the ensuing combat extensive damage was sustained by his bomber. Nevertheless, with great skill this officer manoeuvred into a position which enabled his gunners to destroy the enemy fighter. The homeward flight was accomplished with great difficulty but Flight Lieutenant White's coolness and superb airmanship brought the crippled bomber safely back to the United Kingdom where he made a masterly landing."

An RCAF press release dated 13 January 1945 reads,

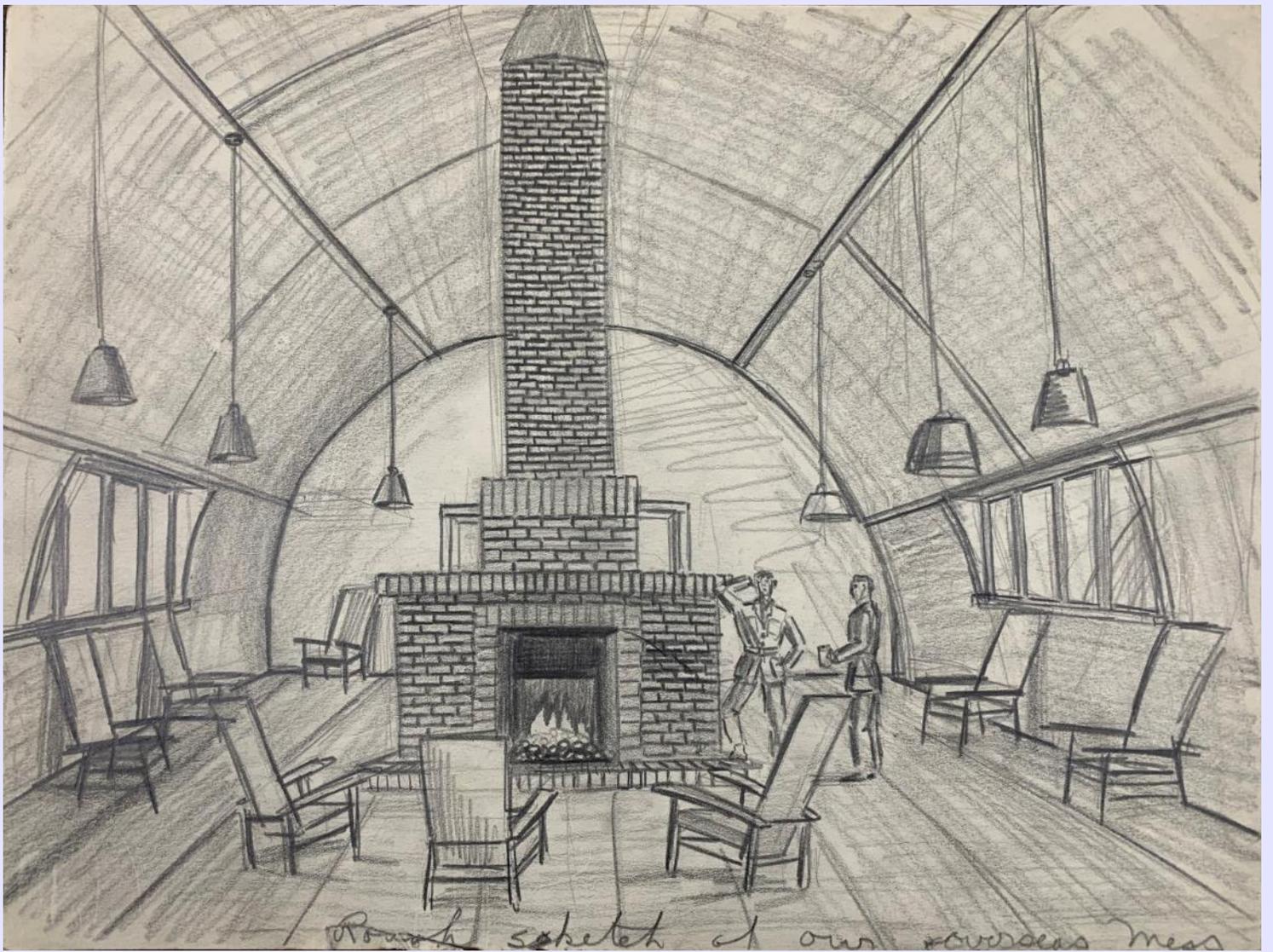
"An RAF Lancaster, "X for X ray" had been badly damaged and had both its turrets wrecked when it's two gunners, Sergeant G.H. Hopkins of North Ireland and F/S R.J. Jones of Kindersley, Saskatchewan, brought down a Messerschmitt 109. This was on the return journey after a recent attack on Osterfeld.

"Sergeant Hopkins was the first to sight the Me.109. It was dead astern and clear in the moonlight. He warned his pilot, F/O W.A.T. White of (2568 Trimble Street) Vancouver, B.C. The ME then approached to within 500 yards, pursuing steadily and firing at intervals. Both gunners returned the enemy's fire, but the hydraulic mechanism of their turrets was wrecked and the windows of the mid-upper turret were shattered. The fuselage was riddled with holes made by cannon shells and bullets, the trimming tabs and elevators shot away and the port outer engine stopped. Sergeant Hopkins was wounded in the back and the Flight Engineer's face was cut and his arm injured.

"The Hun got ready for the kill. He broke away and then flew to within about 50 yards to the starboard of the Lancaster. Sergeant Hopkins and F/S Jones in the mid-upper turret saw their chance and swung their guns round by hand. They poured bullets into the enemy at close range and saw pieces break away from its starboard wing, and its fins and rudder. The ME burst into flames and went straight down. Almost immediately afterwards, the Lancaster crew saw a violet explosion on the ground.

