

Diary of R.W. Troup (later Lieutenant Colonel RAMC), taking convalescent officers and soldiers of the British Forces Army of Occupation in Egypt on a steamship up the Nile from Cairo to Aswan and back

Publication/Creation

1882

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DIARY

1882

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The diary of my father
Lt Col. R.W. Truap. Rame
of a trip up the Nile with
convalescents in Nov. '82.
when serving in the Army of
Occupation.

Francis Major RA.
(later Army of occupation Egypt
1919)

Quetta, Baluchistan 4 Jan 1934

R.W.T. served from 1863 to 1889; half
his time as M.O. with 42nd Royal
Highlanders (Black Watch).

Medals for BHUTAN 1868 KUMASI
1873 EGYPT 1882 and Khedivial

Star. Born Aberdeen 1841 d. 1898.

Graduated ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY.

FCAI 1958

1882

Itinerary of Steamer "Jahtak"

15 days trip to Assouan and back

of Convalescent Officers & Soldiers.

- Wednesday Nov 8th Leave Ison Bridge at 9 am
" " Arrive at Beni-Souef. towards Esneing
Thursday " 9th Leave " " 5 am
" " Arrive at Beni-Hassan.
Friday " 10 Leave " " at 5 am
Arrive Assiout.
Saturday " 11. Leave Assiout at noon
" Arrive at Jahtak.
Sunday " 12. Leave Jahtak at 5 am
" Arrive Kasr-el-Sayad
Monday " 13 Leave " at 5 am
" Arrive at Luxor in the afternoon
Tuesday " 14 at Luxor Excursion to Karnak
(opened by Mr Cook)
Wednesday " 15 Leave Luxor at 5 am
" Arrive at Ed Fou.
Thursday 16. Leave " at 5 am
" Arrive at Assouan.
Friday 17. at Assouan until 4 PM
Leave at 4 PM
Arrive at Kom Ombo.
Saturday 18 Leave at 5 am
Arrive Luxor early in afternoon

Sunday 19. Leave Luxor at 9 am

" " Arrive at Medinet el Khat

Monday 20. Leave at 5 am
arrive at Assiout.

Tuesday 21. Leave at 9 am
arrive Naghagha —

Wednesday

22.

Leave at 4 am.

Arrive at Cairo in the afternoon

(17)

Diary of Trip on "Steam Ship
Tahtak" up the Nile, 15 days,
in medical charge of Convalescent
Officers and Soldiers of British
Forces, Army of Occupation in
Egypt.

Nov. 8th. Left Kasr-el-Nil Bridge
Cairo at 10 am - Surgeon.

Sheaffe doing duty with me -

Convalescent officers. 7.

R.C. Officers & men 70
convalescent —

Officers Servants.

(Soldier). 3

Strength of Detachment Army Hospital Corps

Sergeant 1.

Warrant and file 3. 6.

2 - Inspected the men - each man provided with 3 blankets. - Breakfast served out soon after - and Beef Tea later previous to dinner Meal Hours regulated.

Officers

Breakfast. 8 Am.

Luncheon 1 Pm

Dinner 6.30 Pm.

Men

Breakfast. 8 am (within before)

Dinner 12.30.

Tea 4.30. Pm.

As Convalescents from Abbassingh had only 2 Blankets served out - I bought a large packet containing 25. which were given out in the afternoon of departure.

Patients spread out on pad along the deck - the more debilitated cases selected and placed in a Cabin at the fore-part of the Ship 2 Staff Sergeants were allotted separate Cabins _____

The accommodation provided for Officers
good - there being 6 cabins and an
after Cabin (large) for four - The con-
valescent officers had the choice
of berths, as suited them.

Every requisite of toilet & bedding, except
blankets were supplied to the Officers -

The men had supplied P
and bolsters -

Directed the Sergeant A.C. how to
distribute the duties of men under
him - so far as deck & cabins
were concerned.

