

of Rhode Island &c.

March 13th 1822

My venerable & eminent Kinsman, the celebrated Doct.
 John Fothergill, wrote to me, while a student in the University
 of Leyden, respecting my graduation, and the subject
 of my thesis, when I informed him I had made consider-
 able progress in it, and was well pleased to learn that
 it approximated so near to his own opinions, we having
 spoken of it in general terms before. That great man's
 recommendation was that I should discuss the superior
 powers of the Stomach in our system. On shewing him
 what I had done he remarked with satisfaction that I
 had extended my views beyond what he had con-
 -templated, and he feared I should not be able to fill
 up the sketch I had dashed out; but added, with a
 smile, that it had the characteristic of adventuresome
 youth. I however discovered that he was more than
 satisfied with my ulterior views ~~views~~ of the subject w.
 he had first suggested. Before I had opportunity of
 asking his permission, he kindly said, and Kinsman
 thou hast my leave to dedicate thy inaugural, or first
tentamen to me, on condition that thou use no
 superlatives. I conformed to his direction to the very
 letter, and was rewarded by learning he was not a
 little pleased and satisfied as I expected, for assuredly
 every word of that epistolary homage or reverential
 respect was strictly true, unless my grateful fee-
 -lings betrayed me. I meant to say

J. B. W., having every reason for gratitude and
 veneration, dedicate this my first tentamen
 to Dr Fothergill - a man very learned - wise, and pious:
 the founder, and director of my medical studies - in name
 my proavunculus, in effect my Father. In the ori-
 -ginal thus Johanni Fothergill, Viro admodum
Litterato, Sapienti ac Pio - Studiorum meorum Fun-
-datori ac Moderatori, nomine Proavunculo, Re Patri
meo, - Summa venerationis testificanda causa

S.
Benjamin Waterhouse - an American.

* A great uncle by the mother's side.

Here are no words in the superlative degree, but simply of
 truth and soberness, transcending controversy. Beside

this special subject as a Physician there, and
of a more general aspect on w.^c I wish thee to direct
thy attention as a citizen of the United States, I mean
the history Natural & Civil of thy native place Rhode
Island, w.^c I hope and believe may turn out to be
in the United States what Bath is to Great Britain
the resort of Invalids, from your Southern States, and
from the West Indies. As the Intermittent Fever, or
what you call in the South the Fever and ague, was
never known to prevail in Rhode Island, and can
hardly exist a day when brought there from the
South, I foresee no spot in "the Colonies" as we
used to call them, so fit, so proper and so likely
to become the Bath of America as thy native
Island."

The wise & benevolent Dr Fothergill frequently
adverted to this his favorite subject, and actually de-
signed to promote it; for next to his own country
Yorkshire in England, was that portion of America
where the English language was the vernacular
tongue. And the wise and benevolent Fothergill
was my fulcrum in everything that was good while
I was in England, Edinburgh and at Leyden. His
remarkable partiality to America was in the first
instance owing to his Father, who was a powerful
preacher of the Religious Society of "Friends," and
and of his brother Samuel Fothergill, still more
eloquent as a preacher, and who was remembered
with admiration as long as memory could be re-
tained of the real person, and ever since, by tra-
dition; for the writer was an infant in arms, when
that eloquent man moved the people of the British
colonies, as Orpheus is said to have moved
not only the human soul, but even the brutes w.^c
being interpreted meant the depraved and brutal
disposition in degenerated; for it is certain that
Samuel Fothergill's eloquence here & in England
was without a parallel, unless we admit of that
of the celebrated George Whitfield, who was an a-
-mire of his fellow laborer Fothergill, who was