"F/O White piloted "X of X Ray" to an airfield in the South of England. He made a rough landing due to the aircraft's condition, but none of the crew were hurt and the two wounded men were taken to hospital, where they are now recovering quickly."



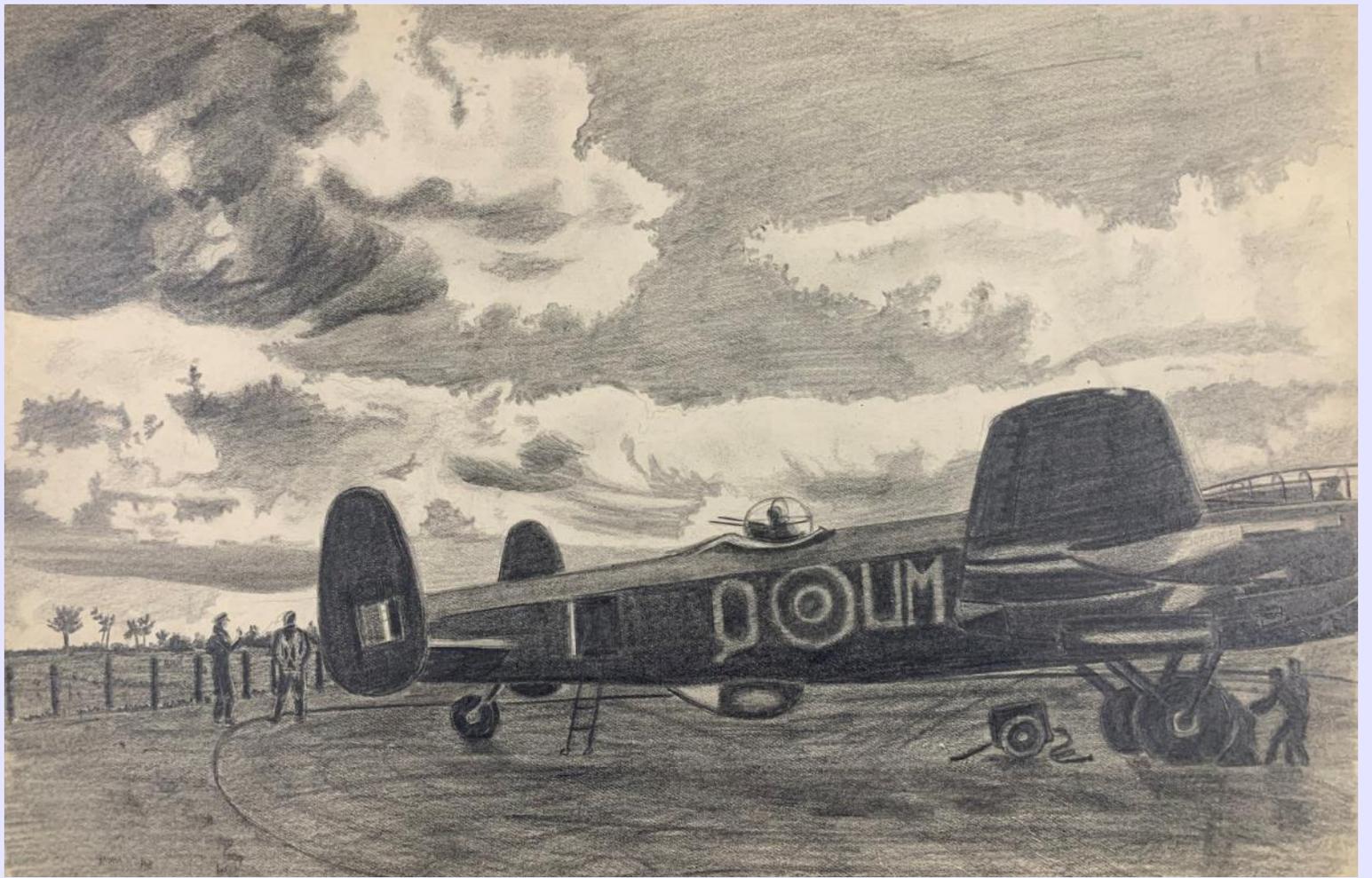


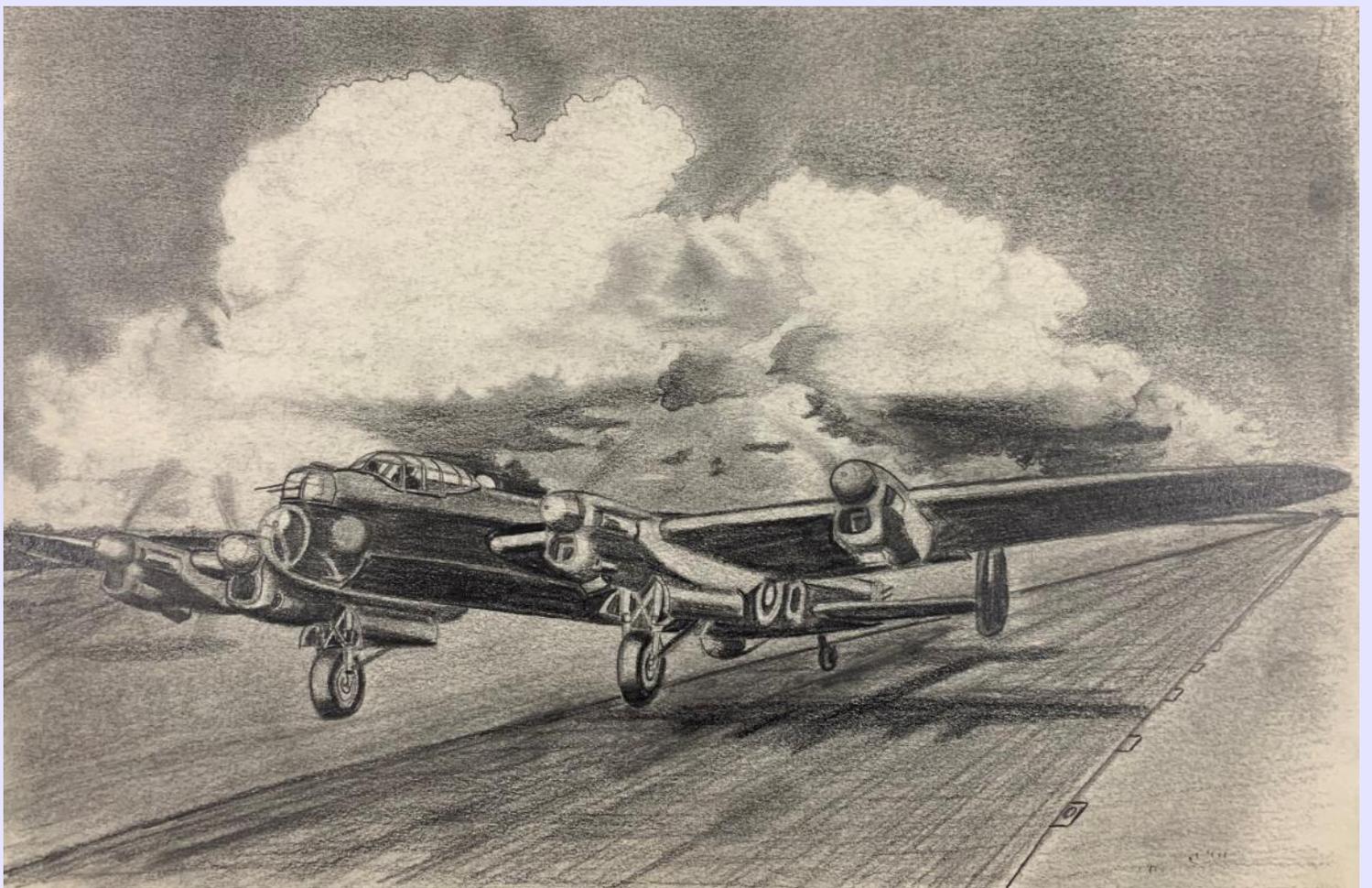
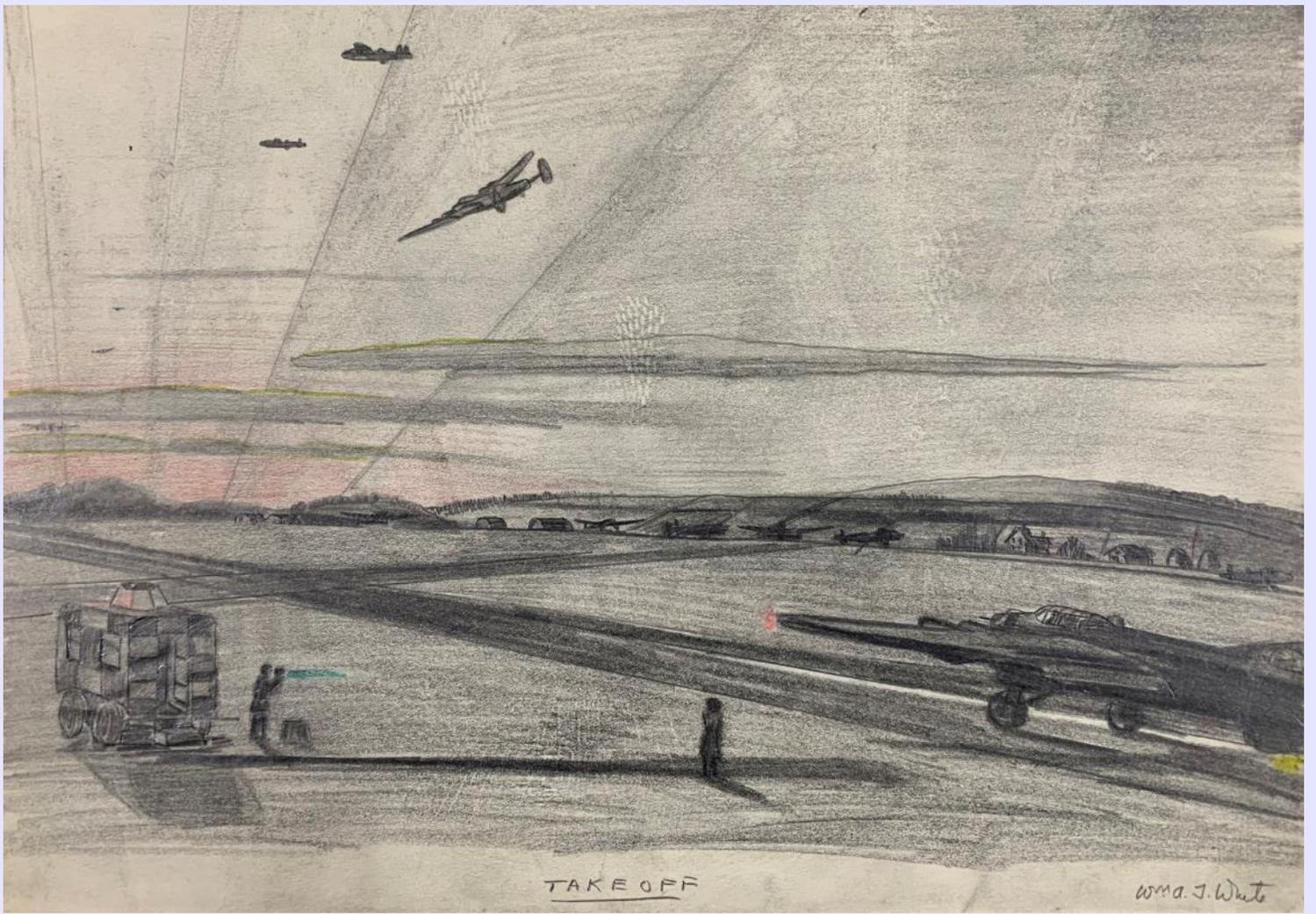
Rough sketch of our mess hall