Specially directed Sergeant to see that
each man was provided with his
furniture and blankets - only one
furniture deficient - This case was
transferred to a convenient place -

Inspection of convalescents

Officers all slight cases - The
majority of non-commissioned Officers & men

4 ^{very debilitated}
slight cases & the minority, merely
wanting change of air & rest - &
set well - Inspected diners, which
were found good consisting of Roast
Beef Potatoes &c - in selected cases
Chicken with Duck by trees as well
required. The bread especially re-
marked as good - French made -
all seemed thoroughly satisfied -
some later in the day expressing
themselves as perceptibly better.
all the Officers partaking of meals at
the same table and requiring no
special attention -

Provision on agent on board for
such stimulants as might be required,
to be placed in safe keeping and given
as prescribed -

Received from Medical Officer
Cook's Steamer, Assouan.

18. 11. 82.

Fifteen Plaques for
Answer to Liliput.

Mark of messenger.

2/12/82

4 ^{very debilitated}
slight cases & the minority, merely
wanting change of air & rest - &
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Provision on board for
such stimulants as might be required,
to be placed in safe keeping and given
as prescribed -

after Sun down found the night cold -
 Prevailing wind to and by N - heavy
 dew fall - requiring careful putting
 down of all side awnings - and
 as awnings prevented the proper
 steering of vessel - it was found
 necessary to stop the vessel, before it
 reaching the intended destination
 (as shown in the Itinerary Page.)
 Starting so late as 10 am is therefore
 objectionable & would recommend the
 convalescents embarking the previous
 evening - so that the vessel might
 start at an earlier hour next
 morning - would also recommend the
 most careful selection of pure cases of
 debility, where no acute symptoms were
 present - or such cases where there

would be little likelihood of any harm arising from exposure on deck under awnings, with the blankets allowed them. Reserving at the same time ample accommodation below for such cases as might occur. In addition to the 3 blankets I would therefore recommend the waterproof or ground sheet. (upulation) - which the patient could wrap round the blankets over his feet - In addition such man should have his night cap - as this found a considerable boon, preventing colds & rheumatism &c when well drawn over the head and ears. —

Informed Captain this agent, to see that unnecessary hatchways were closed - to prevent accidents. And to take care that no one was supplied by the crew or themselves with liquors &c from any source

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Ship or otherwise - and where any ship
rules were infringed, or want of clean-
liness disregarded to have it pointed
out to me at once -

9. November - Left - moorings this
day. 4 AM, reaching the station
(or might have arrived at the prison
evening) at 8 AM - Some com-
plaints made regarding the food -
which I found good - but wished
the agent to make it stronger - Rice
water drinks asked to be made for
such cases as might require them
and complied with - Dinners &
Other meals to be inspected daily before
and after service - and any complaint
at once investigated - Substituting,
where required, anything extra in
line of food the patient could not
take - All cases, requiring special
diets, to be specially seen to - & where

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which injured but treated as cases in
Hospital - A small piece of cheese
given with the bread this afternoon to
the Sea Men - The case of books
brought on board (a present) was opened
and issued to the patients. - The dinner
today consisted of stewed meat and
Potatoes. - Cooked excellent. - For-
ward night again it was very cold
and chilly - with dewfall - increasing
during the night - rendering it necessary
to utilize every available piece of
awning canvas, especially on the side
of the prevailing wind (W). 2 fore & aft, &
all patients especially instructed to
have in use their great coats in the
evening and utilize them with
their bedding during the night.
Inspection of sick & convalescents

found that some as yet had made no progress - while others had gained a little & some expressed themselves as nearly well - In all the appetite had improved - A few were bilious from want of exertion - requiring the aid of a mild aperient and lighter food - Prevailing wind as on previous evening but rather colder - This may have arisen from the ship's progress thru the water causing currents of air, having been at anchor on the previous evening alongside the west bank of the river. I have noted the cold nights especially, as I find that great care is required to protect from exposure to the chilly night air, especially in

convalescent cases - more especially
 in such suffering from diarrhea,
 (not to mention cases where there is a
 liability to diarrhea). Hence the
 use of the cholera belt and the
 waterproof or ground sheet with
 tight cap - when we can secure
 protection to head, stomach &
 lower extremities - & secure the
 invalid a good night's rest
 by placing him under the most
 favorable circumstances pos-
 sible.