a most eloquent preacher among the Society
of Friends, before or since his time, w.^c as it re-
-garded America, the first year of my life viz 1754.
When it was remarked by some possibly invi-
-diously that the Bachelor D^r Fothergill, never
appeared quite so partial to any young man
even his nephews, as he seemed to be to young
Waterhouse, born, and grew up to man's estate
at three thousand miles distance, and who,
though he came to him highly recommended,
could hardly be called a relation, yet so it
was. The Doctor evidently took pleasure in ask-
-ing Benjamin questions, and very rarely indeed
without a smile of approbation at his answers.
But there was another and more potent reason
w.^c the venerable man now and then mentioned
as did some others of Fothergill's age belong-
-ing to the Society of Quakers, and that was a
most powerful one, I mean a personal resemblance
either of feature, yet less of feature than of per-
-son, about his shoulders, w.^c are rather high than
sloping, and something and somewhat in speech
By somewhat I mean something—something uncer-
-tain what, difficult to be precisely defined. The "je-
ne sais quoi" of the French. What ever it may have
been, the good and great man felt an affinity with
Nor was it to me wonderful. Every evening except the
sabbath, I sat at the same square table placed in
the middle of room, and directly facing each other; he
with his pen & ink, answering his numerous letters of con-
-sultation written in more languages than one, and w.^c
he often said was the most laborious part of his bu-
-siness, after riding all day over the pavements of
London. The letter-collector came three times through
the street, with his bell, the last time, about eleven o
clock, when they were taken from the district depo-
-sit and put into the general Post-office in Lombard
street, near to the Royal Exchange to go, if we may
so speak everywhere. While D^r Fothergill was in-
-tent in writing professional letters, I was as busy
in transcribing from my lectures of the day from a short

short hand to a long or common hand. I think I shall ever remember what the worthy Doctor said to me one night that struck me for a moment like a cannon shot.

He looked up at me directly opposite, and said, "that's right, Kin'sman - never slacken thy industry in acquiring, medical knowledge, put down every thou hearest in the day from Hunter - Fordyce - Lowthorpe and Furgerson and then let me tell thee thou wilt never make a great Physician till thou shall have forgotten it all."

It struck me in the pit of my stomach (not in the heart as most people unwisely say) when suddenly surprized by something afflictive. I drop'd my pen, and I suppose my countenance, when Dr Fothergill laughed aloud - a very rare thing indeed for him, and added in the kindest and soothing tone - Be not discouraged Benjamin, but hear my reasons for saying so. - Reading alone will never make a wise man, or a skillful physician; and I am satisfied that intense reading, or extreme closeness to letters is an injury in learning any and every science. It even tends to impede the healthy operations of the young physicians personal intellect. He must feel for himself - try for himself, and acquire for himself, or in one word he must try for himself - he must attempt by repeated efforts. He must make the trial, untill repetitions prove the fact. We are taught by practice & repeated observations. Experience is knowledge derived from repeated trials; hence the peculiar expressive phrase the Practice of Physic.

Of what advantage are all the books ever printed to the Captain of a ship, or his pilot on an unfrequented coast compared with that w. he acquires from his dipping-lead, and his aspect of the clouds, and his general knowledge of the sight left or invisible winds, w. blow where they listeth, that is, wherever they lean or incline. Can books, or lectures w. are the same thing teach the doctrine of the pulse, or the peculiar aspect of the human countenance, though it is, through mercy divested of hair in all those parts of it w. give us the operations or movements of the soul. Every one who has to deal with the human body, and especially of the aspect, including its colour, and especially of those windows of the soul the Eyes, must learn these important particulars through his own senses. See

I saw all this and never forgot it, and now in my old age I commit it to paper and ink for the benefit of those who have not had my advantages, of studying at the feet of Gamaliel, but at the same table with one greater than the Jewish Doctor, and doubtless as pious a man, and considering the age in which we live, and our enlarged means of information a Christian Philosopher in whom none ever found quile: and whose acts of benevolence, chaste and faultless life of seventy years, and innumerable and ceaseless charities, and relief of human sufferings by disease will justify me in uttering ^{my} of full belief of John Fothergill, that rigid truth may say of him — There was a Man sent of GOD whose name was John.

When Fothergill died, of a very acute dishepful disorder of the urinary bladder, and parts adjacent, the public prints poured forth the sighs and groans of a grateful people in sighs and strains of deep affliction from the court to the cottage. The language was we have lost the friend of mankind and of merit — the physician who many had believed for half a century had stood between them and the grave. The notion of his great riches was equally extravagant. From his ample and select practice, it was imagined by a great portion of the people that his earnings would equal that of Radcliff's. I heard him more than once remark that the opinion that he would cut up fat would be found falacious. No said he I have been contented to be my own executor, and never had the frivolous ambition of being quoted as leaving as I might an immense fortune as a physician. What he left was handsome, but not so disgracefully large as some of his predecessors, w.^e he considered as a reflection on the character of a practitioner of physic. It was a natural error of judgment arising from his chaste life as a Quaker — his unsurpassable industry as a medical man who never saw the inside of a playhouse or ballroom, and who never built a house, or ever travelled abroad after he commenced a practitioner of physic in the rich & busy city of London, where Physicians are more honored and better paid than in any other city in the world. H

