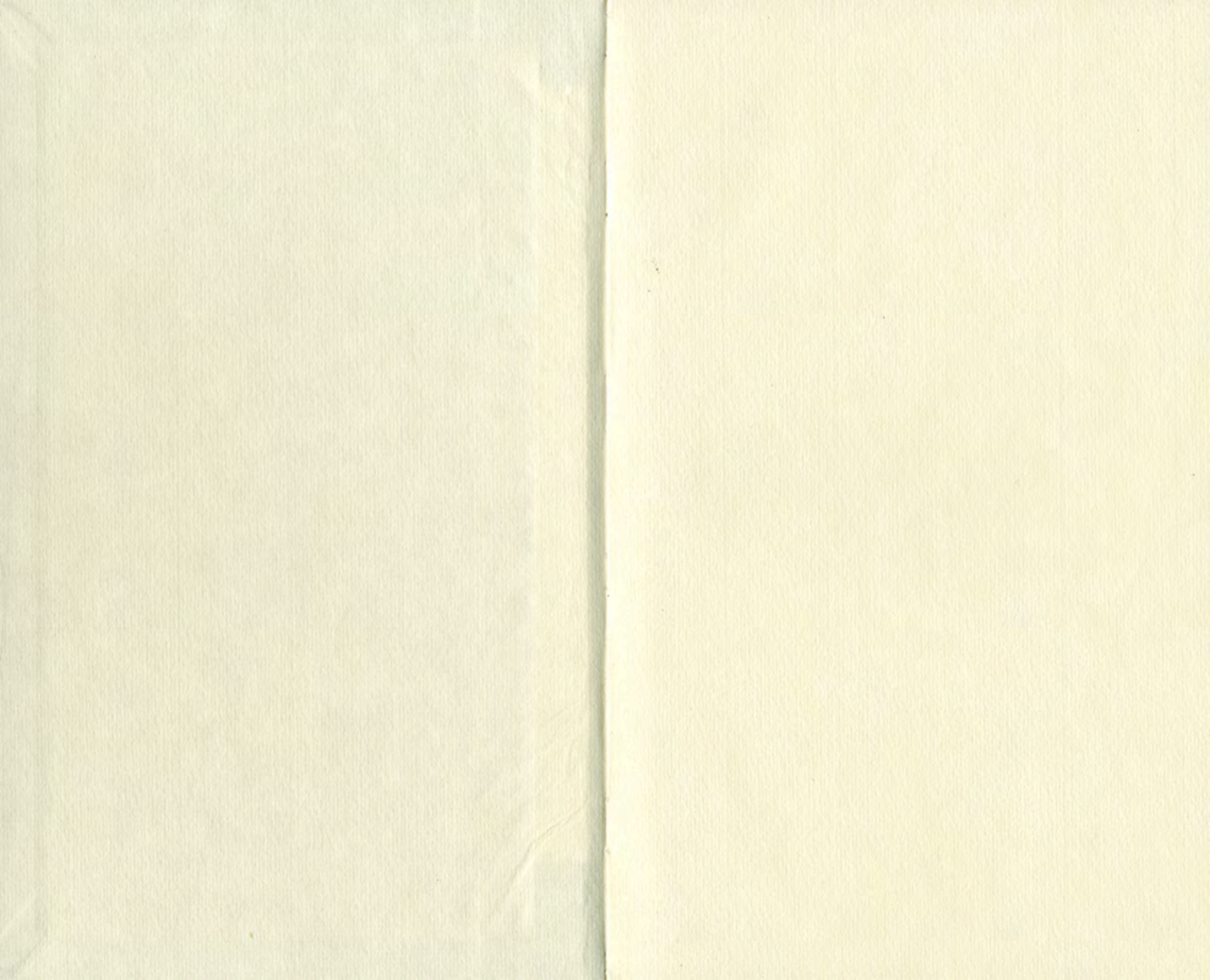
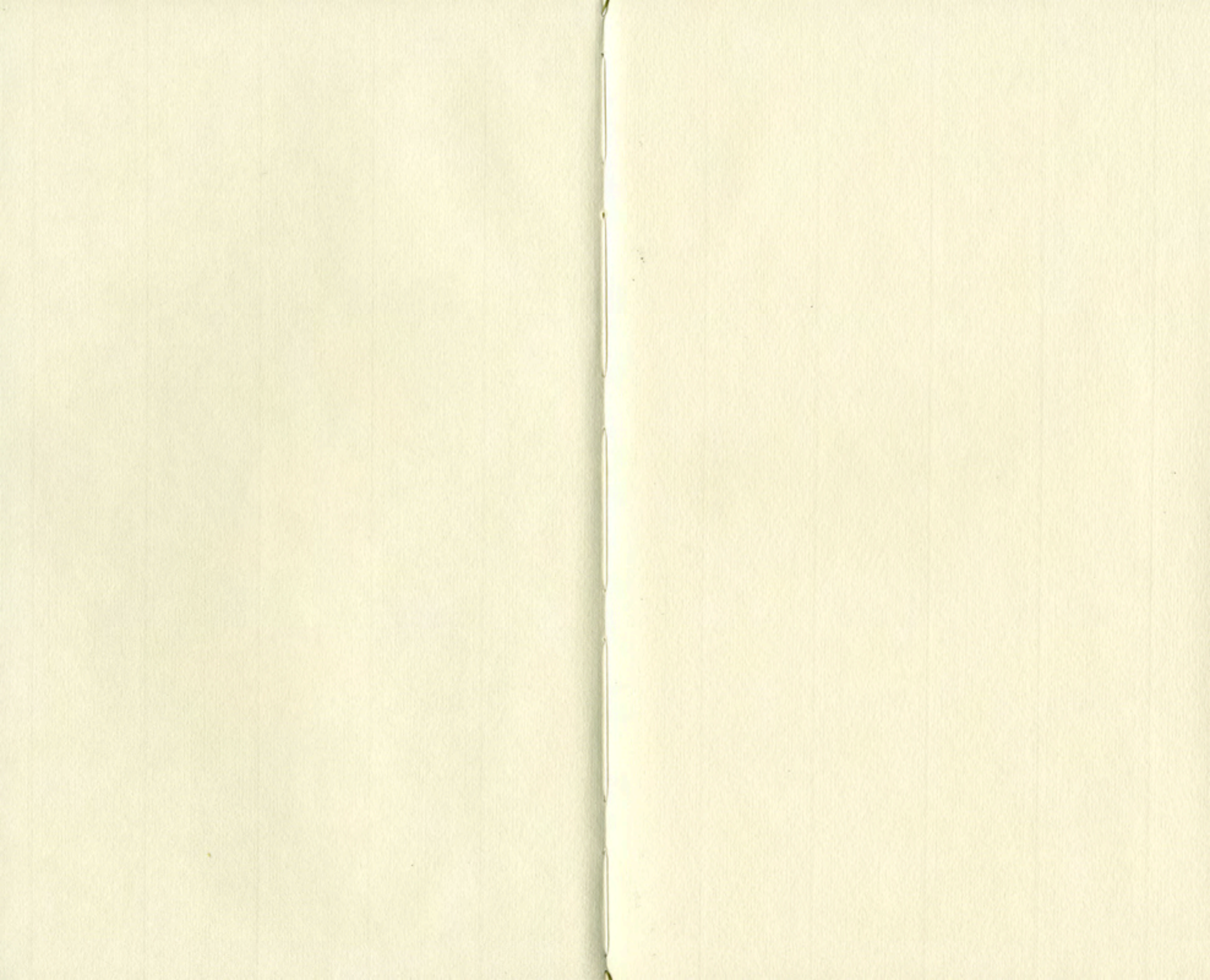


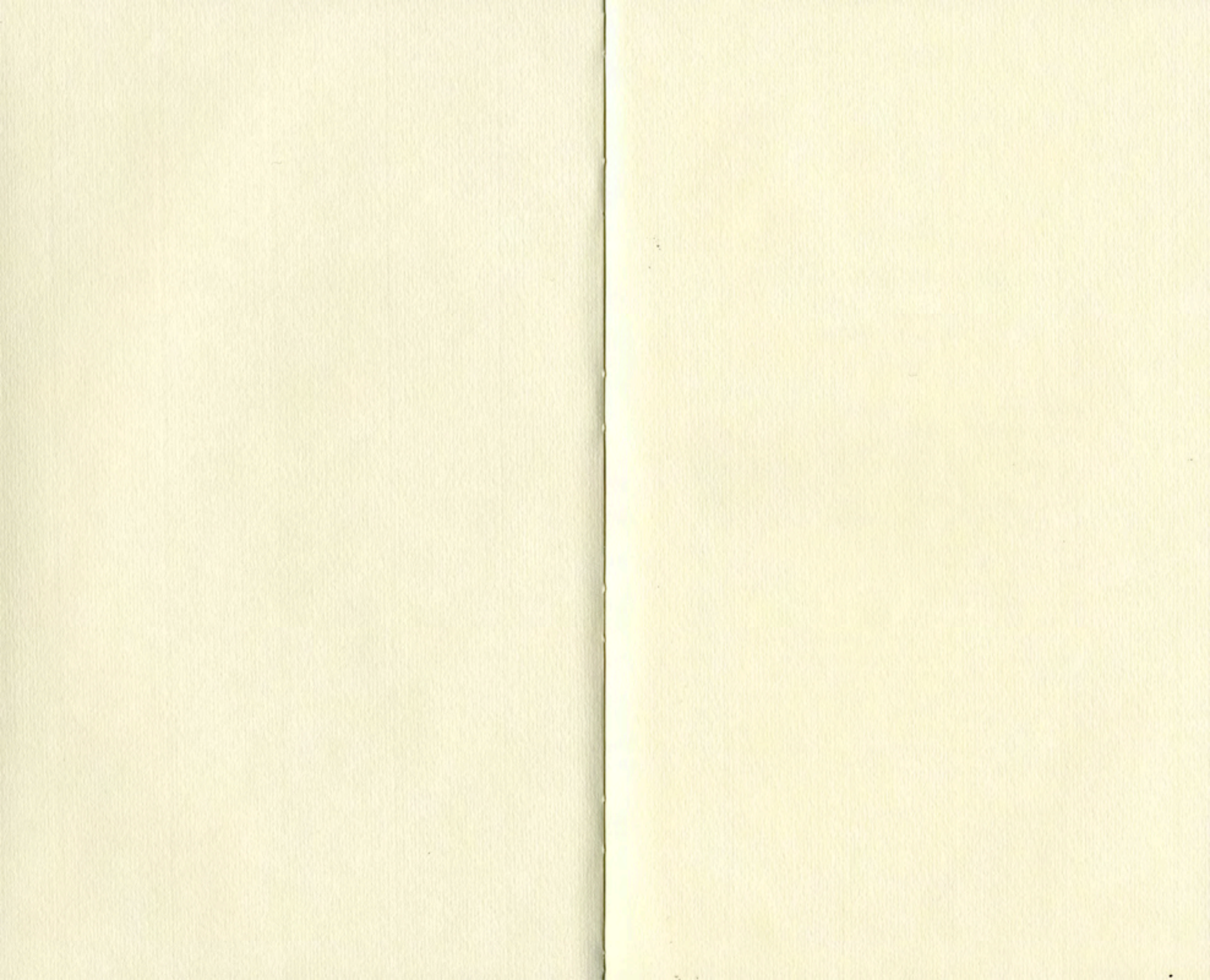
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A. W. Emerson

from

Oct 5

R. W. Emerson

from

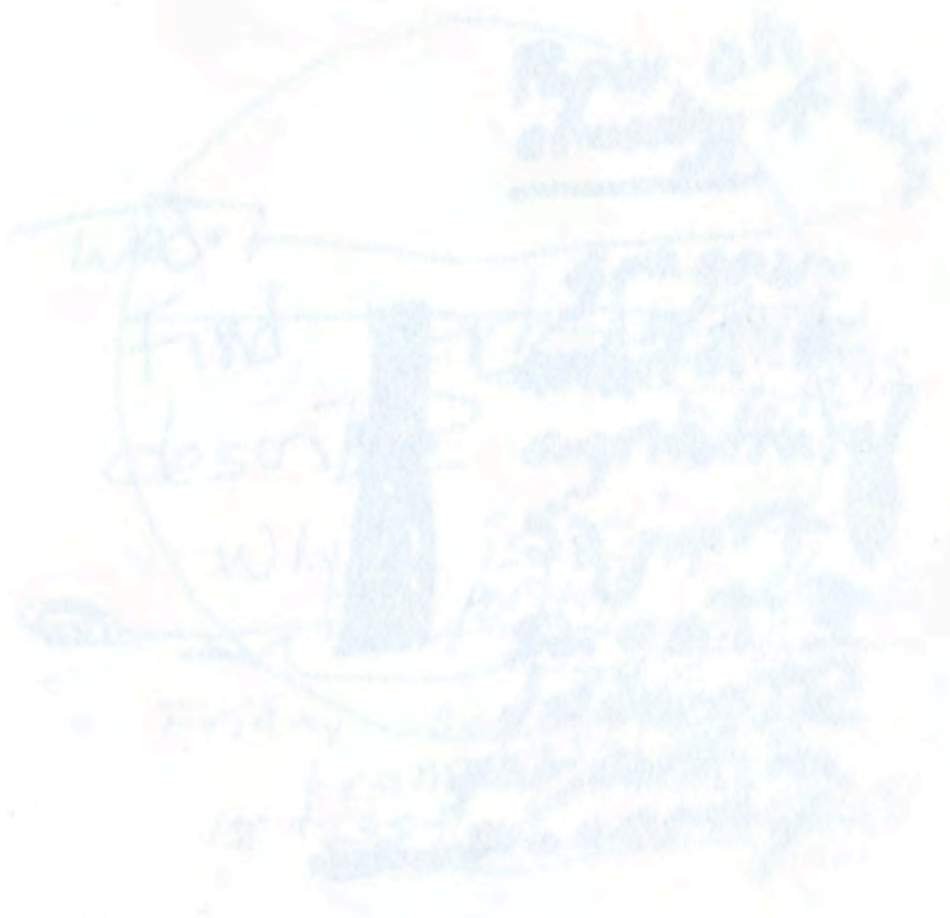
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*W. W. Munroe
for
P. P. P.*