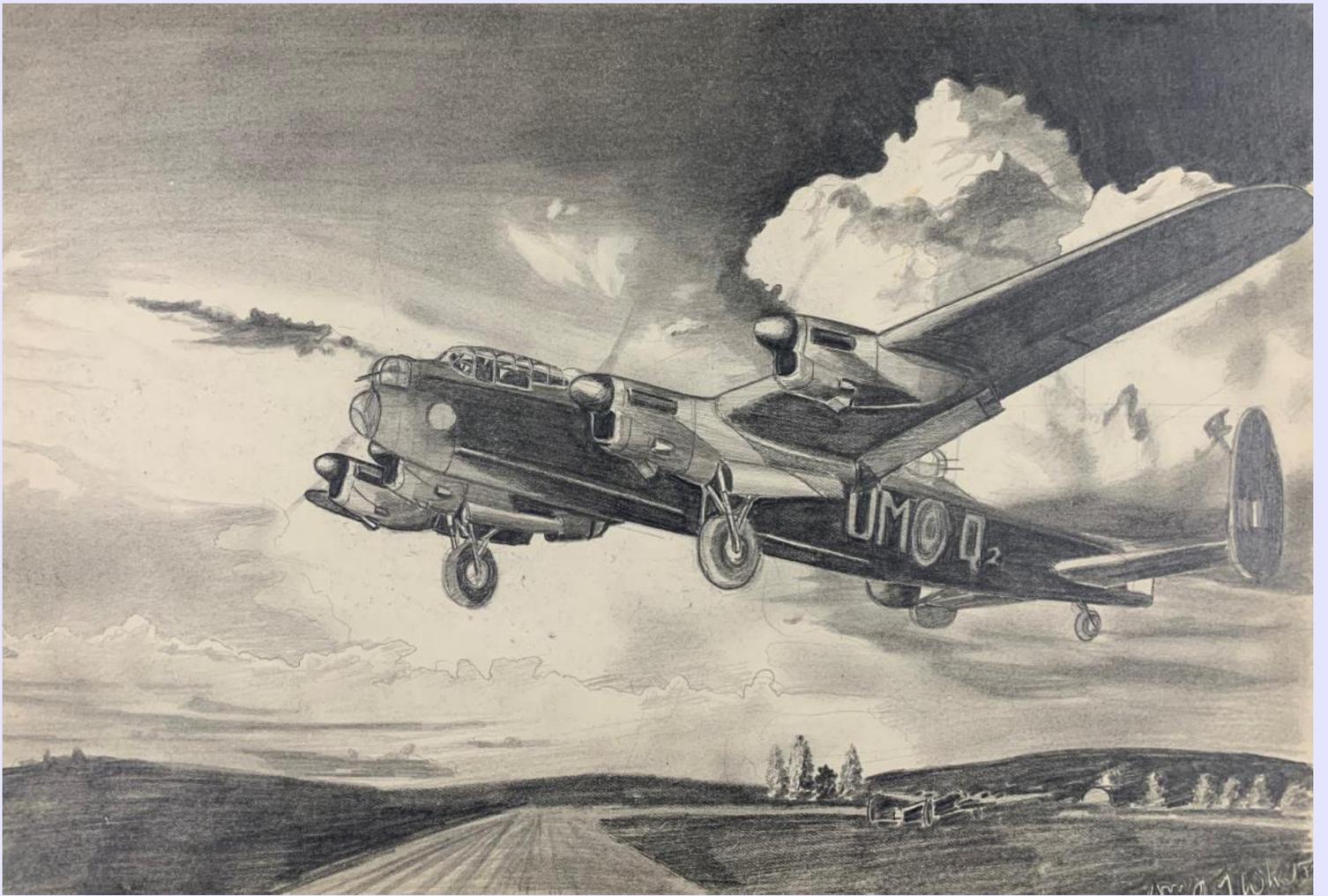


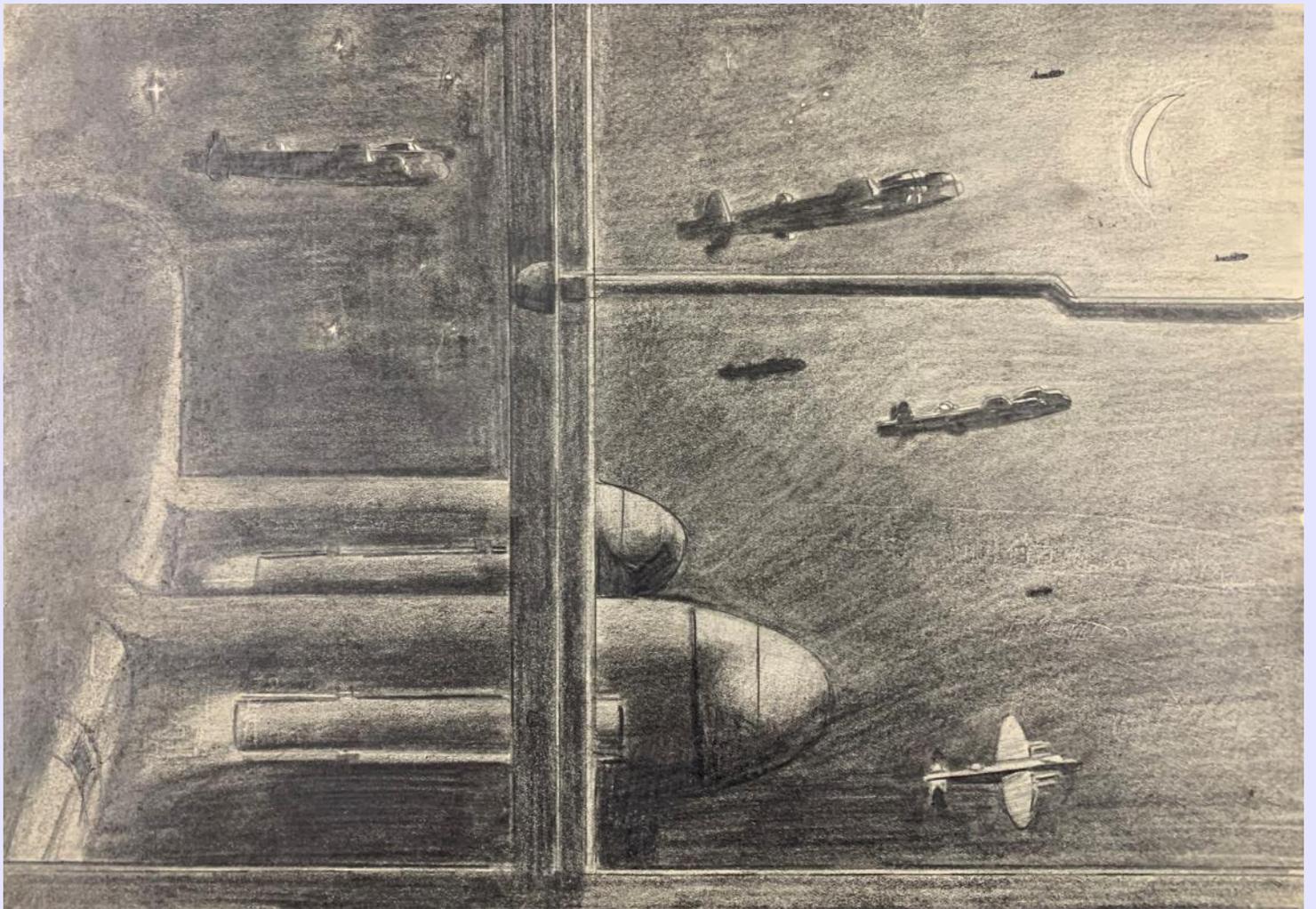