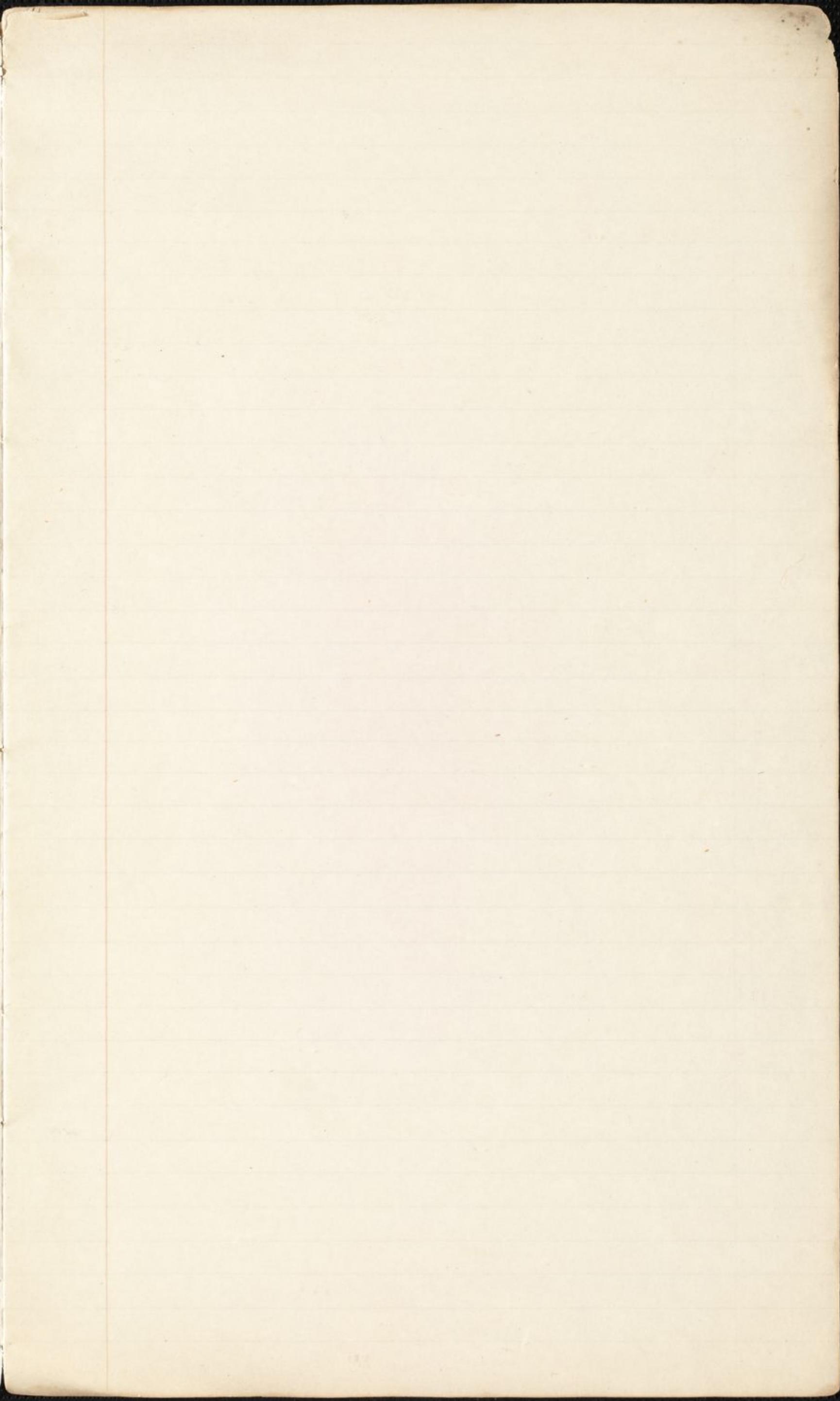
It is incredible what a vast fortune a very popular Physician may scrape together in the space of half a century, by unceasing practice and testimony accumulations in the city of London, that more than modern Kenilworth, or Babylon, where the inhabitants are generally speaking "full of idleness and full of bread."