WALDEN MARGINALIA

OR

THE CONTENTS
OF A DOZEN SHANTIES

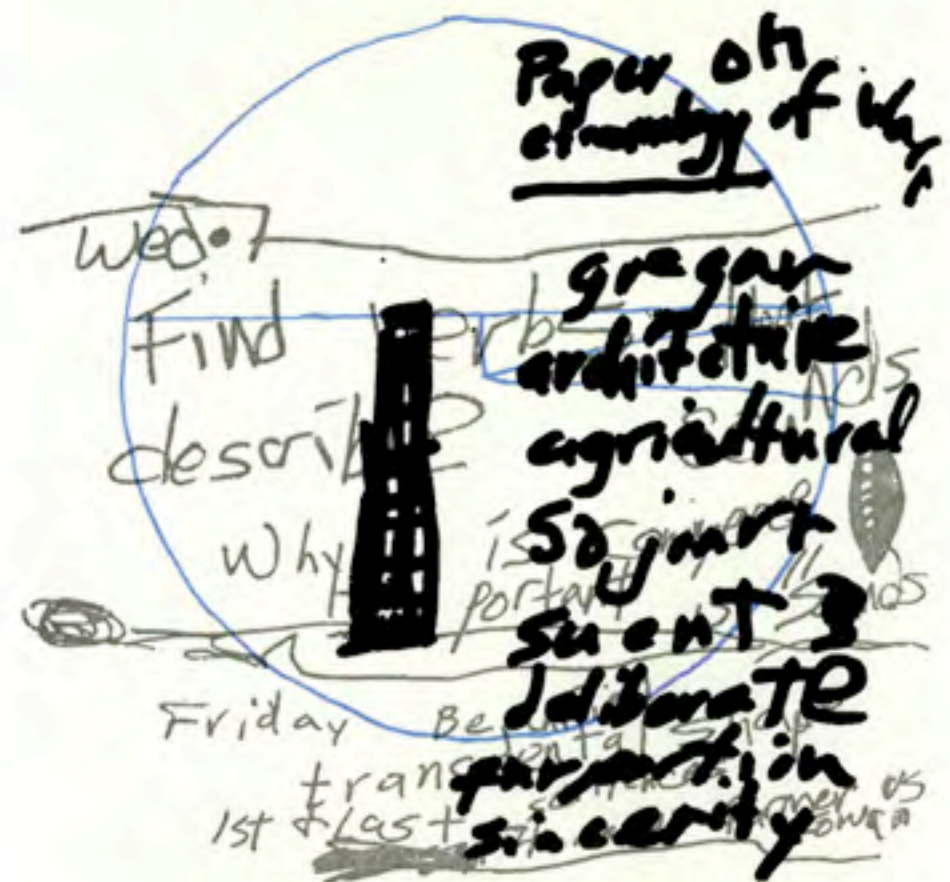


By ANNE R. DIDD

WALDEN MARGINALIA;

OR,

THE CONTENTS
OF A DOZEN SHANTIES.

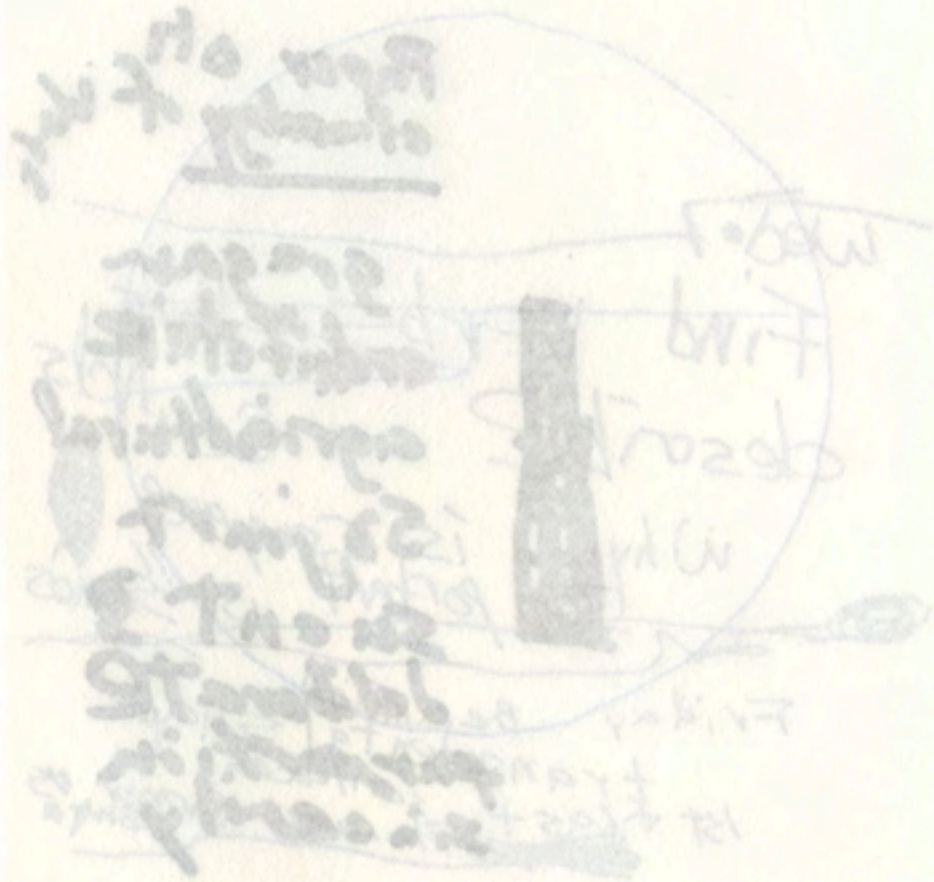


By AMELIA R. BIRD

WALDEN MARGINALIA;

OR

THE CONTENTS
OF A DOZEN SHANTIES.



BY AMELIA R. BIRD

"The book exists for us, perchance, which will explain our miracles
and reveal new ones. The at present unutterable things we may
find somewhere uttered."

"I did not read books that first summer; I hoed beans."
—Henry David Thoreau

I.

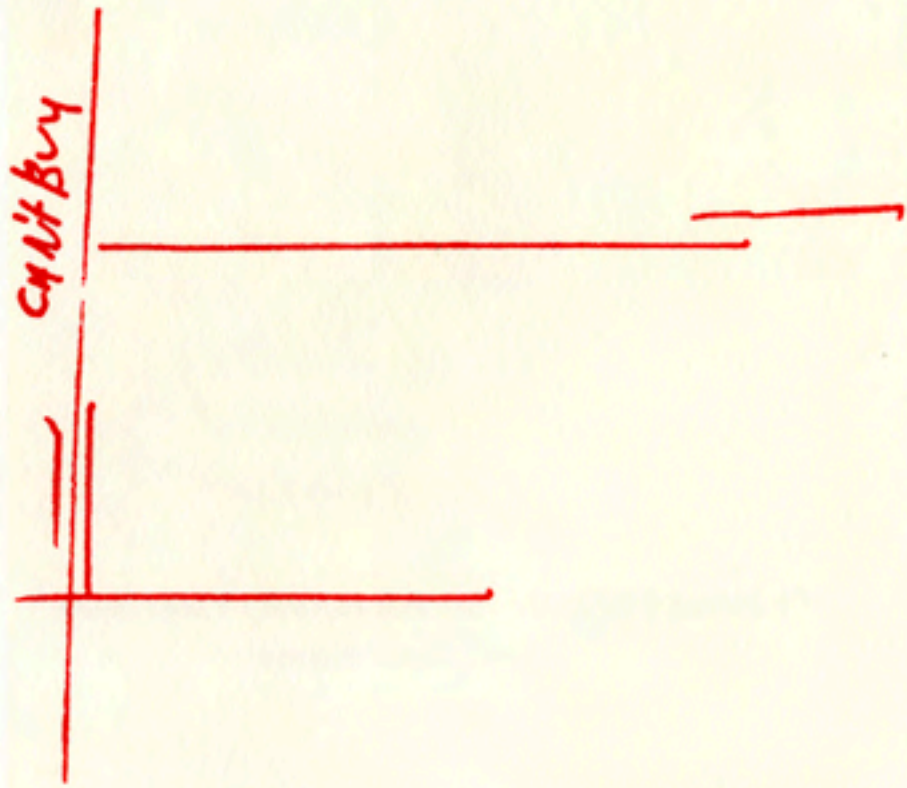
In 1894, a critic recommended *Walden* if not for its actual contents then for its "suggestive capacity." And thus we can think of it as a kind of container.



The book exists for us perhaps, which will explain our miracle
and reveal new ones. The at present unattainable things we may
find somewhere uttered.

"I did not read books that first summer; I had none."
—Henry David Thoreau

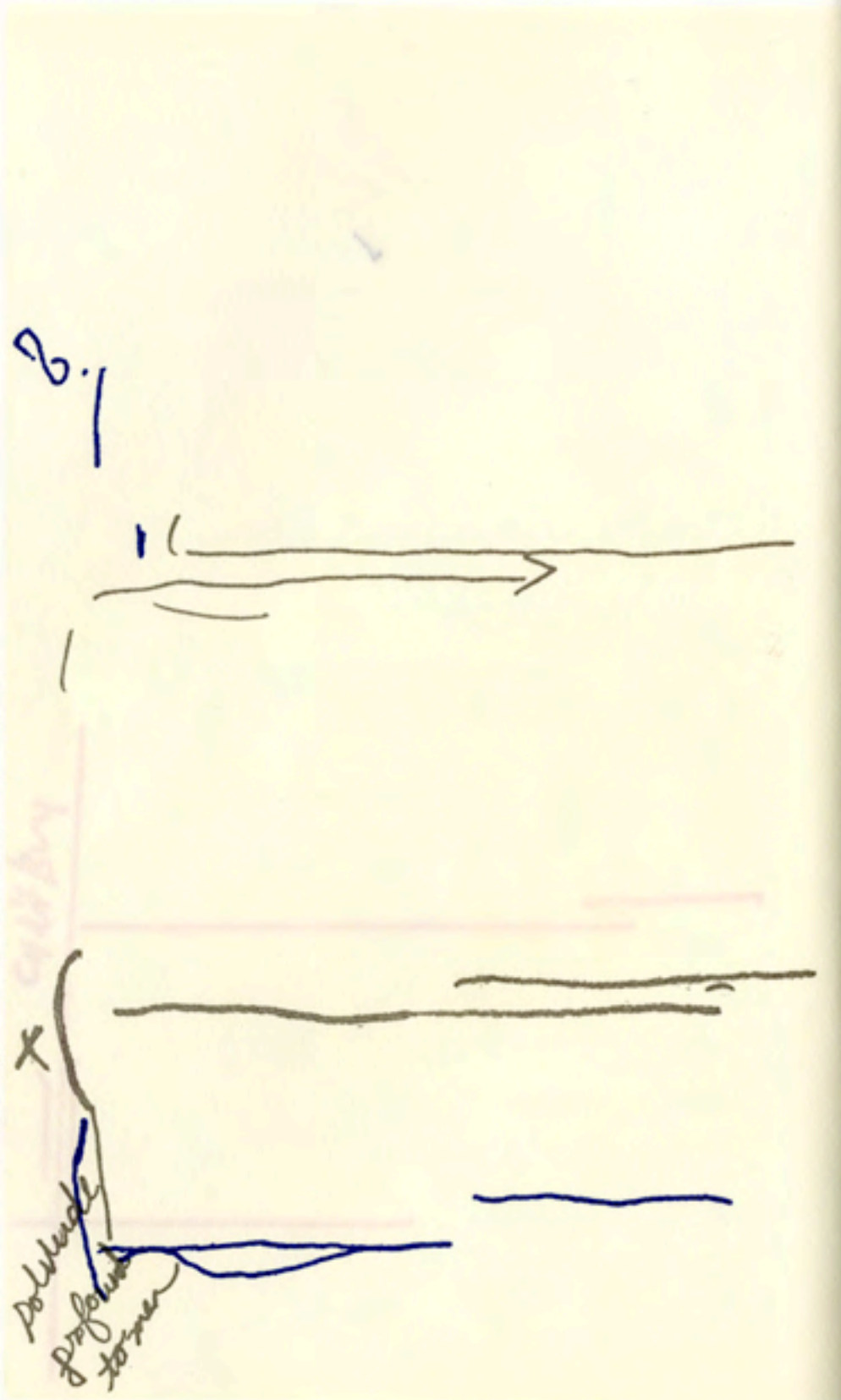
In 1804, a critic
recommended
Walden if not for
its actual contents
then for its "sup-
erlative capacity."
And thus we can
think of it as a
kind of container.



In the chapter
"The Woods"
Thoreau describes
his daily life in
Walden and how
he came to realize
the value of
nature. He writes
that he had
learned to
live with
the woods and
the woods
were his
company.

In or out of the
woods, Walden has
never been an easy
road. The text is
highly metaphorical,
aphoristic, and
pedantic. Also,
it's full of holes.
Thoreau sets up
an argument in one
chapter and con-
tradicts it in the
next, saying he'd
rather eat a fish
out with fish.