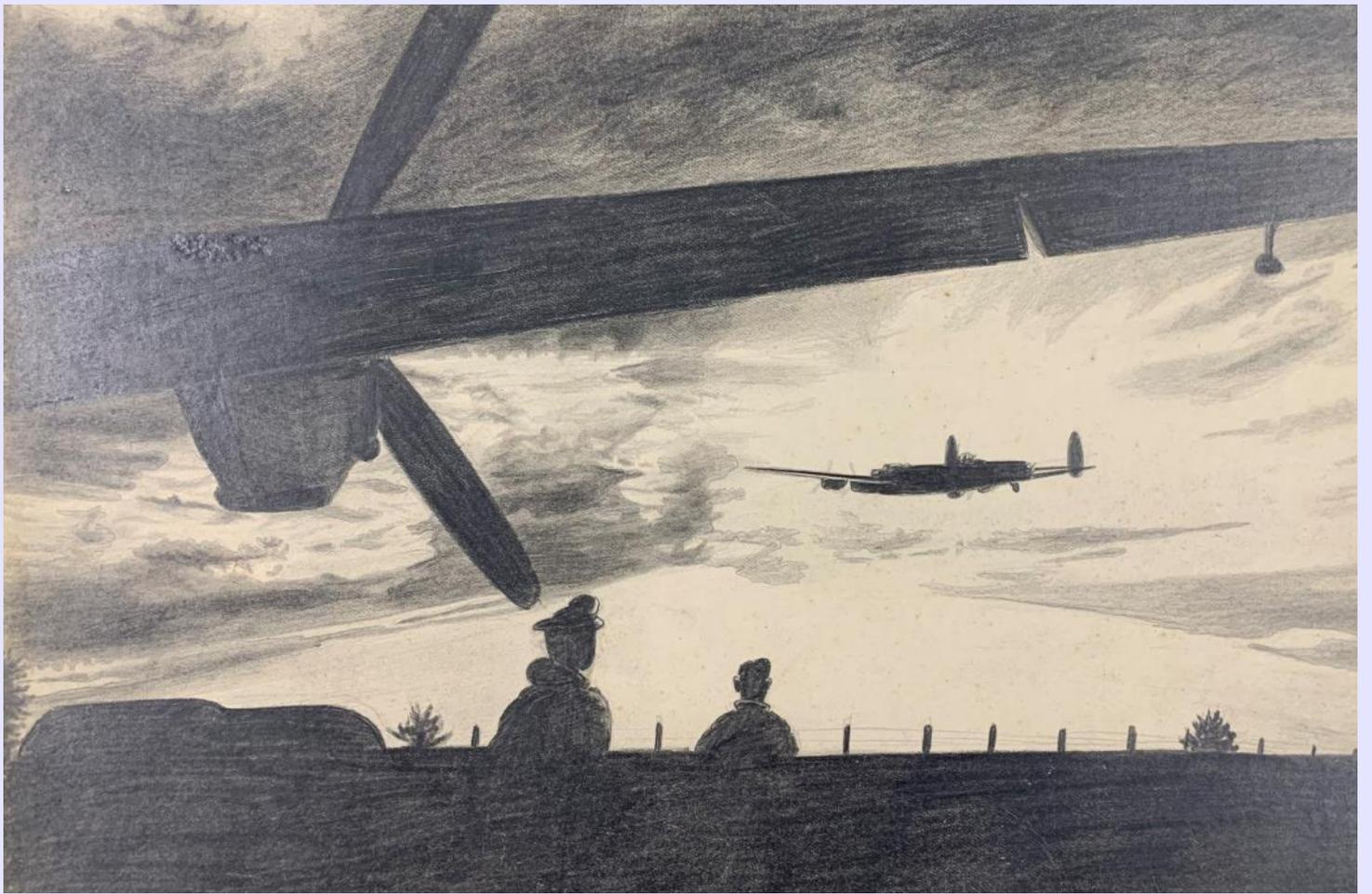
Crew room