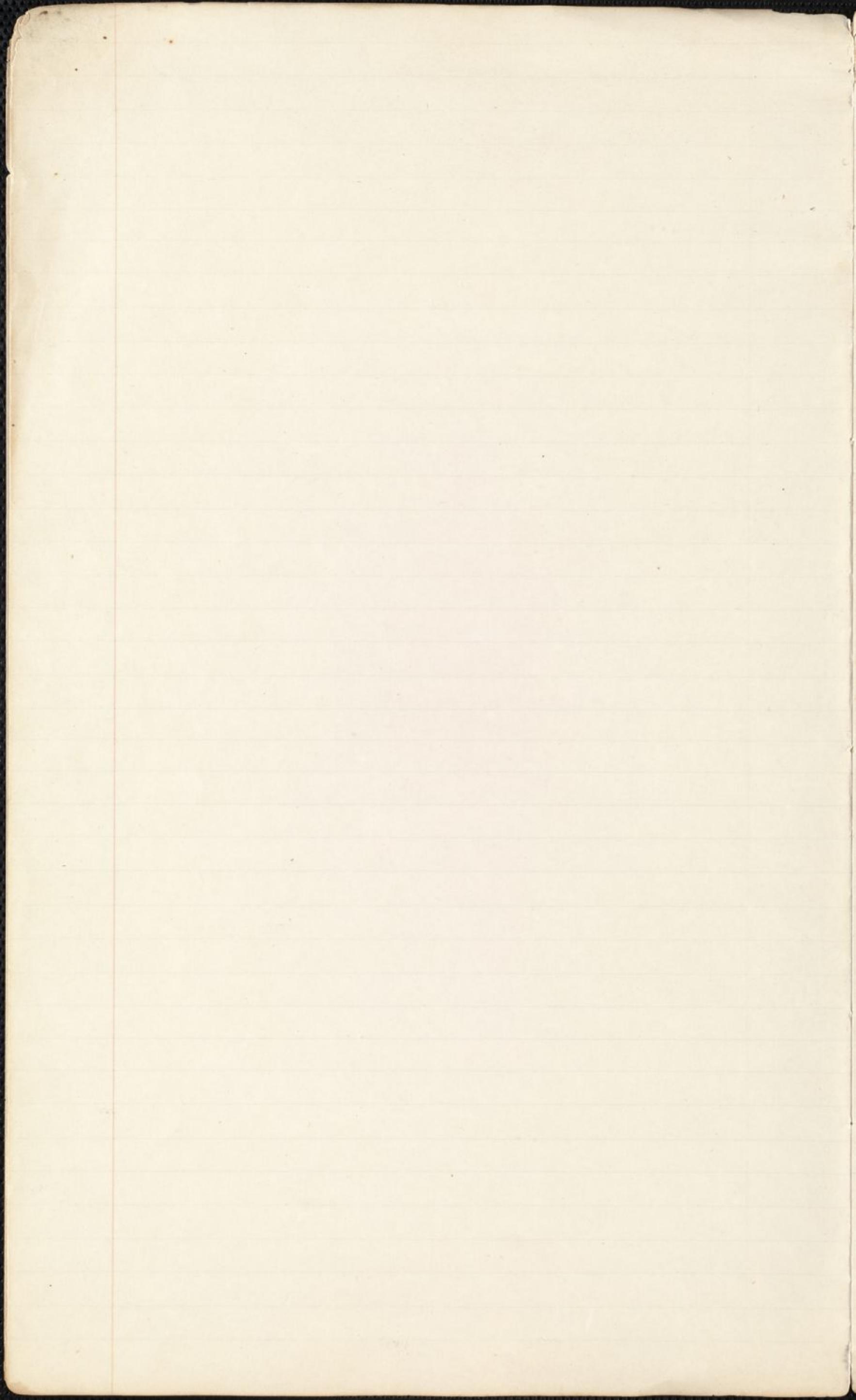
Dr. Fothergill was Physician to Lord Mansfield who was a near neighbor, and relied on his skill with implicit faith and entire reliance, without doubt or reserve either of his ability or fair mindedness. Earl Mansfield's complaints were seldom more than what arose from a deep thinking mind, and needed only the judgment & advice of a consummate Physician to suggest the best way of making his patient stand his own physician. I never saw Lord Mansfield with other than a healthy countenance for a man of three score years & ten.