In or out of the woods, *Walden* has never been an easy read. The text is densely metaphoric, aphoristic, and pedantic. Also, it's full of holes. Thoreau sets up an argument in one chapter and contradicts it in the next, saying he'd rather eat a fried rat with relish.

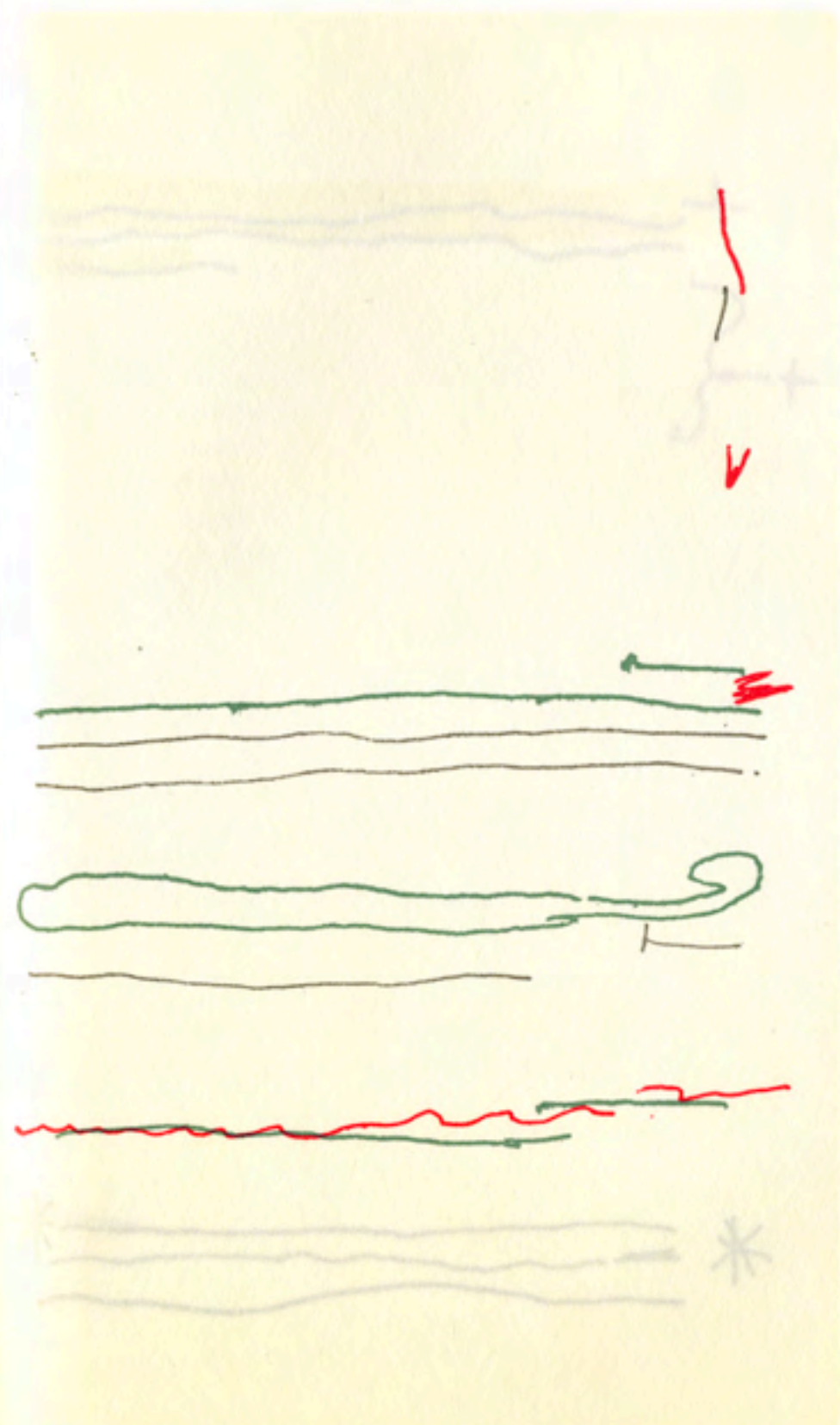
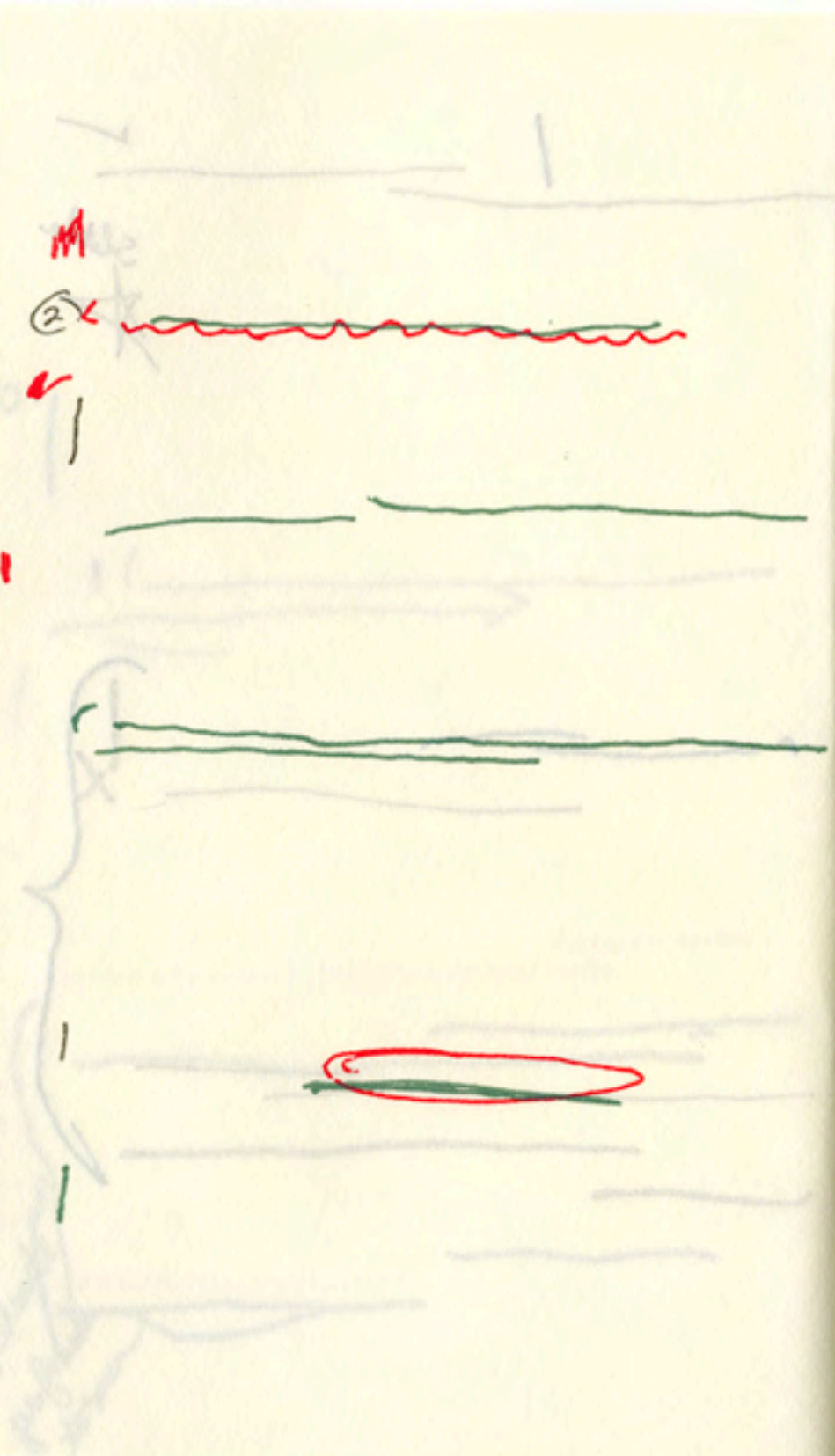


In the chapter "The Ponds" Thoreau describes an old Indian path around the water's edge as seen from a distance in winter as a "clear undulating white line." But seen close-up with too much foliage surrounding it, that same path was indistinguishable.

And so it is with
Walden. We come
to it as we come to
the mountains of
the world. It is a
world of its own
and follows its own
rules. When he leaves the
ground to describe
that holy wilderness
of the future will
but the path is
made and in their
invisible follow-
ing, keep them
clear and defined.

In the chapter "The Pond" Thoreau describes an old Indian path around the water's edge as seen from a distance in winter as a "clear undulating white line." But seen close-up with too much large surrounding it that same path was indistinguishable.

Thoreau is always stumbling across paths in the woods and following them. When he leaves the pond, he concludes that holy wanderers of the future will find the paths he made and, in their insensible following, keep them clear and defined.

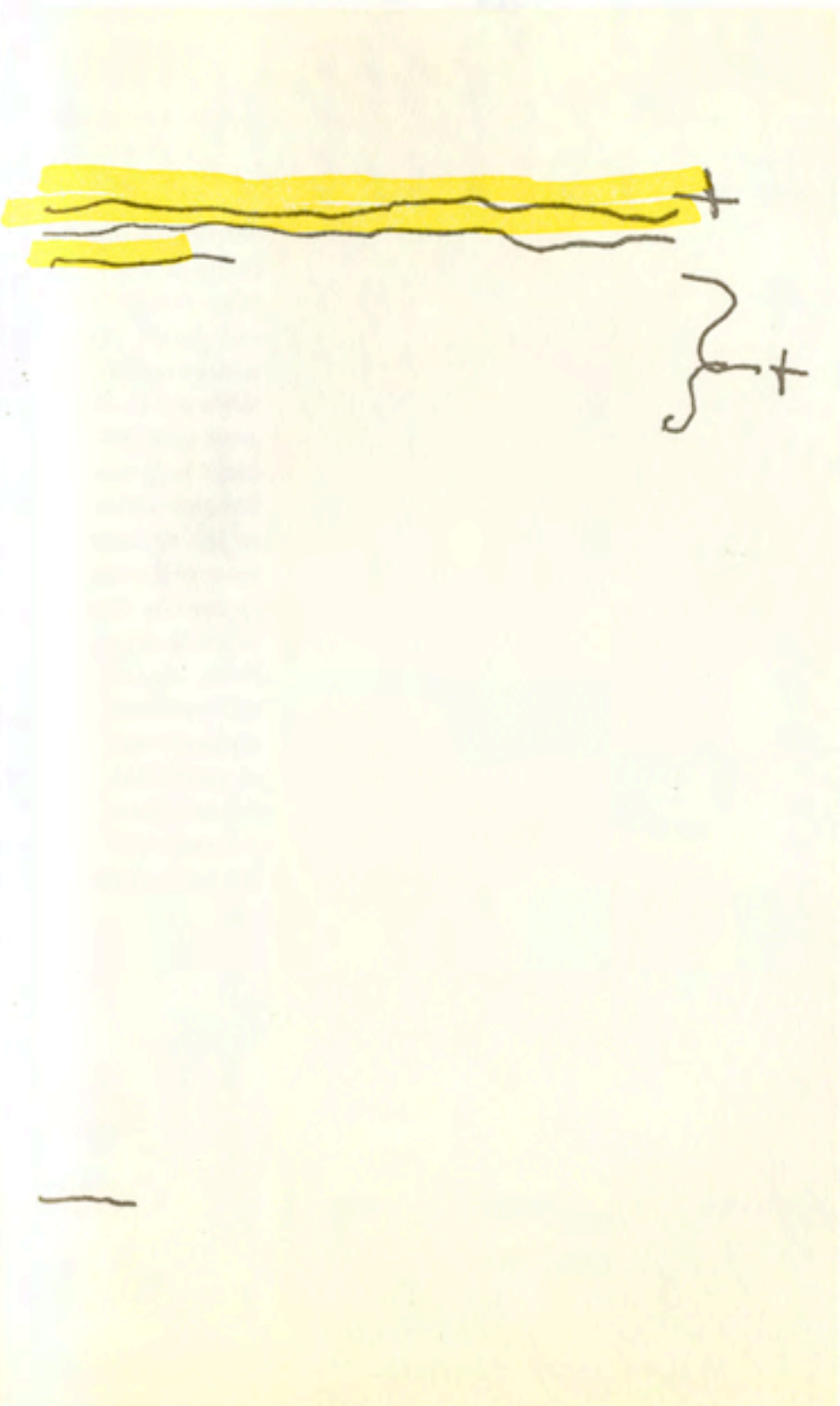


sure, Thoreau may have been a bit of a trend and a man's boy and a pyromaniac, but he was unadorned about first-person narration, he is the reason we have found people with various intensities of graphite, and he urges us "books must be read as deliberately and nervously as they were written."

And so it is with *Walden*. We come to it on our own or we are led to it in class, and we expect it to go somewhere tangible, for if anyone can teach us how to live right it must be Thoreau, the great American trailblazer.

Sure, Thoreau may have been a bit of a fraud and a mama's boy and a pyromaniac, but he was unabashed about first-person narration, he is the reason we have round pencils with various intensities of graphite, and he urges us, "books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written."