was white

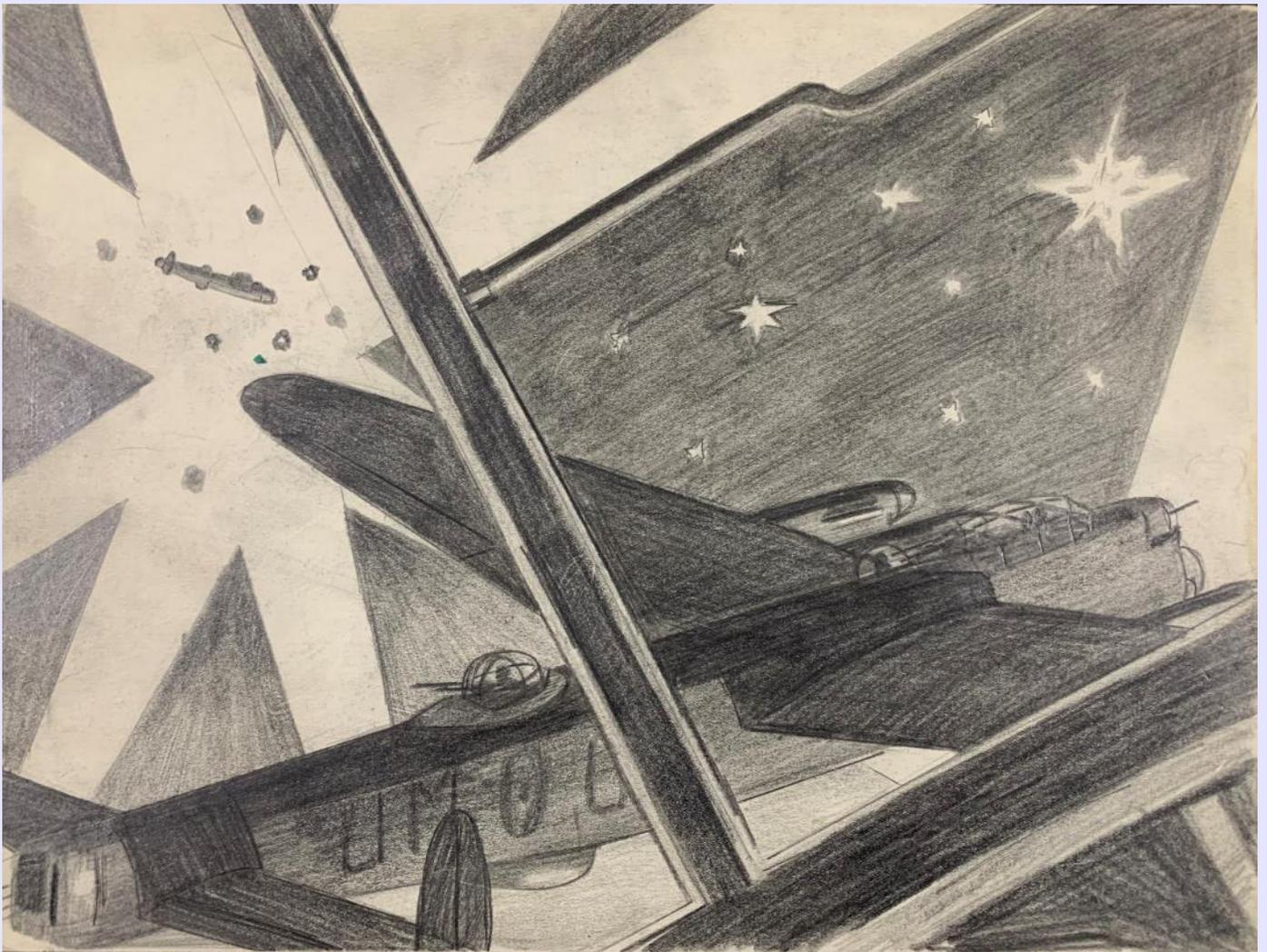