10. Nov Continued our journey during
 the night but about 5 o'clock a
 leak from striking a sand bank
 which delayed us some time.
 Examined the holds, but little
 water had accumulated - &
 no inconvenience was experienced

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by day on board. - the western bank
more cultivated than E. bank - and
this has been seen ^{all} along since
leaving Cairo. - the majority of the
sugar factories having been es-
tablished on this side - the
weather today is milder and
much less chilly - the wind about
ahead of us blowing right along
the deck and proving very in-
vigorating - inspected all cases on
board - generally found all im-
proved - 2 or 3 cases still very
weak - but by far the larger proportion
sitting on to perfect convalescence
all seemed very much satisfied.
Some have quit bit diarrhea and
now wishing for opening medicines.
I would recommend in another trip

a good supply of Castor oil and
 Puleo Rheo co - being on hand
 as safe remedies in such cases,
 where any dysentery com-
 -plication may exist or has
 existed. Examined the milk
 today and found it very good.
 The being made up in 4 to
 5 pints of water. Dinner today
 of Quat meat and beans &
 very excellent - but few
 plates contained anything
 on removal. The Bread is
 still used, as baked in Cairn,
 and found very excellent and
 highly appreciated.

Towards night the air was not
 so cold as formerly. Not so dark &

the dewfall decidedly decreasing,
 in fact the air more genial altogether.
 Arrived between 11 and 12. at
 Asriout - remaining for the
 night - prepared weekly returns
 in duplicate, forwarding in duplicate
 to the Prov. Cairo - the post office
 at Asriout.

11th - A beautiful genial morning -
 much more so than it has been,
 Major St. Clair, Berkshire Reg^t ar-
 rived - lacerated wound of the leg
 beneath the knee; otherwise well.
 Received papers with him.

Officers able to go and see
 the place - men kept on board,
 and every precaution taken
 to prevent them getting
 agitated. Fresh supplies received

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here - all of very excellent quality,
and consisting of Mutton and Beef.

The country here along the sides of the
Hile, more especially the west - gets
more cultivated each day - and the
trees more numerous - especially
the Date palm - the country, to the
westward, protected by large & long
ranges of dry sandy looking hills
sloping down towards the river
and leaving a flat surface
of irrigated ground, where millet
and Sugar Cane are cultivated.
down quite close to the river edge,
where the natives may be seen feeding
the soil with water from the hile,
forming it into wells artificially
dug, here and there, along the
bank of the River.

Animal life also keeps pace,
on land and water -

Large Flocks of Pelican. Sand
grouse. Geese &c —

Detained here for the day while
the ship is caulking — Inspected carefully
all the convalescents today and find the
large number still improving, some few
cases remain in a very debilitated state —
no coal arriving — detained here during
the day, with no chance of our leaving —
recommended that the steamer be
moved away from the shore, to
avoid any chance of men leaving by
night. & to take the advantage of the
current and breezes on the river.
The same was carried out — night
genial and no dewfall — and on going
round all seem comfortable and happy.

12th Nov. Still detained — all very anxious
to go on — life getting rather monotonous —
and the men requesting permission to
"stretch their legs on shore", as they
called it — Morning air sharp and
chilly — Sent a private Telegram to

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Mr Cook's agency at Cairo saying
we were detained and negotiating
arrangements being made for our
proceeding at once - During the after-
noon a fresh breeze sprung up rendering
the air quite invigorating - wrote officially
to PMO Cairo reporting arrival of Major St.
Clair & reporting on general state of
health of the convalescents.

13th Nov. Still detained - but coal ex-
pected to arrive in sufficient time
to allow us leaving 12 mid-day -
Sailed at mid-day - Sergeant Buckle
R.A. remains very debilitated - dysentery
& symptoms returned - appetite very capricious
and frequent calls to the stool passing
small quantities of blood - requiring special
treatment and dieting. - Kit inspection of
Army Hospital Corps - Inspection of
Surgical Instruments in Panniers.

Left at midday punctually - having
a sharp breeze which was very
much appreciated by all on board -
proceeding in a southerly direction
along the eastern bank of the
river. Wind northerly and with a
little east in it - sharp - but very
agreeable - the convalescents beginning
to put on their great coats and keep
moving about - doing them good
after two days of monotonous
inactivity.

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The soldiers seemed to appreciate their
dinner - I served Beef and Lentils.
I may mention here that 2 hours after
the dinner meal was over it is issued
to all - to those who may wish it.
Wind fell away towards evening,
leaving air genial and calm and
very pleasant - 2 feet from dewfall.
Went round decks at 8.30 and
found all comfortable.