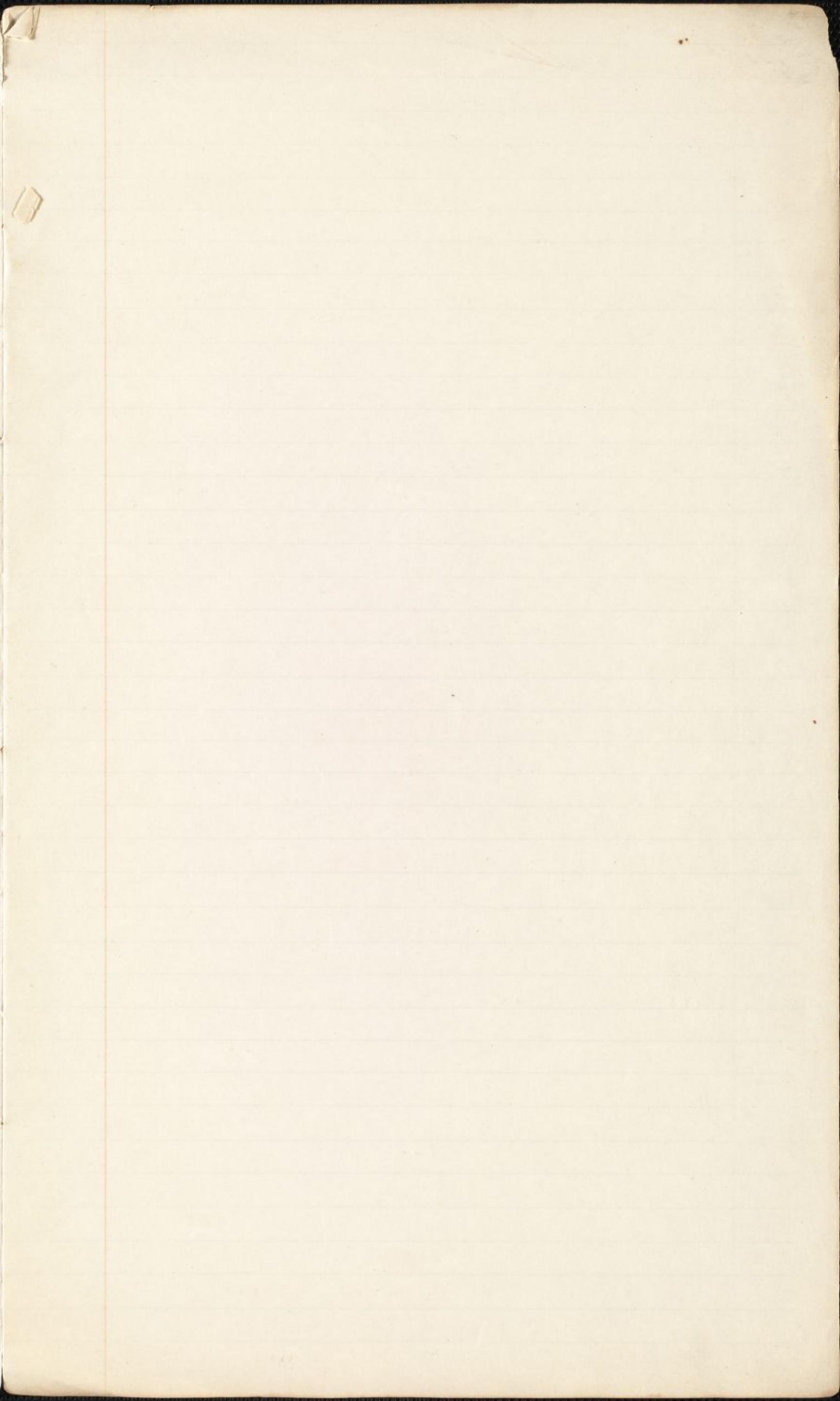
Lord Chancellor Thurlow was somewhat different. His constitution seemed to have been more freely tampered with. He, though a strong, athletic looking man, had some pretty strong marks of hypochondriacal affection. He would not infrequently call himself at our house to relate a new symptom, or relate a new feeling, and beside he, a very dark and powerful looking ^{man} bordering on the fine military aspect, had nevertheless a strong marked aspect of a spleeny subject, with nevertheless an iron fibre and a dauntless mind struggling against some visceral derangement.