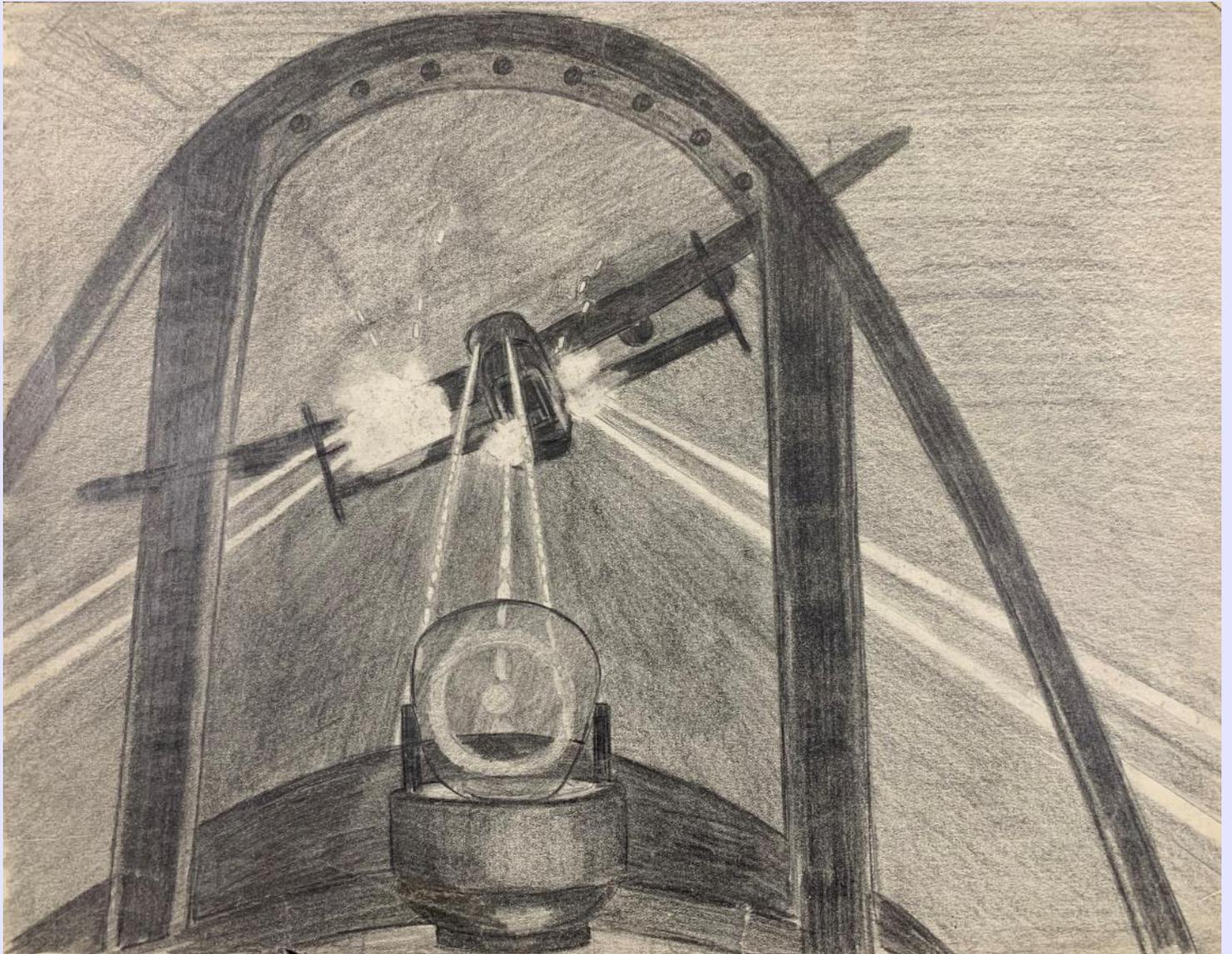
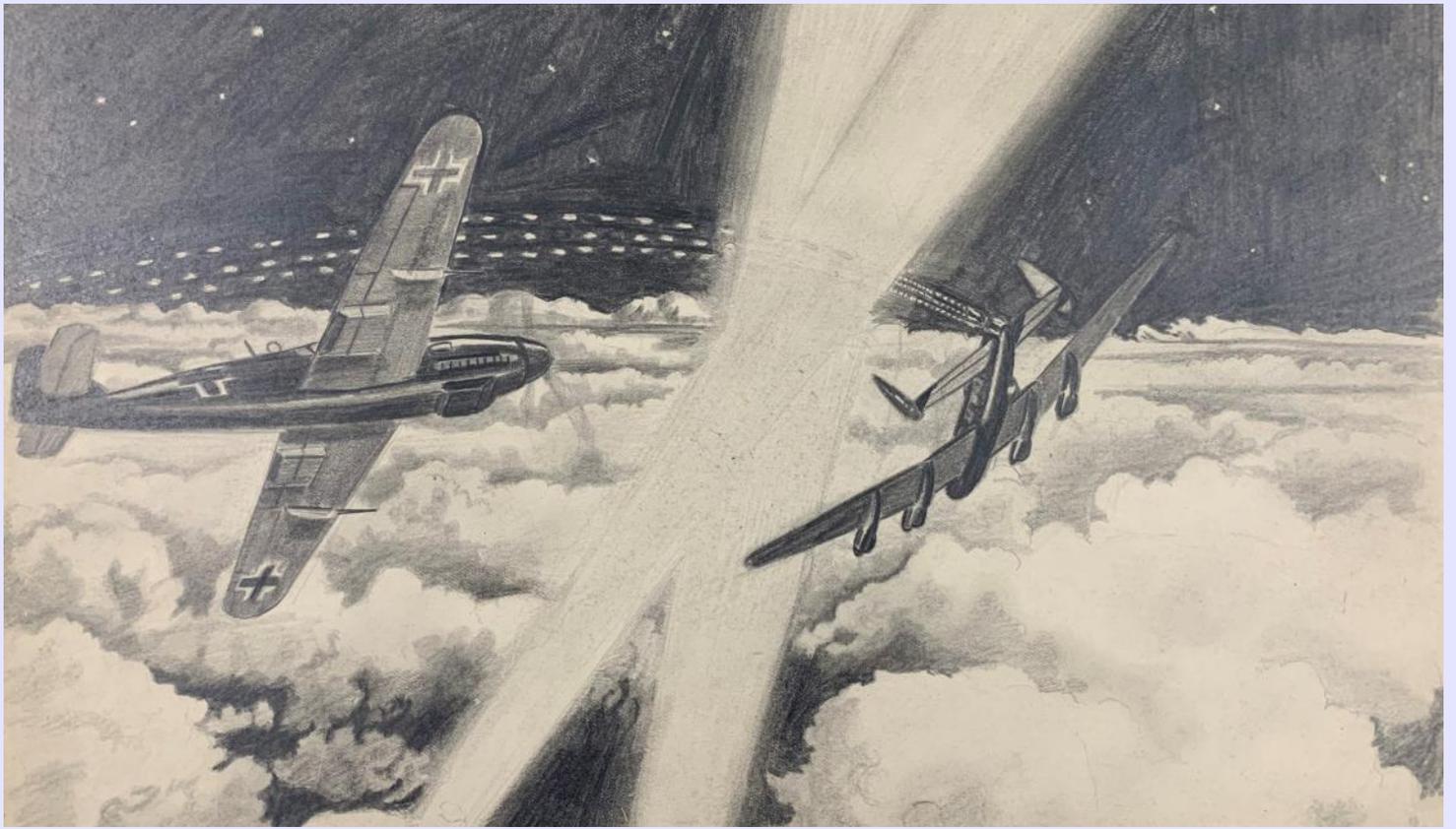