14 Nov. Went on our journey last night to
12 o'clock. When we moved - proceeding
again at 5 am - the river at this
stage presenting numerous long and
irregular bends and surrounded
on its Eastern bank by a
vast amphitheatre of high hills
of sand and lime stone sloping
down at one place into the
alluvial bed of the river & then
plunging down abruptly per-
pendiculars in the lower 100 to

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150 feet of their height. - passing on
this side the old town of Eskeem-
buzze again delightful - failing
towards noon but springing up
again in the afternoon. Went
round - find Capt. Bucket R.A.,
somewhat improved - Ste
McKee, Shropshire Regt. very
feverish and Trooper Hamlin
19th Hussars, in a very de-
-bilitated state - While all the
Others show a decided tendency
to mend, these 3 remain very
low and require careful looking
after.

15th Nov. Moved last night came
little distance above Kass-El-Layad
and today proceeding on our way
towards Sargor. The morning
sharp and invigorating - there

had been slight dewfall during the night - General health of troops remains good - No exceptions noted in the previous day's report - & one or two show extreme cases of debility, & loss of nerve tenacity and animation, & some time must elapse before recovery takes place.

The two dysenteric cases (Sr Buckel R A & Pte McKee Shropshire Regt. remain in a low condition - the former requiring stimulation of Chamberlaine on account of *Stomach irritability*. One Officer Lt Thatcher (Shropshire), had a relapse of acute

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Tonsillitis requiring local
counterirritation &c. —
Arrived at Luxor 8-30 Pm
16^{Nov} ~~1781~~. Mr Cook had offered a
trip to Karnak for the men on
donkeys — Karnak a little over
1 mile distant — allowed all
who were able to go. The men
spent a very enjoyable day
& returned to the boat in time
for dinner. The men behaved
well & no offences were regis-
tered or called attention
to — sentries posted to prevent
men leaving vessel or receiving
anything injurious. No
improvement in the cases previously
referred to. Caught dictating &
Lieutenant desisted & under

the Supervision of special orderly.
 17 Nov^r Left Cayor 4 am. - all men
 reported present - weather fine and
 genial - ready this morning
 found mouldy - Complaints made
 of it - These I sent to - 2 others
 fresh bread substituted. The
 Bread found fault with was
 supplied at Assiout and
 was not so well baked as
 the bread supplied at Cairo.
 Lentils were supplied with
 the stewed meat at dinner
 I seemed to be highly delighted.
 Towards midday & on in the afternoon
 heat greater than we have had, being
 from 78 to 80 in the Cabin - Sun very
 powerful - Passed Bonah in the
 morning about 11. and Edfou later

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in the afternoon - about 6 P.M. When
with the descent it got beautifully
fine - air very serene and
balmy. The presence of numerous
sandbanks impeded our way
and we had to row for the
night - 7 miles further on along
the left bank. No further re-
port on health - cases remain
as yesterday.

18. Daybreak on our journey to
Apronan - heat still great as
yesterday - could not do without
the covering - either side of river
surrounded by low ridges of
hills with large boulders of
rocks, presenting diversities of
shape - with the mirage
many fantastic forms -
River passed in places &
suddenly opening into again

and sometimes breaking into
different channels. Lt. Thatcher,
Strospore Regiment improving,
but Capt. Baker R.A. journeyed
the conjunction of the eyes intensely
yellow. - The latter not pleased
on sick report. but heated &
recommended careful dieting.
Within four or five days a decided
change in the temperature &
power of the sun's rays - Exercise
in the sun very fatiguing &
causing headache - air very
dry - passed Silselleh today
where the river is hemmed in
on both sides by rocks, forming
a narrow channel in the river,
as it expands again with
its alluvial delta on either

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side - here however it is
more plentifully wooded down
to the water's edge - ar-
-riving (noon) at Korm-burba
where here are the ruins of a
Temple - Temperature as taken
in Cabin 78° F. Sandbanks
still common - the hills around
are of lower ranges & more
alluvial in appearance.
Arrive Yonah 6 P.M.