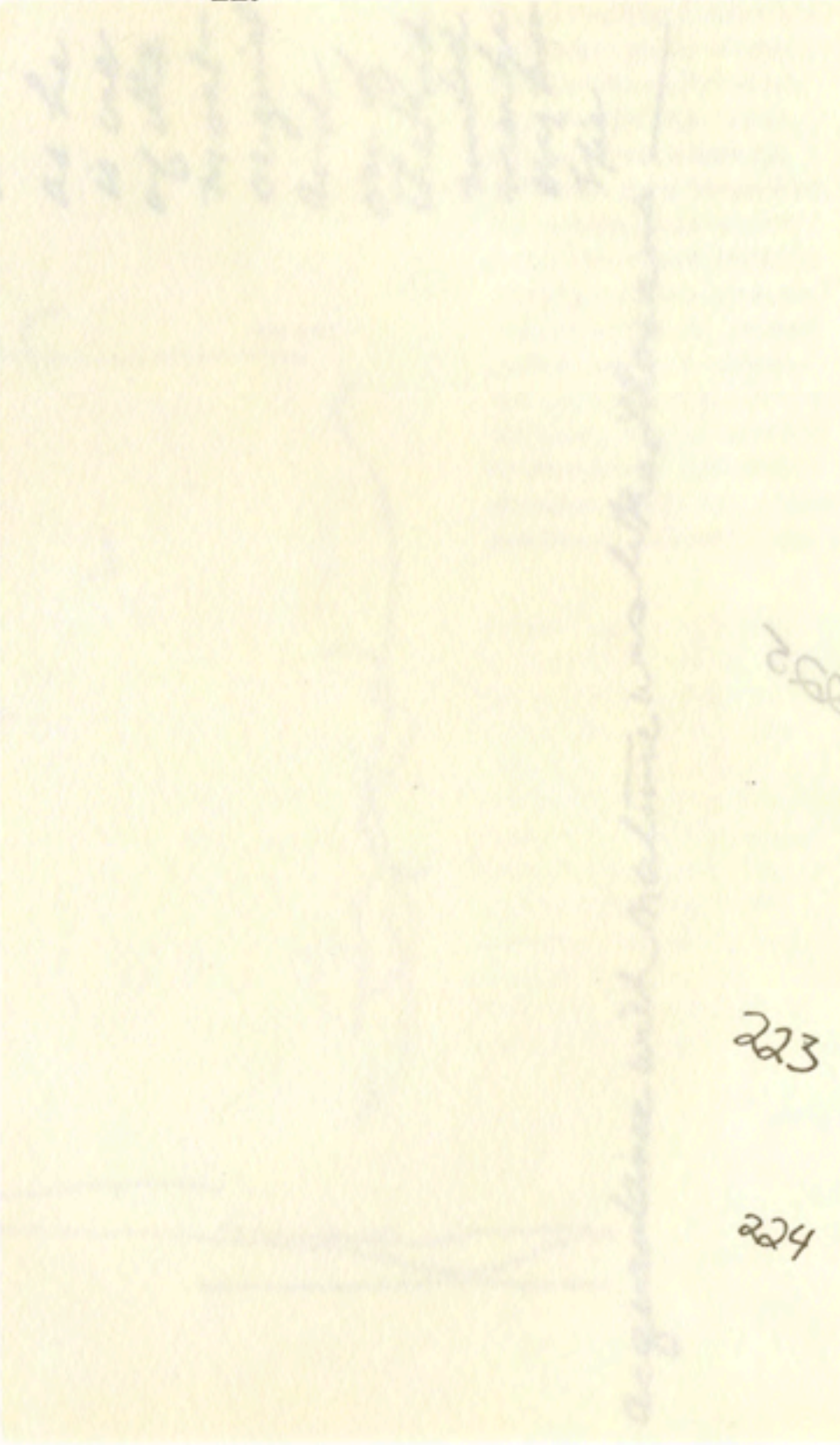
And so it is with
Walden. We come
to it on our own or
we are led to it in
class and we respect
it as go some where
perhaps for the
at one can track
as how to live right
it is the great
and the
and the
and the
and the



Any text can be studied for the marginalia it inspires, but I am drawn to *Walden* because it both begs to be annotated—to be mastered and the proof of understanding be marked on the pages—and defies such piddling, denies easy comprehension, and tells the reader that she needs to find a different way to track.
Or at least that's what I glean from my notes.

II.

Writing in the margins of a book is another to write in a diary. The notes may be intended for only your eyes, but they can't help but imagine a stranger or the stranger of your older self re-reading them. Writing in a library book, then, supposes self-consciousness and enters the realm of performance, not just an act to wear a large hat or take a note to your partner.

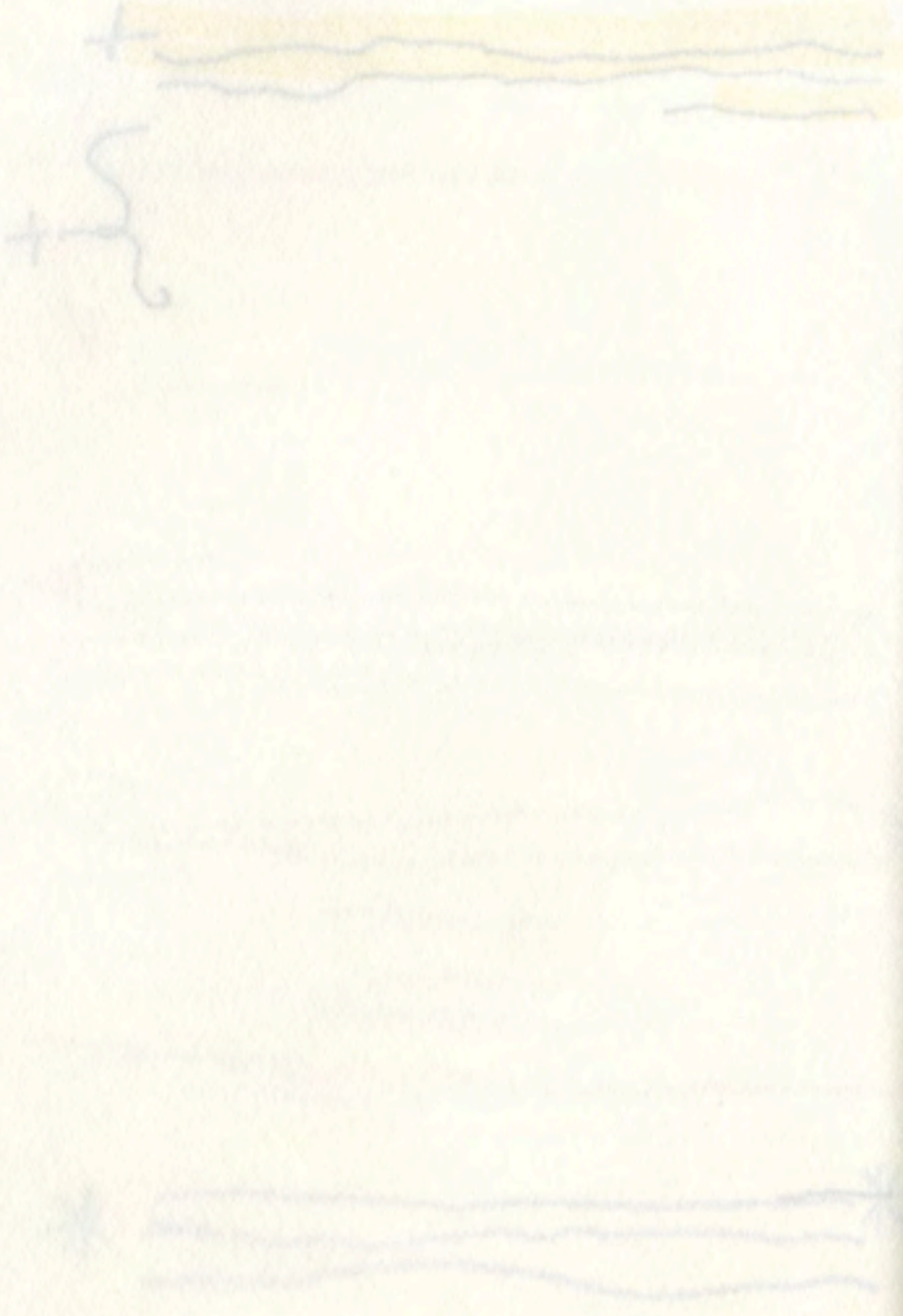


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224

your notebook may have been a bit of a...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...
...a book...

Any text can be studied for the margin...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...
...it is drawn to...



Writing in the margins of a book is similar to writing in a diary. The notes may be intended for only your eyes, but you can't help but imagine a stranger or the stranger of your older self re-reading them. Writing in a library book, then, surpasses self-consciousness and enters the realm of performance, an act akin to wearing a large hat or talking to your parents.

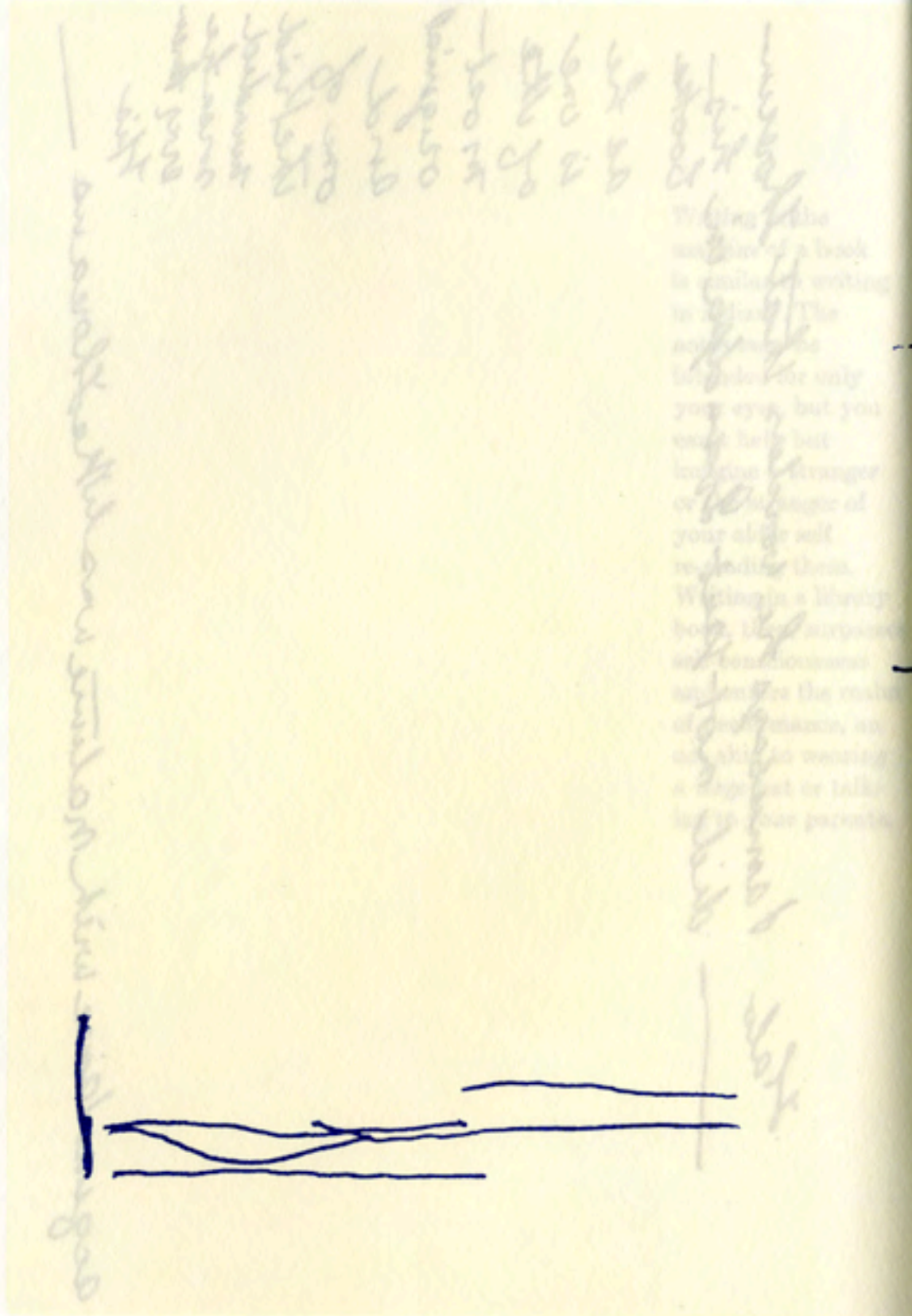
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HGS
ESS
Halo James says he wonders that Thoreau
— did not put Grandpa in his
books

as he
is one
of the
most
original
and
one of
the kind
I would
never see
ever then
This