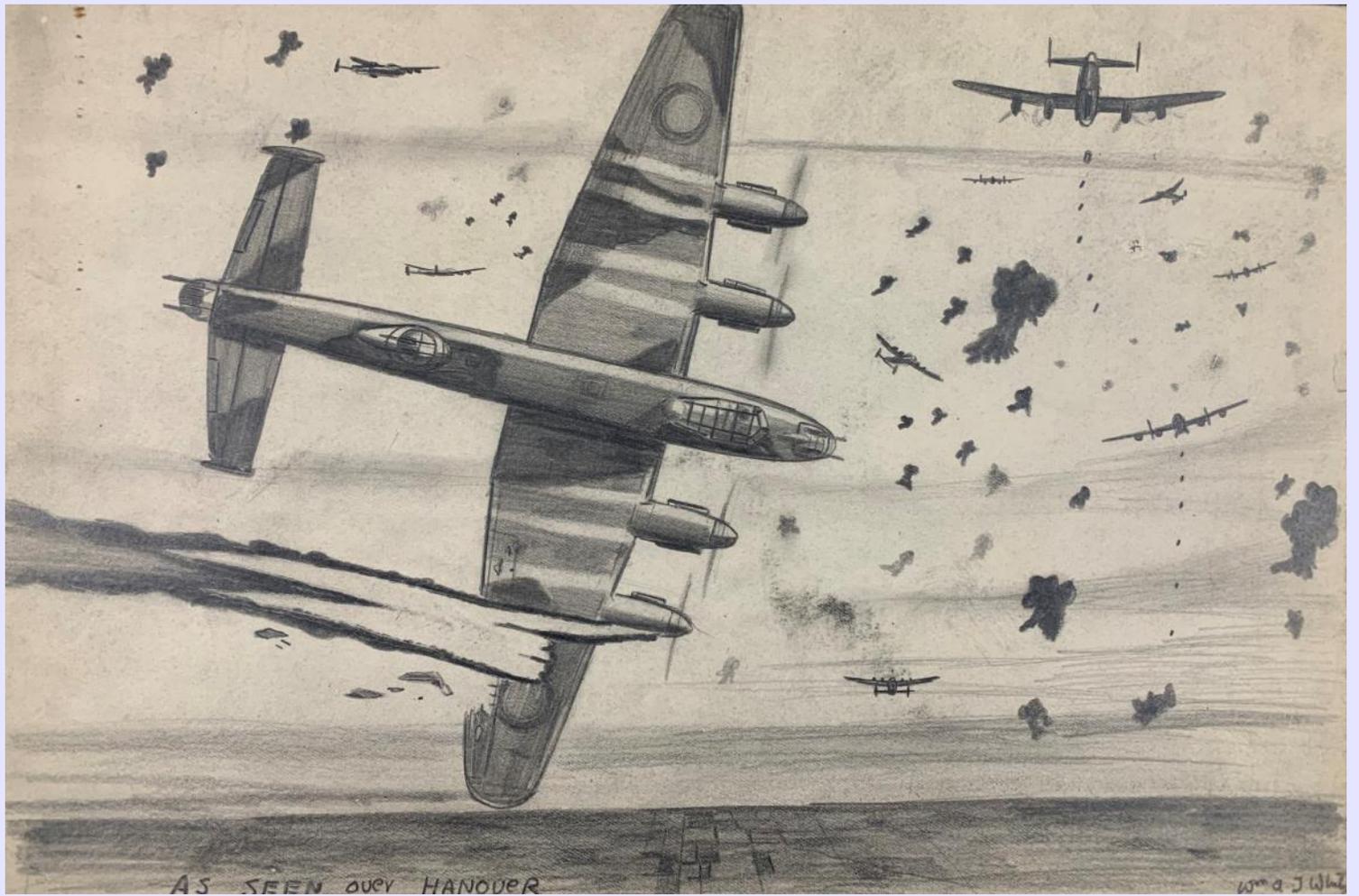












AS SEEN OVER HANOVER

Wm J White



ENGLISH COAST

Wm J White