The general health of the party
improved - the bad cases
forming a very small - The
Brand again felt very much
decreased - but not sufficient
to condemn it. It seems
more difficult at this
stage of the journey to

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preserve the head - probably
the balingre list is well done,
as in the case of bread & coffee
at Cairo. Which was pro-
mised fall to be ready for
19 Nov. Moved at Assuan
at 2.30 Pm. When we again
started on route for Cairo -
Last evening received a
Telegram from Surg. General
requesting information as to
progress made - answered
by telegram the same evening
45 Piastres paid. As the
same was despatched at
night. I had to be taken across
the river - General health
good - but there all are
suffering tired of the monotonous

of my life - I am expressing
 a wish to be in Cairo again.
 The dysenteric cases are
 improved - but very weak
 and far from well - Dis-
 patched weekly returns to
 17th Nov. in Amphite
 weekly returns sent by Postal
 boat, ^{the mails on} which I am informed,
 will reach Cairo 24 hours
 before us. The day has
 been very hot - and sun very
 powerful - overpowering those
 who have been visiting the
 first Cataract and other
 sights of the place - Those
 going having been recommended
 to take every precaution

against the sun - being bel-
-nets and wet handkerchiefs
over the head - very oppressive
on board ship. —————

I have affixed to this diary the
map of service on the Nile &
Suddieh. —————

anchored for the night a few miles
below Korm-Bukho - Leaving early
next morning - for Luxor
20th Still proceeding on our journey.
Blowing hard up the river & making
us and at times even causing
the motion of the vessel to be
unsteady. Beautiful incipitating
breeze for the men. Sweeping the
whole ship fore and aft. And
more life giving than the heat
of the previous few days.

28.

The men however seem physically to be picking up - about 50 of them fit for duty. - about 8400. - The minority still very debilitated - tho' some of them have improved - are very severe case of Chronic dysentery remains - every means of nourishment are supplied to him. Stimulants given Port & Champagne. but his debilitated state is very pitiable & the Injunc remains very dry & fixed. Arrived at Luxor the same evening about 6. When a bundle of papers were received. - Coasting at this station to proceed in the morning.

29.

21. Jan left this morning -

The Mead has been supplied
fresh at this station - The
junior supply having be-

come quite stale & mouldered.

It would be advisable in future

sup. were some means adopted

to check this evil - as for

supplying biscuits in the

absence of proper bread

During the day temperatures

very agreeable & a healthy

insignating breeze in the

river. Nothing fresh to report

regarding the sickness on

board. The vessel.

Arrived the same evening at

Singhah and moored for the

evening -

22nd Left early this morning for
Aspiont - weather foggy and coldish
with a fair breeze - reported
on arrival at Aspiont, the
health of troops & mns. as
follows.

Officers 7. Well & fit for duty
" 1 Jaundice, unfit
for duty.

56. Much improved and fit
for duty.

12. Cases requiring further
treatment - & weak and
debilitated cases, tho' not
fit for duty, much improved

2. Serious cases of
Chronic Dysentery, and
requiring very careful
treatment and dieting

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at this point of journey from
Luzon to Apia - found climate
very different - greater difference of
temperature - days not so hot &
nights colder - left Apia the
same day and moved for the
evening lower down at Manta-
loof - Evening visit found
all doing well, except Surgeant
Kuchel & J. B. R. A., who suffers
from excessive prostration -
occasional calls to the stool,
with excessive vomiting on
slightest cause - in fact a
pure case of extreme debility
and inability to contend with
the specific poison.

Every kind of nourishment
 is being made use of - brandy
 with egg, as flip, & small
 quantities of champagne - with
 the use of jellies made
 from chicken & beef tea -
 & the medicine use of
~~narcotics~~
~~sedatives~~ & diffusive stimulents
 with such cathartics as could
 be retained. A special order
 being detailed night and
 day to specially look after
 him.

23 Nov. Left en route for
 Benikasson - weather still
 foggy ahead - but a pleasant
 breeze on the water - Left
 Lunenburg. Still weather 2.

more collapsed - but still symptoms
 not more pronounced ^{than} they have
 been - about midday a sudden
 change - body colder - features more
 collapsed - & evident signs of
 approaching dissolution - even
 now stimulants taken and
 retained - but prostration very
 marked - symptoms went
 on from bad to worse and
 patient died about 1.30
 Pm. - Thoroughly exhausted -
 Reported same by Telegram -
 arrival at Meghala.
 Where we moved for the evening
 where we found the mos-
 quitos and sand flies very
 troublesome.