acquaintance with Malinche was with the Mexicans

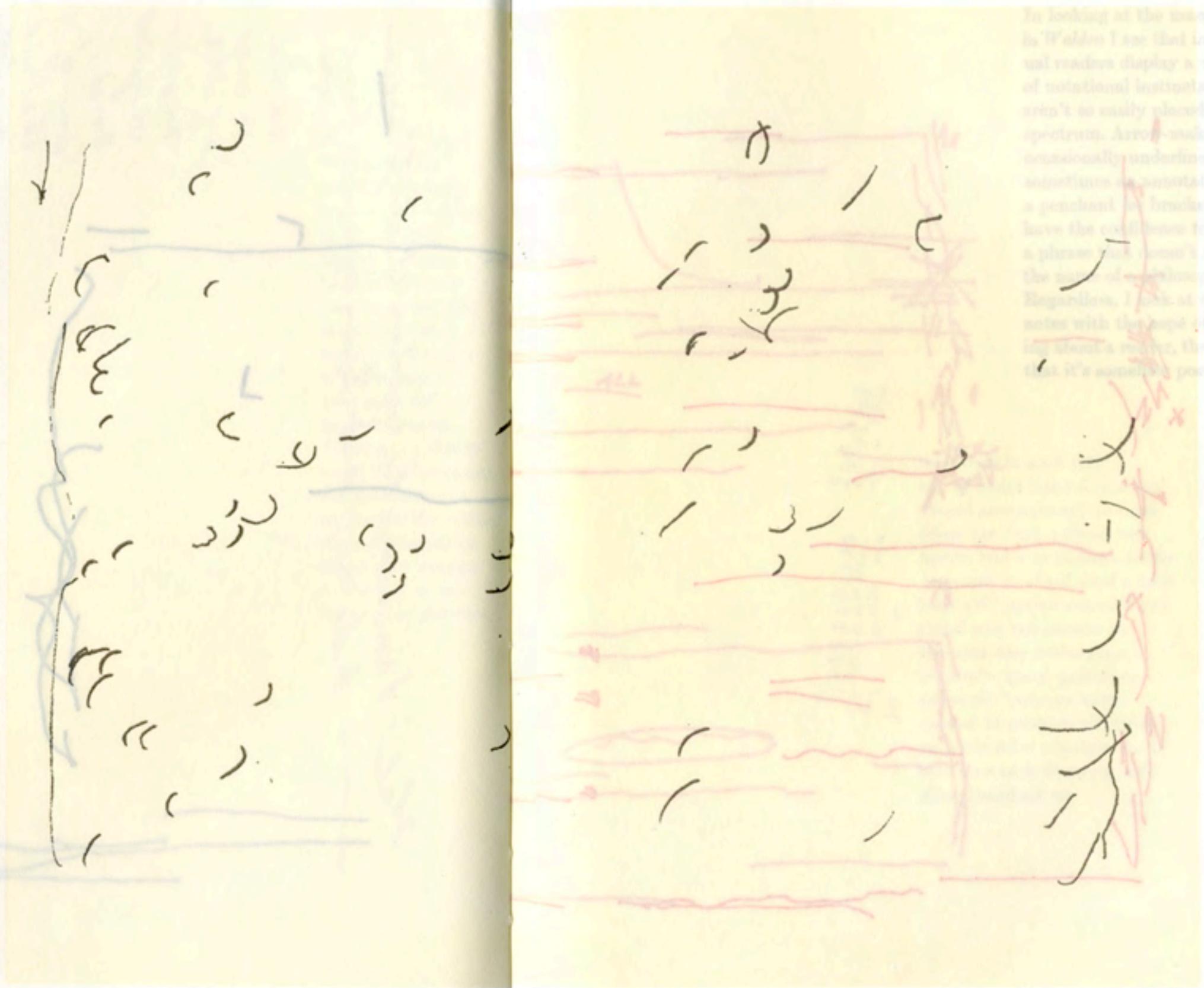
Notes could be divided into categories: marks of ownership (names on flyleaves), unrelated jottings (math figures, phone numbers), classroom notes, acquisition information, book reviews and other outside contexts, opening opinions, book convention imitations (readers' indices, tables of contents), readers' codes (signs of attention, signs of approval or disapproval, invented systems), words and phrases, and finally, full sentences.

I look for patterns. I need to think that jumpy patterns stare, arrows, lines, zig-zags and hash marks were found because they don't indicate why a chunk of text is important. I was tempted to rank these marks to place them on a spectrum from winky to harsh. The most unambiguous marks go on the bottom. Words of course go on top.

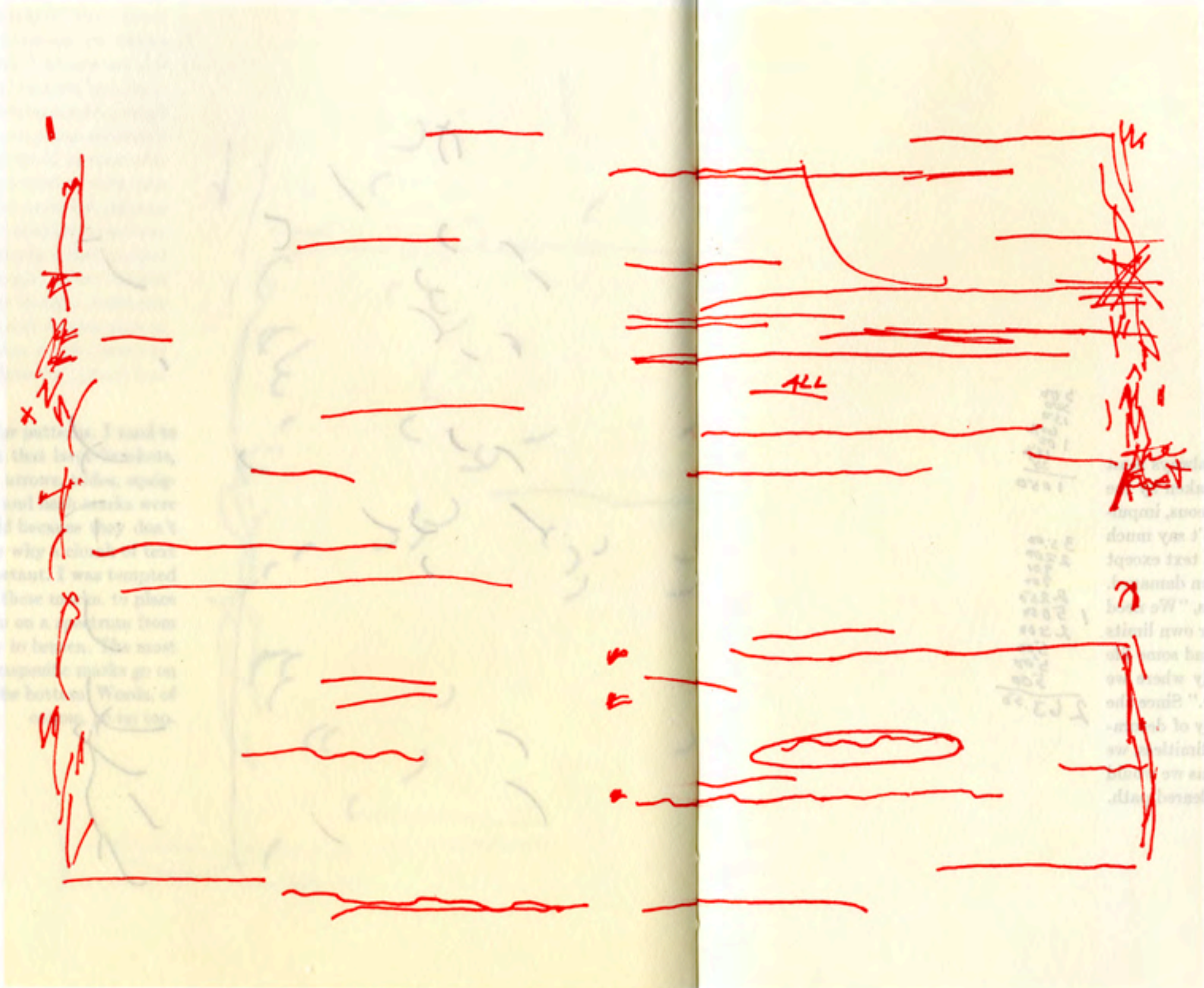


Notes could be divided into categories: marks of ownership (names or initials), unrelated jottings (math figures, phone numbers), classroom notes, acquisition information, book reviews and other outside contexts, opening opinions, book reviews, imitations (teachers' indices, tables of contents), readers' codes (signs of attention, signs of approval or disapproval, invented systems), words and phrases and finally, full sentences.

I look for patterns. I used to think that large brackets, stars, arrows, tildes, squiggles, and hash marks were timid because they don't indicate why a chunk of text is important. I was tempted to rank these marks, to place them on a spectrum from wimpy to brazen. The most unspecific marks go on the bottom. Words, of course, go on top.



In looking at the annotations in 'Walden' I see that individual readers display a variety of notational instincts and aren't so easily placed on a spectrum. Arrow-makers occasionally underline, and sometimes do so together with a pencil or bracket. The student on the right will have the confidence to write a phrase that doesn't exist in the text of the passage. Regardless, I look at my notes with the hope of learning about a reader, the belief that it's sometimes possible



In looking at the marginalia in *Walden* I see that individual readers display a variety of notational instincts and aren't so easily placed on a spectrum. Arrow-makers occasionally underline, and sometimes an annotator with a penchant for brackets will have the confidence to write a phrase that doesn't contain the name of a philosopher. Regardless, I look at margin notes with the hope of learning about a reader, the belief that it's somehow possible.

In looking at the margins
in which I see that individ-
ual readers display a variety
of notational instincts and
even if so easily placed on a
spectrum. Arrow-makers
occasionally underline and
sometimes an annotator will
a penchant for brackets will
have the confidence to write
a phrase that does not contain
the name of a philosopher.
Nevertheless, I look at margin
notes with the hope of learn-
ing about a reader, the belief
that it's somehow possible.

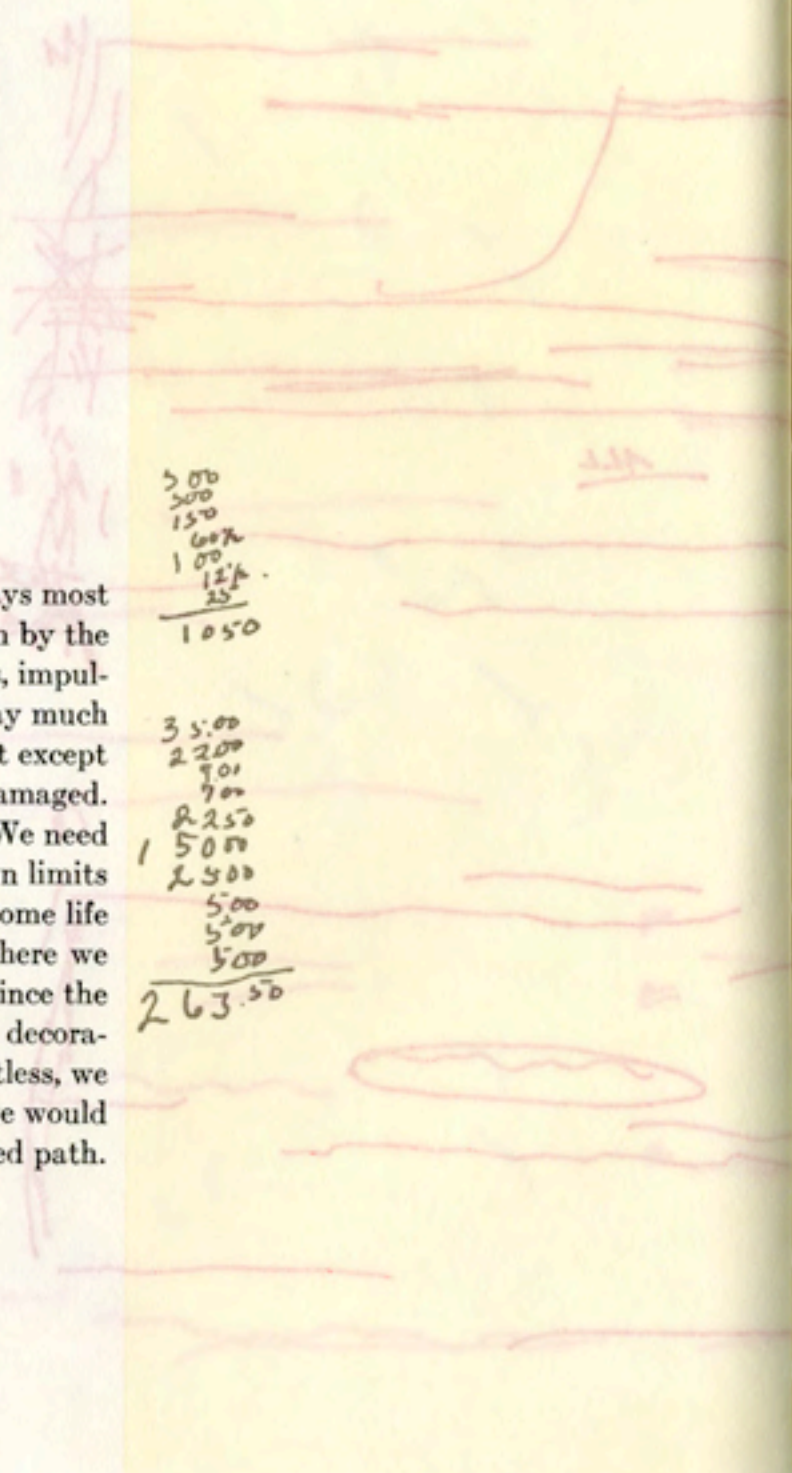
But I am always most
confounded and taken by the
outliers. Spontaneous, impul-
sive doodles don't say much
about a reader or a text except
that a book has been damaged.
But Thoreau writes, "We need
to witness our own limits
transgressed, and some life
pasturing freely where we
never wander." Since the
aesthetic capacity of decora-
tive marginalia is limitless, we
can approach it as we would
an uncleared path.

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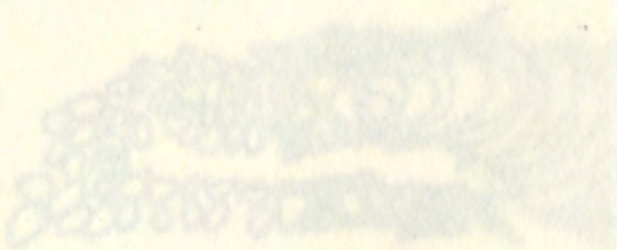
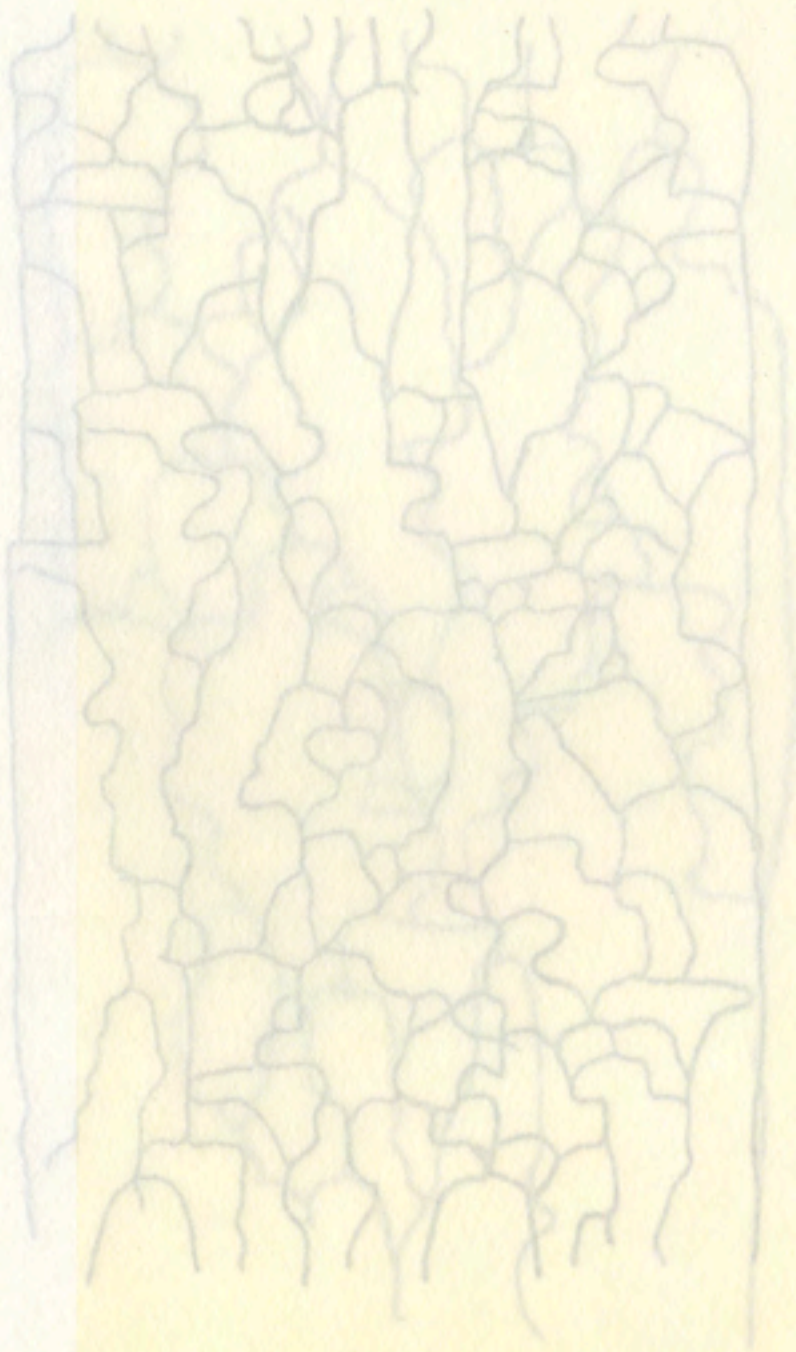
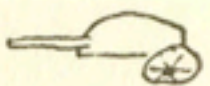
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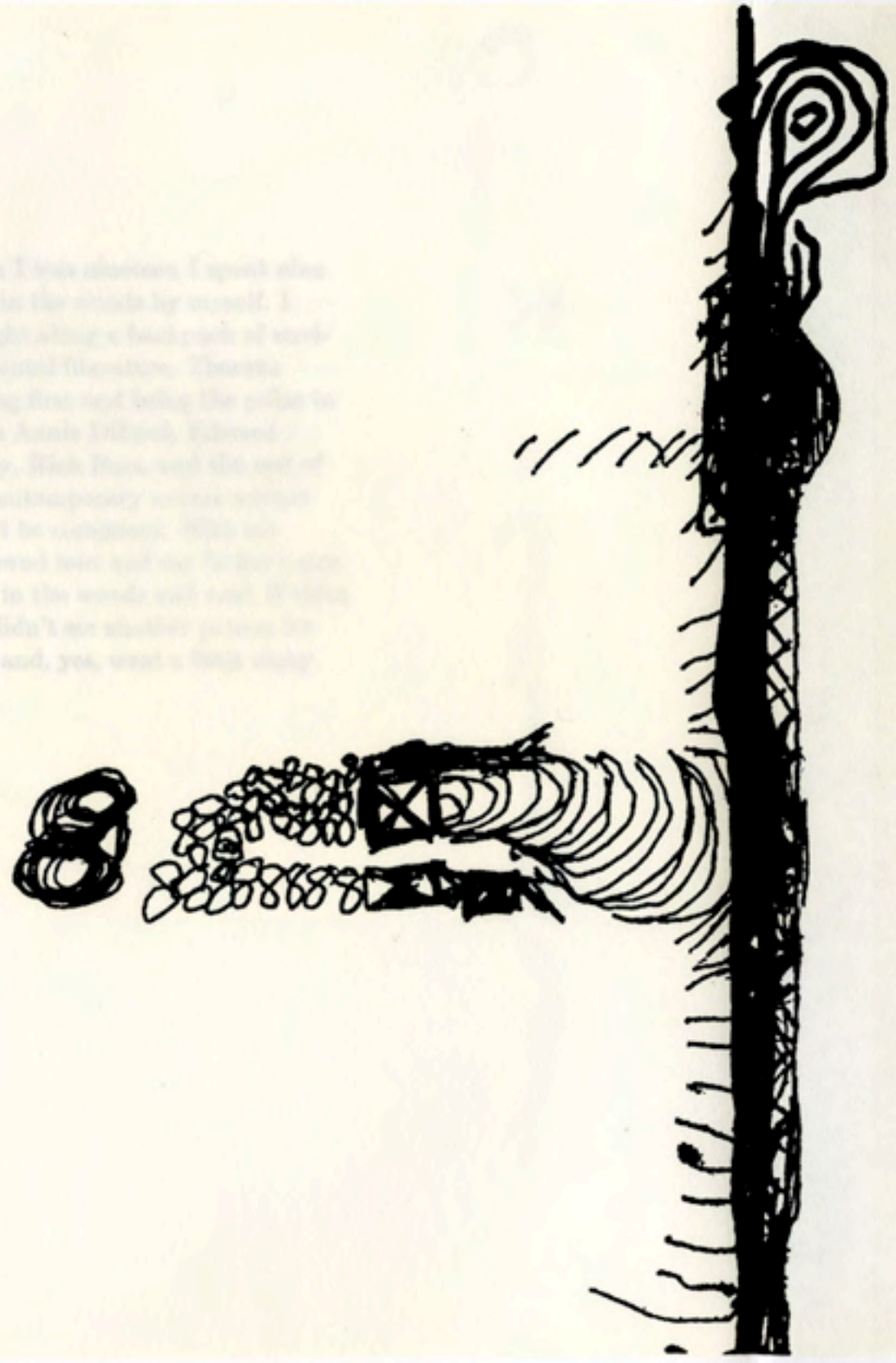
But I am always most
offended and taken by the
writers. Spontaneous, impul-
sive (and he don't say much
about a reader or a text except
that a book has been damaged).
But Thoreau writes, "We need
to witness our own limits
transgressed, and some life
pasturing freely where we
never wander." Since the
aesthetic capacity of democ-
ratic imagination is limitless, we
may approach it as we would
an uncharted path.

III.





When I was eleven, I spent three
days in the woods by myself. I
brought along a backpack of work
equipment. There
was no tent, but I had the shelter
which I had built. I had
shelter, food, and the rest of
the necessary items which
would be sufficient. I had
learned to live and to be alone.
I sat in the woods and read. I
didn't see another person for
days and, yes, what a time was.



10



When I was nineteen I spent nine days in the woods by myself. I brought along a backpack of environmental literature, Thoreau coming first and being the pillar to which Annie Dillard, Edward Abbey, Rick Bass, and the rest of the contemporary nature writers would be compared. With my borrowed tent and my father's gun I sat in the woods and read *Walden* and didn't see another person for days and, yes, went a little crazy.

©
*
Dennis Coakley

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*

At Louisa Esinsing

When I was nineteen I spent nine
days in the woods by myself. I
brought along a backpack of envi-
ronmental literature, Thoreau
coming first and being the pillar to
which Annie Dillard, Edward
Abbey, Rick Bass, and the rest of
the contemporary nature writers
would be compared. With my
borrowed tent and my father's gun
I sat in the woods and read Walden
and didn't see another person for
days and, yes, went a little crazy.

It's all there, in my notes. Rather,
it's in their shapes. On many pages
I stuck to frilly stars, overworked
curly brackets, and stacked lines—
patterns that look like the trails
beavers weave in the sand on the
way into and out of their lodges
of sticks.

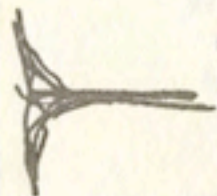


p. 188



It's all there in my notes. Rather
it's in their shape. On many pages
I stuck to fully stars, overworked
only brackets, and stacked lines—

p. 196



patterns that look like the trails
beavers weave in the sand on the
way into and out of their lodges
of sticks.

p. 122



— p. 339

I was afraid to touch with Thomas's
text with a highlighter. I was too
nervous to underline. I was even
late to write words in the margins, for
what could I say about a book that had
so much away it had me sitting in the
woods expecting revelation before I'd
even opened it. I even opened it
but I couldn't write on it in the
margin. Thomas's words: "There is no
disturbance. There is no noise.
Stop writing. Go inside."