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24 - November.

Leave early this morning
en route for Cairo. Morning
cold and hazy - a cool
breeze during the day in
river. - written up to in
voyage. I winding up the
different documents re-
-quired by P.M.

No further report on general
health of troops - which I
consider has been very
satisfactory - especially
in the purely debilitated
cases - receiving all

Cases of Chronic Dysentery &
Diarrhea for a sea voyage
as better adapted

Returns End of Voyage -

Find

52 Fit for duty.

12 Hospital

5 Convalescent

1 Duty.

70 Total.

Abbasiegh. 25 Convalescents

Duty 20

Hosp. 3

Convalescent 1

Died 1
25

Citadel 20 Convalescents

Duty 13

Hospital 6

Convalescent 1

Gherich. 25-convalescent.

Duty. 19.

Hospital 3

Convalescent 3

Total 25

7 Officers sent - only

1 returned sick - Capt

J V Baker RA - who

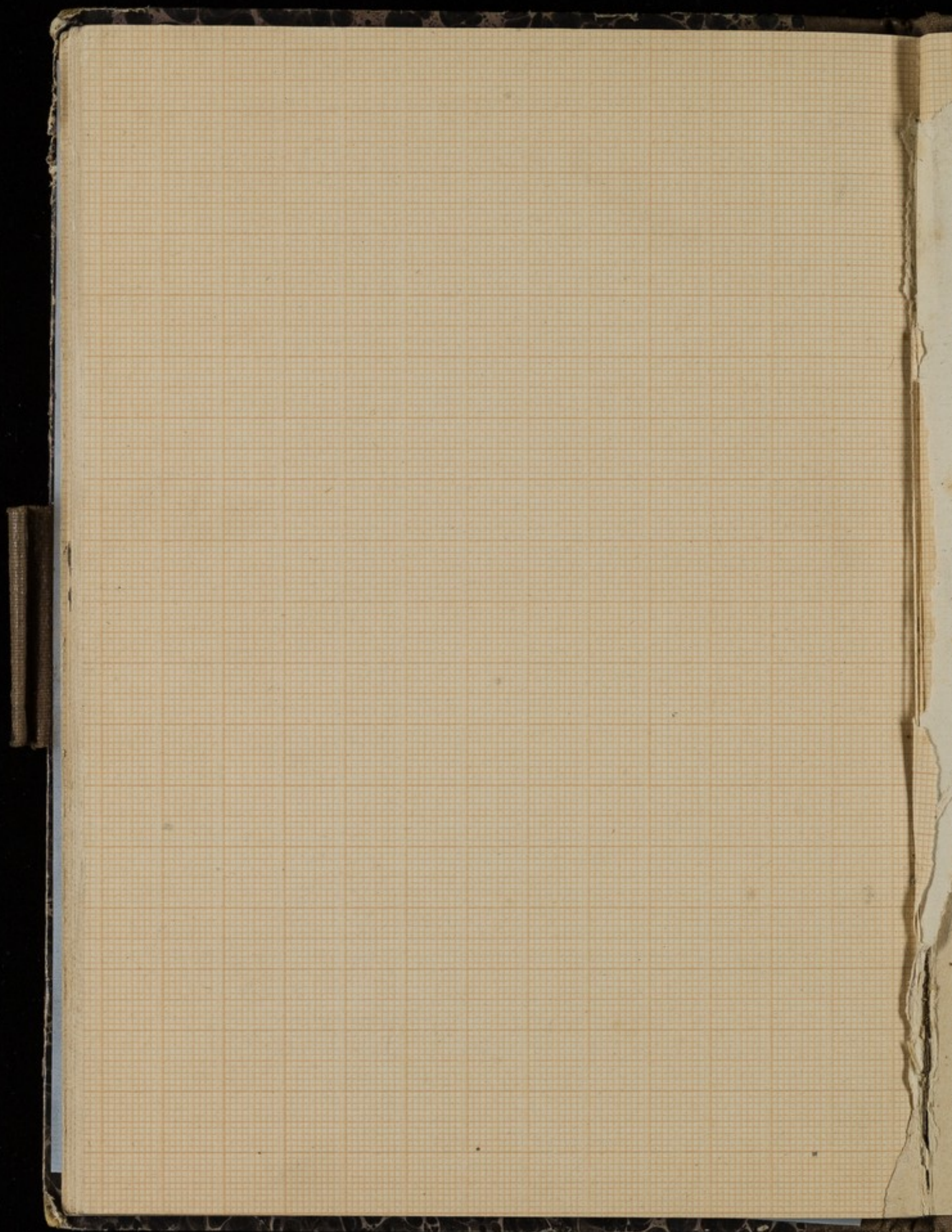
after suffering from

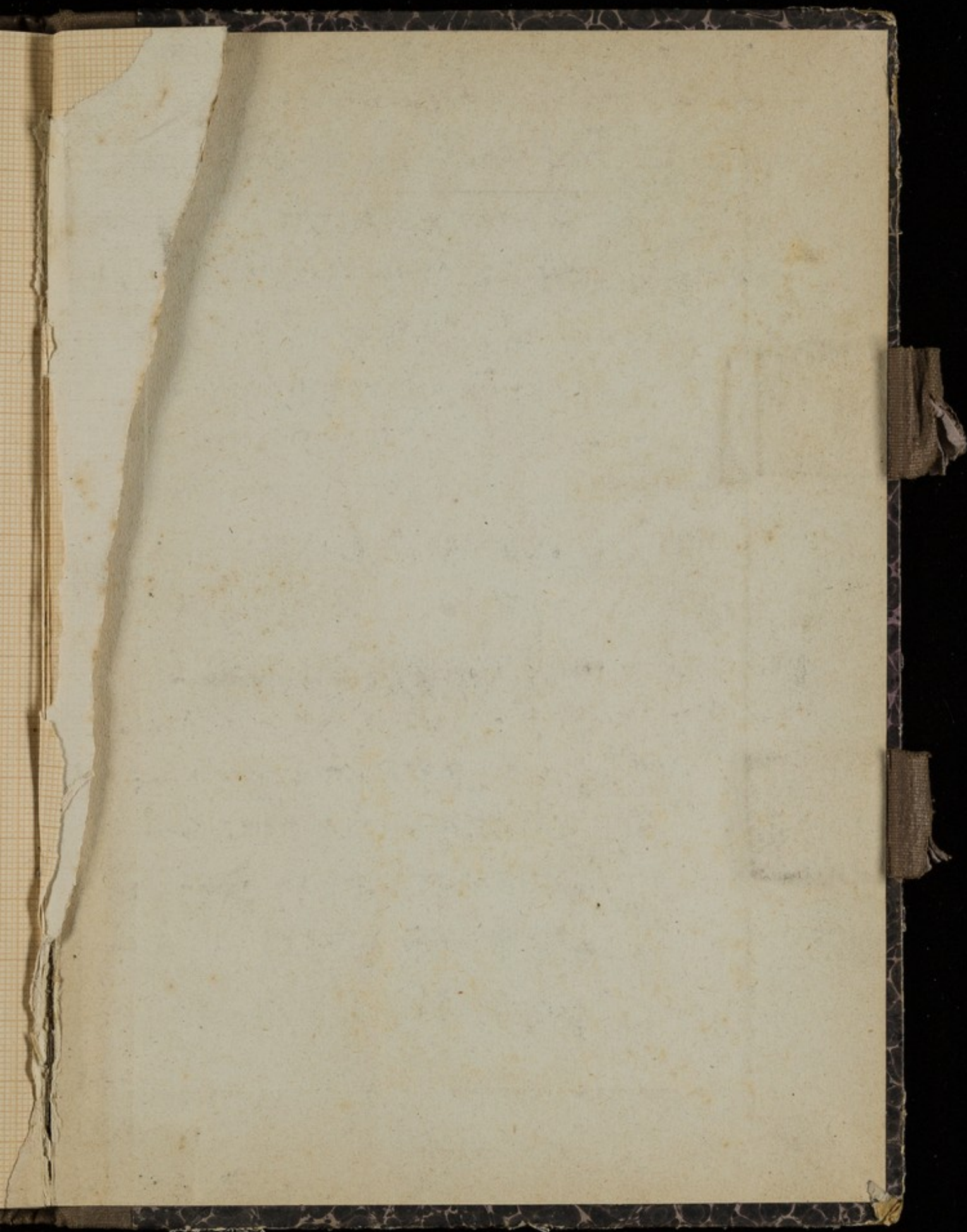
Scrimmer has been

attacked with jaundice

W. J.











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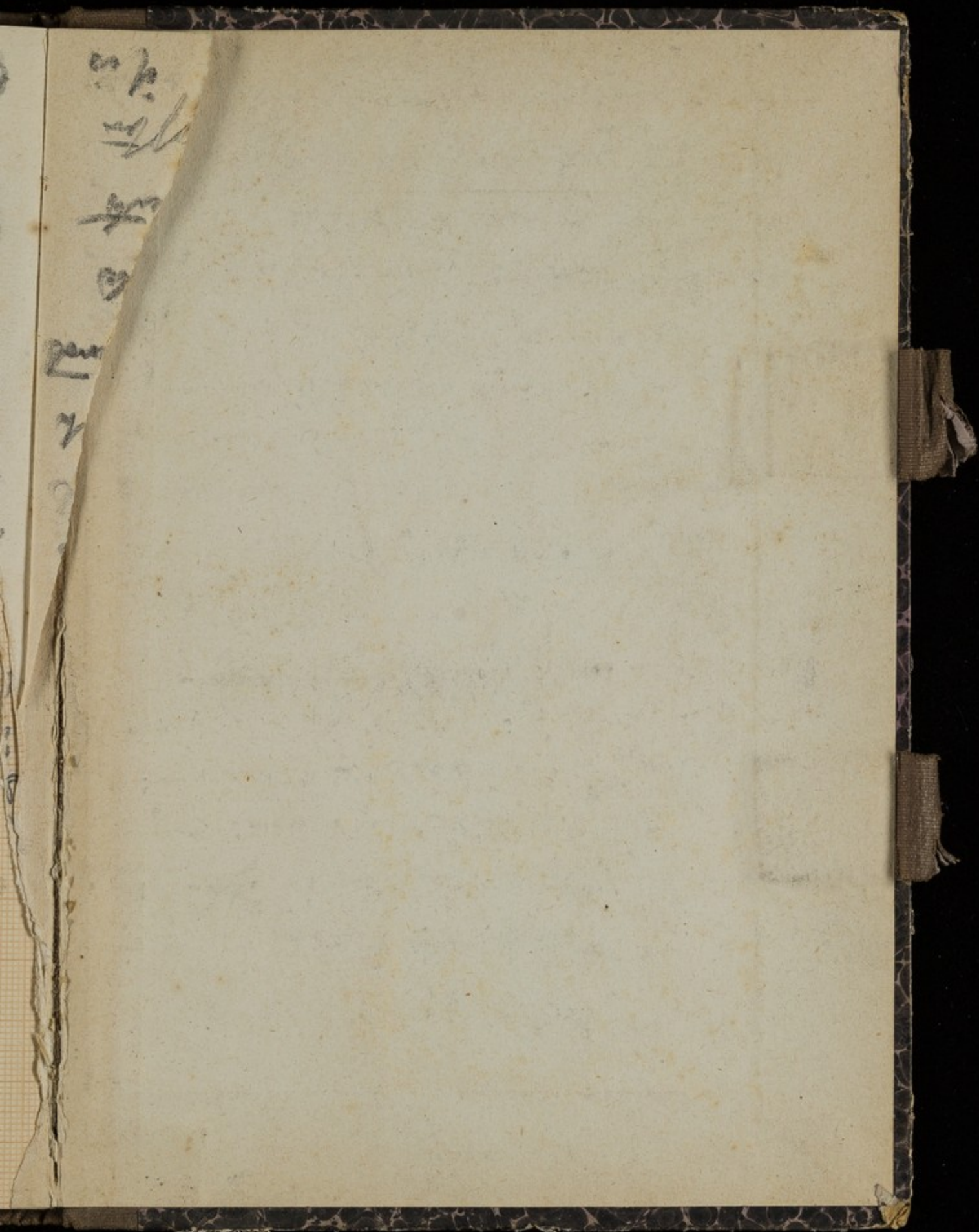
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