— p. 235



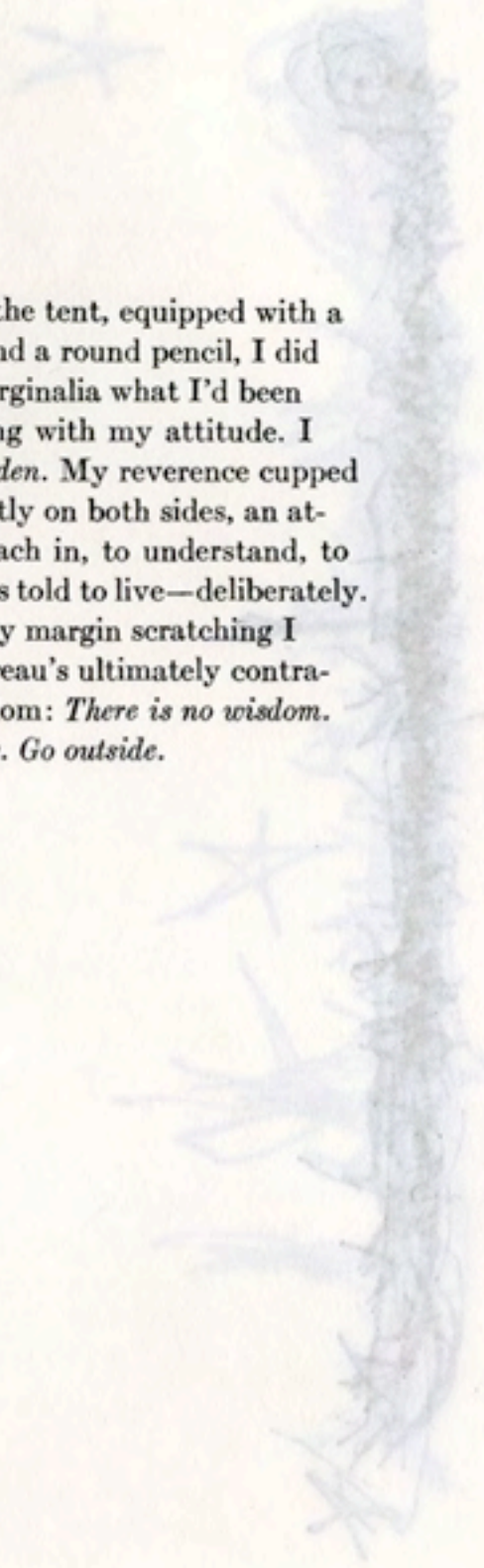
— p. 251

— p. 339

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128.9 —
125.9 —
125.9 —

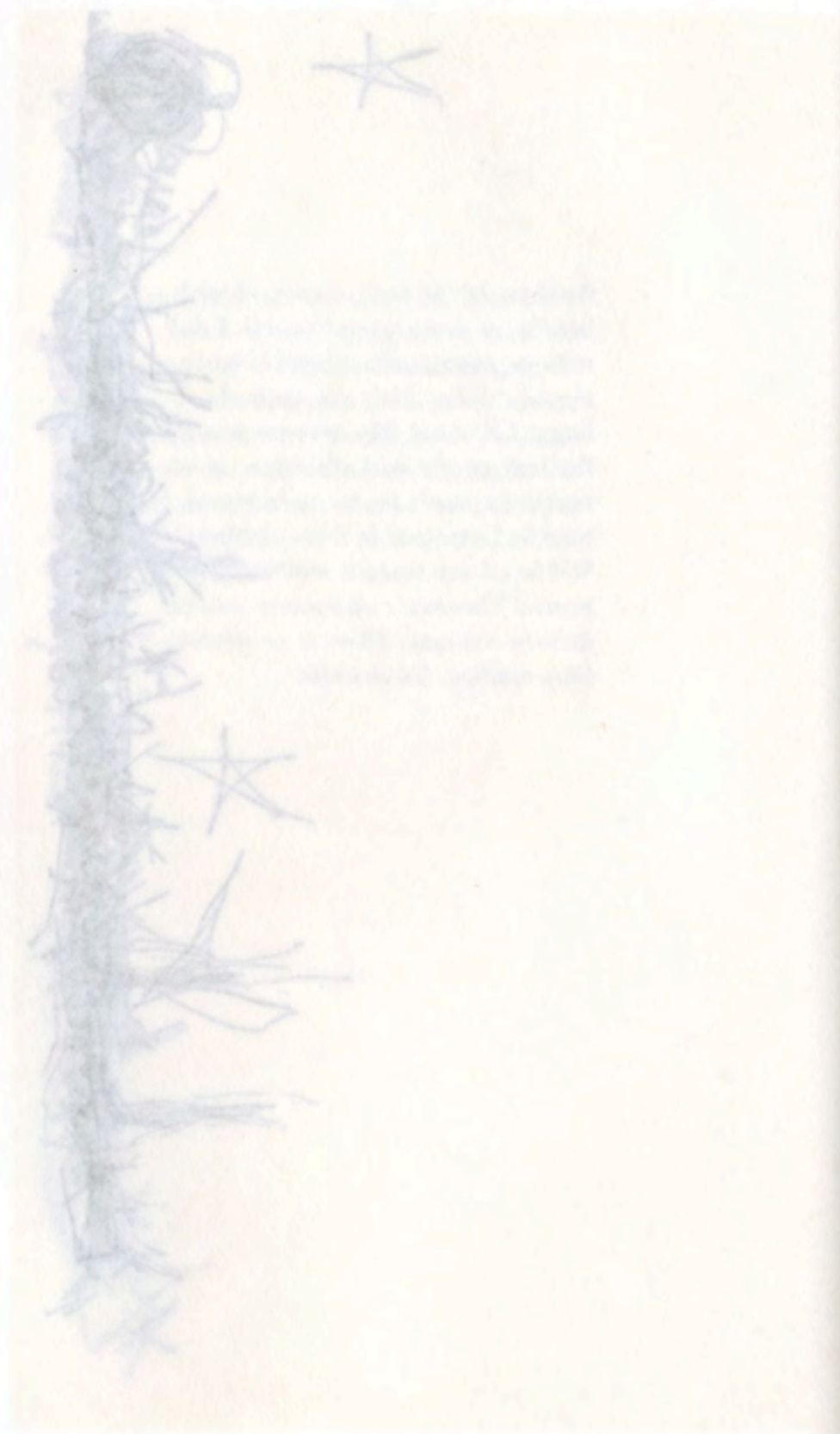


I was afraid to tamper with Thoreau's text with a highlighter. I was too nervous to underline. I was even reluctant to write words in the margins, for what could I say about a book that had so much sway it had me sitting in the woods expecting revelation before I'd even opened it?



So there in the tent, equipped with a headlamp and a round pencil, I did with my marginalia what I'd been already doing with my attitude. I hugged *Walden*. My reverence cupped the text gently on both sides, an attempt to reach in, to understand, to read as I was told to live—deliberately. But in all my margin scratching I missed Thoreau's ultimately contradictory wisdom: *There is no wisdom. Stop reading. Go outside.*

APPENDICES

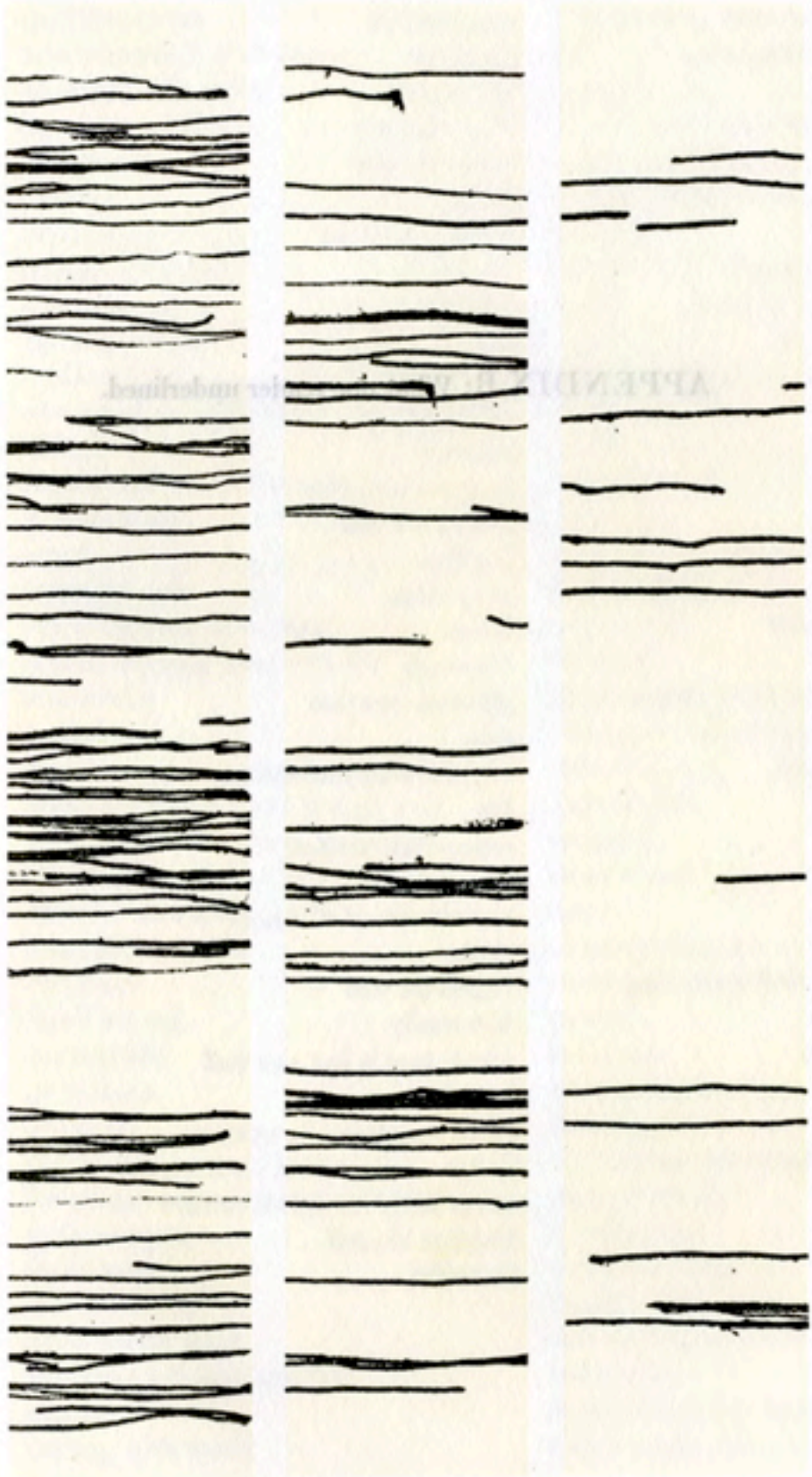


APPENDIX A: All the numbers... one copy of W. after
divided into three.

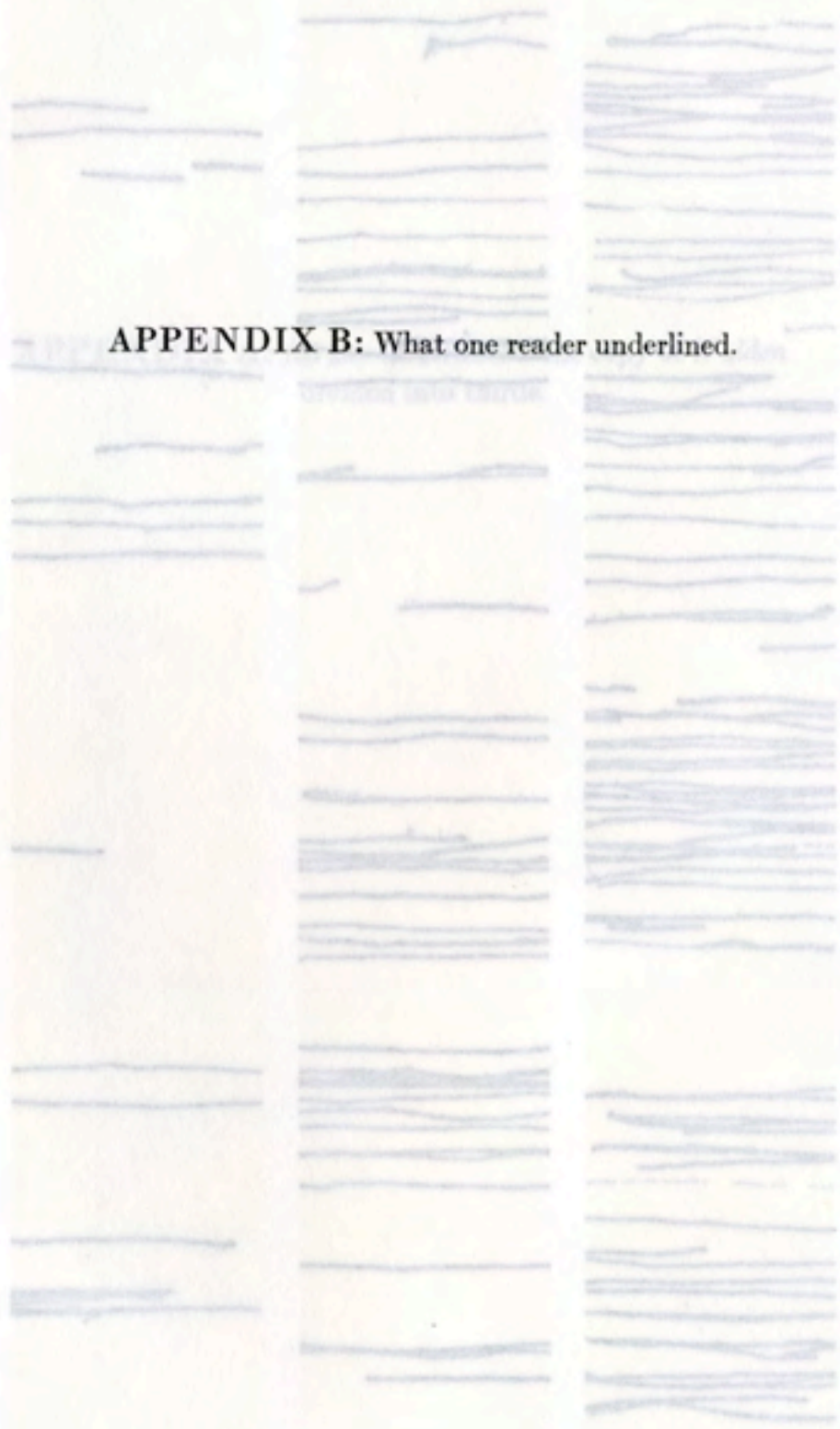
[The rest of the page contains several columns of text that are extremely faint and illegible due to the quality of the scan.]

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: All the underlines—one copy of *Walden*
divided into thirds.



APPENDIX B: What one reader underlined.



low potatoe
nightly; but few at first; the
change
humanly
instinctively
generally
I found in myself
woodcock
Gray with according to the nature of
most say no
nature
I think were best
no change in that
The bond was my well ready dug
other spirit
It was very quiet
try up the brain
to launch
I should
attached to the village
I'm however
I was determined to know better
my own thoughts
the nightbird circled
I think
nature
natural
red birds
two or three
half-civilized
attempts
even this already planted
a necessity of subject
greater and greater violence
more to help themselves
not returned
have been
this patient
could write a remarkably good hand
low potatoe
nightly; but few at first; the
change
humanly
instinctively
generally
I found in myself
woodcock
Gray with according to the nature of
most say no
nature
I think were best
no change in that
The bond was my well ready dug
other spirit
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try up the brain
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nature
natural
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no change in that
The bond was my well ready dug
other spirit
It was very quiet
try up the brain
to launch
I should
attached to the village
I'm however
I was determined to know better
my own thoughts
the nightbird circled
I think
nature
natural

that these men
into a nutshell of civility
an irresistible voice
necessary of life
savageness
poverty
philosophy
present necessity
but naturally
last importance
a naked thief
who could do with less
"They"
impersonal as the Fates
so commonly
suent
degraded rich
begin without borrowing
broad, flapping American ear
impartially
is vanity
Manus mortariumque bene lavato
Wash your hands and trough well
the contents of a dozen shanties
When a man dies he kicks the dust
There is no odor
imagination
two years
caged myself
conventicle
mountains
the earth
continent
Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!
rigid economy
see it burn
fish in the sky
pebbly with stars
My head is hands and feet
mortal
dealing with truth

It is not all books
alert
contemplation
the oxen that wore them
Warned by the whizzing sound
lost the scent
stampede
the restless world
the pine needles
screech owls
voice of the wood
wood-nymph
did the deeds of darkness
animal, yet with human sobs
dark valley
more fitting and dismal day dawns
Walden nymphs
early to rise
No yard!
Sympathy
serenity is rippled but not ruffled
piece of forest
cigar or pipe
darkness
black kernel
rain
unaccountable friendliness
awakening
Next
too cheap
we were never alone
Morning air!
Hebe
vigor of youth
it was spring
Sufficient distance
the side of his head
new and better customs
chickadees
In him the animal man
called humble who never aspires

could write a remarkably good hand
consciousness or of stupidity
in his animal life
compensated
wise policy
humble himself was he exalted
not reckoned
never to help themselves
greater and greater remoteness
a monopoly of subject
seven miles already planted
arrowheads
half-cultivated
brown thrasher
red mavis
natural
tinkled
the nighthawk circled
my own thoughts
I was determined to know beans
Pythagorean
strolled to the village
Etesian
to launch
tying up the helm
It was very queer
other spheres
The pond was my well ready dug
no storms, no dust
Walden wears best
natives
moral bog hoe
Grow wild according to thy nature
woodchuck
I found in myself
practically
instinctively
humanity
change
mighty hunters at last
few potatoes

imagination
preserve
larva state
less peaceful
never fought
Polk
fiercely spitting
cunningly
surprised
as
as
white breast
learned
It was I and Fire
heathen I was
her lips
very slope
house
Forward
glorious creation
skin
of particular inclination
Ice
completely melted
lacinated
excrements of all kinds
drain
vegetable leaf
Internally
whole tree is but one leaf
bowels
there is nothing inorganic
no stronger proof of immortality
never have enough of nature
Explore thyself
Humility

APPENDIX C: Bibliography of *Waldens*.

The marginalia in this book are presented as single pages and page spreads of notes by multiple readers and as composite images of notes by individual readers in a chapter or an entire volume, and were found in the following copies of *Walden*:

Walden; or Life in the Woods. Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1854 (first edition).

- University of Iowa Library
- University of Chicago Library
- Concord Free Public Library, Emerson Collection
- Johns Hopkins University Library

Walden, A Story of Life in the Woods. New York: A.L. Burt, 1902.

- Library of Congress

Walden and Other Writings of Henry David Thoreau. New York: Random House, 1937.

- University of Iowa Library
- University of Chicago Library

Walden: Life in the Woods. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1946.

- University of Chicago Library

Walden, or, Life in the Woods and On the Duty of Civil Disobedience. New York: Signet, 1960.

- University of Iowa Library

Walden and Other Writings by Henry David Thoreau. New York: Bantam Books, 1981.

- Library of the artist

Walden; and, Civil Disobedience. New York: Penguin Books, 1983.

- New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan

Walden. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

- University of Chicago Library

COLOPHON

All marginalia in *Walden Marginalia* were rendered in the artist's hand, conformed to the dimensions of the first edition of *Walden*, and printed from photopolymer plates on a Vandercook No. 3. The text was hand-set in Scotch Roman and Bodoni types, the closest approximation of those used in the first edition. The paper is Zerkall Book Vellum. Special thanks to the University of Iowa Center for the Book faculty, whose feedback and support has been invaluable, and to the staff of Women's Studio Workshop, especially Bryn Sumner, masterful and enthusiastic typesetter, and Chris Petrone. Henry D. Thoreau's inscription to Ralph Waldo Emerson and Edward Emerson's marginalia were drawn with permission from the Concord Free Public Library.

Walden Marginalia was printed and bound in 2012 at the Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, NY. WSW is supported in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency. This project was also supported with grant funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Windgate Charitable Foundation, and the College Book Art Association.

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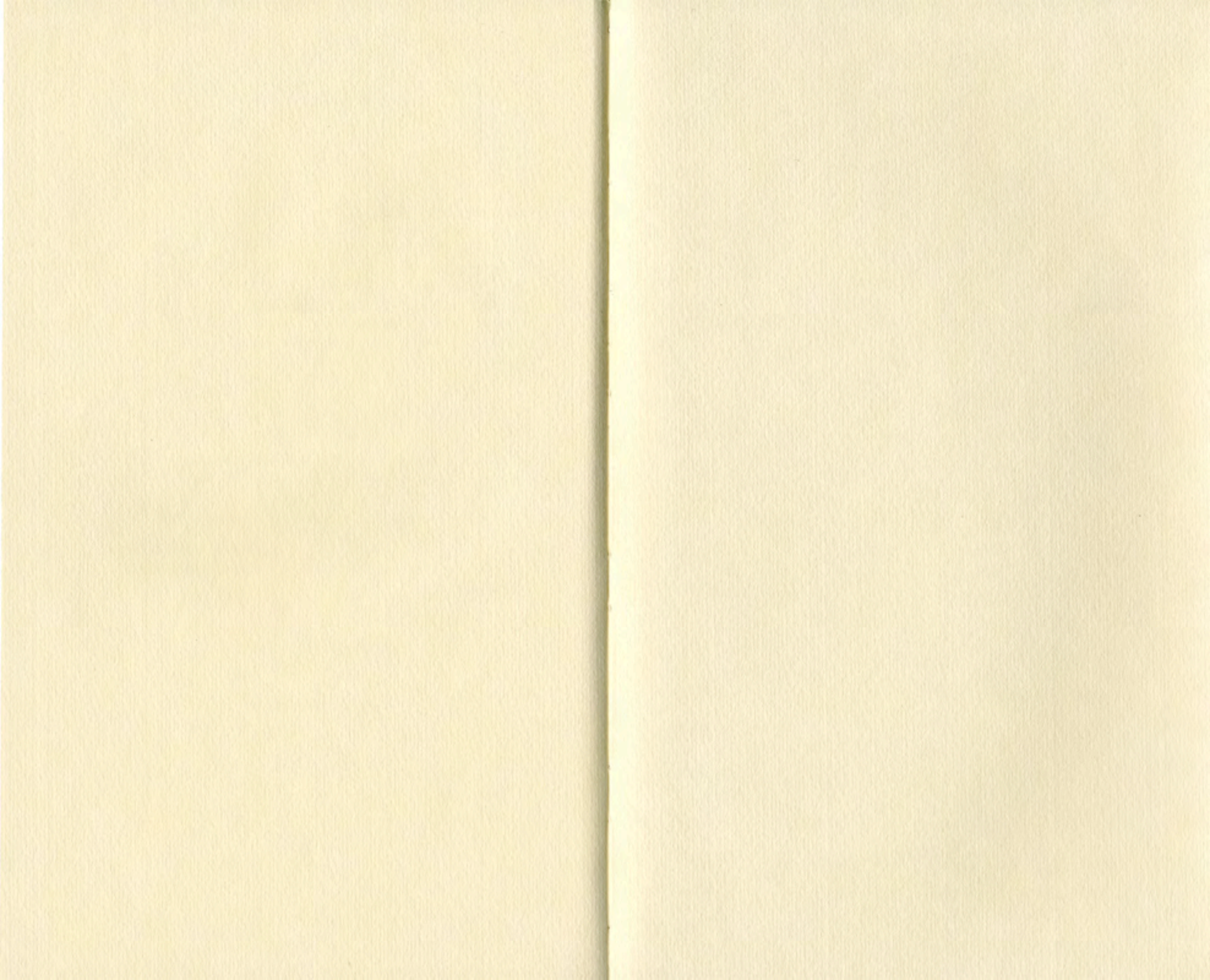
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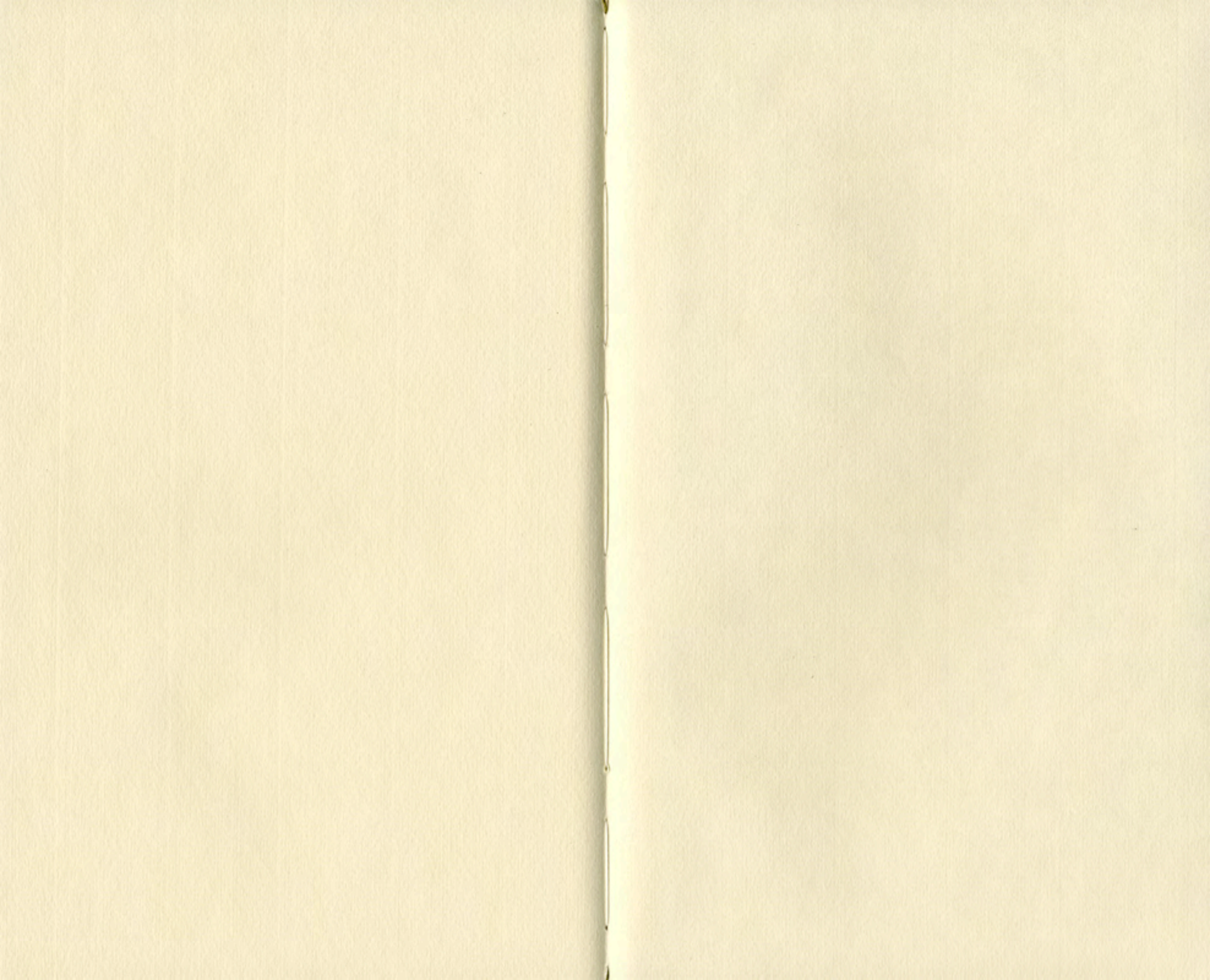
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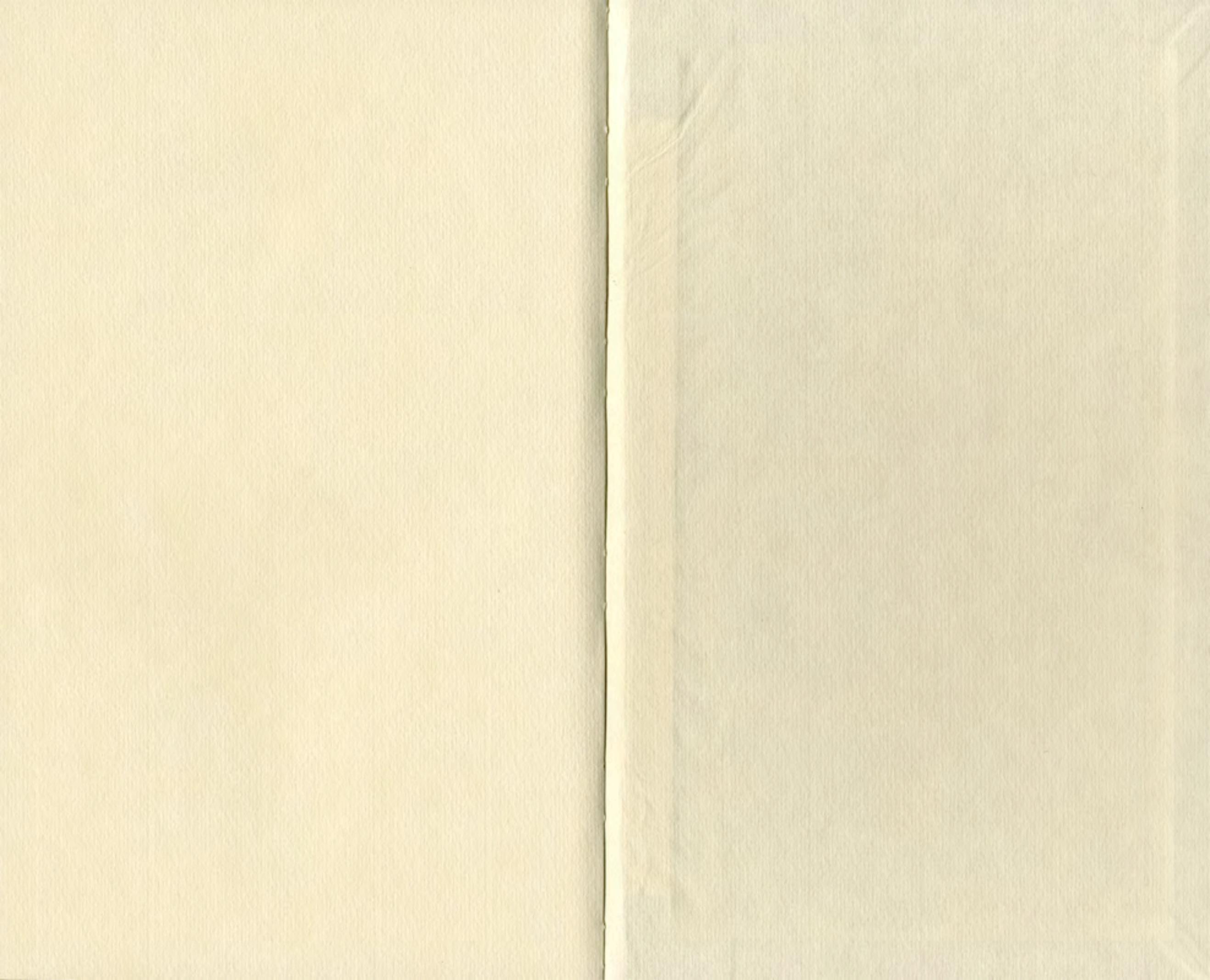
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Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is arranged in several paragraphs and is too light to transcribe accurately.







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