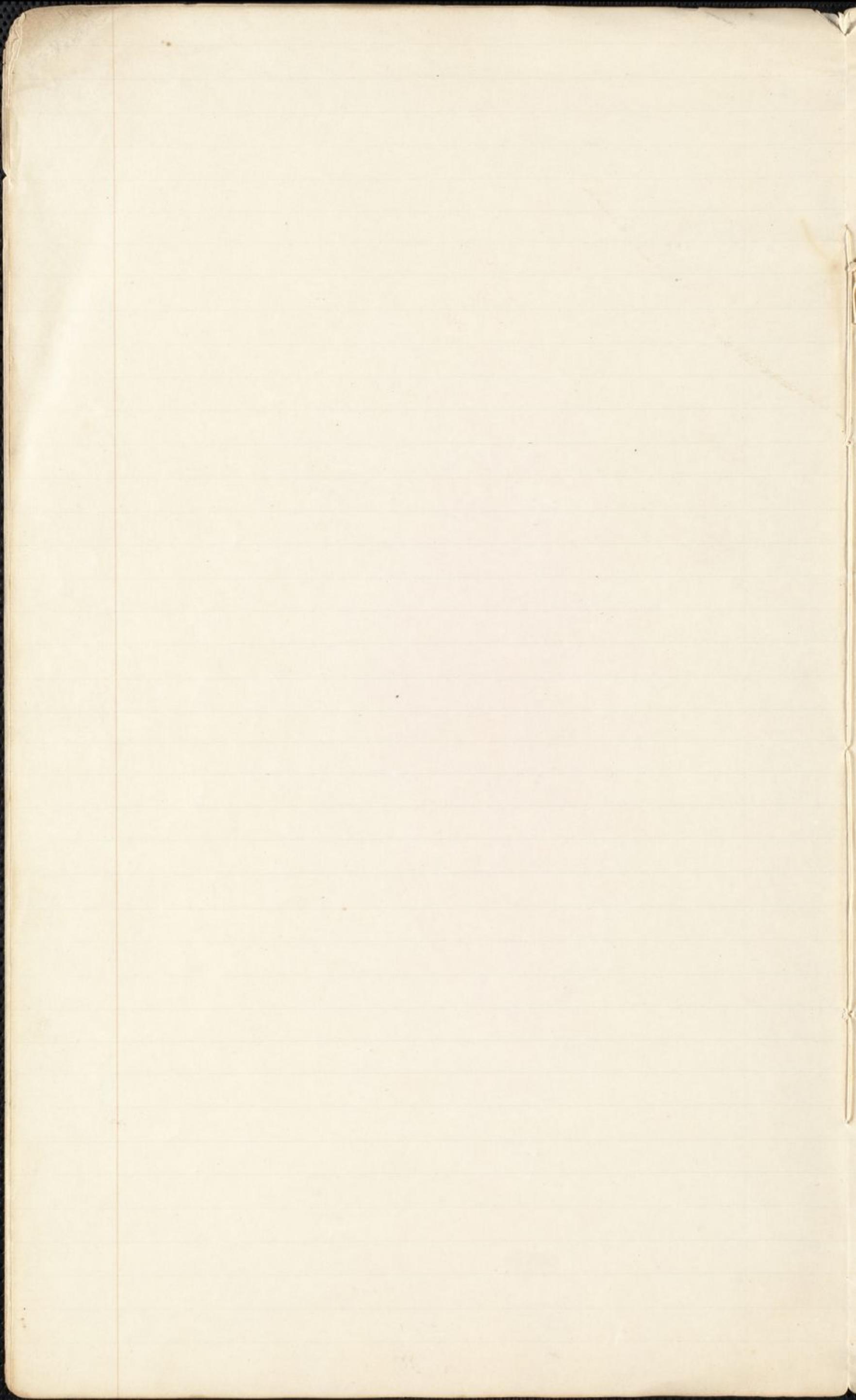
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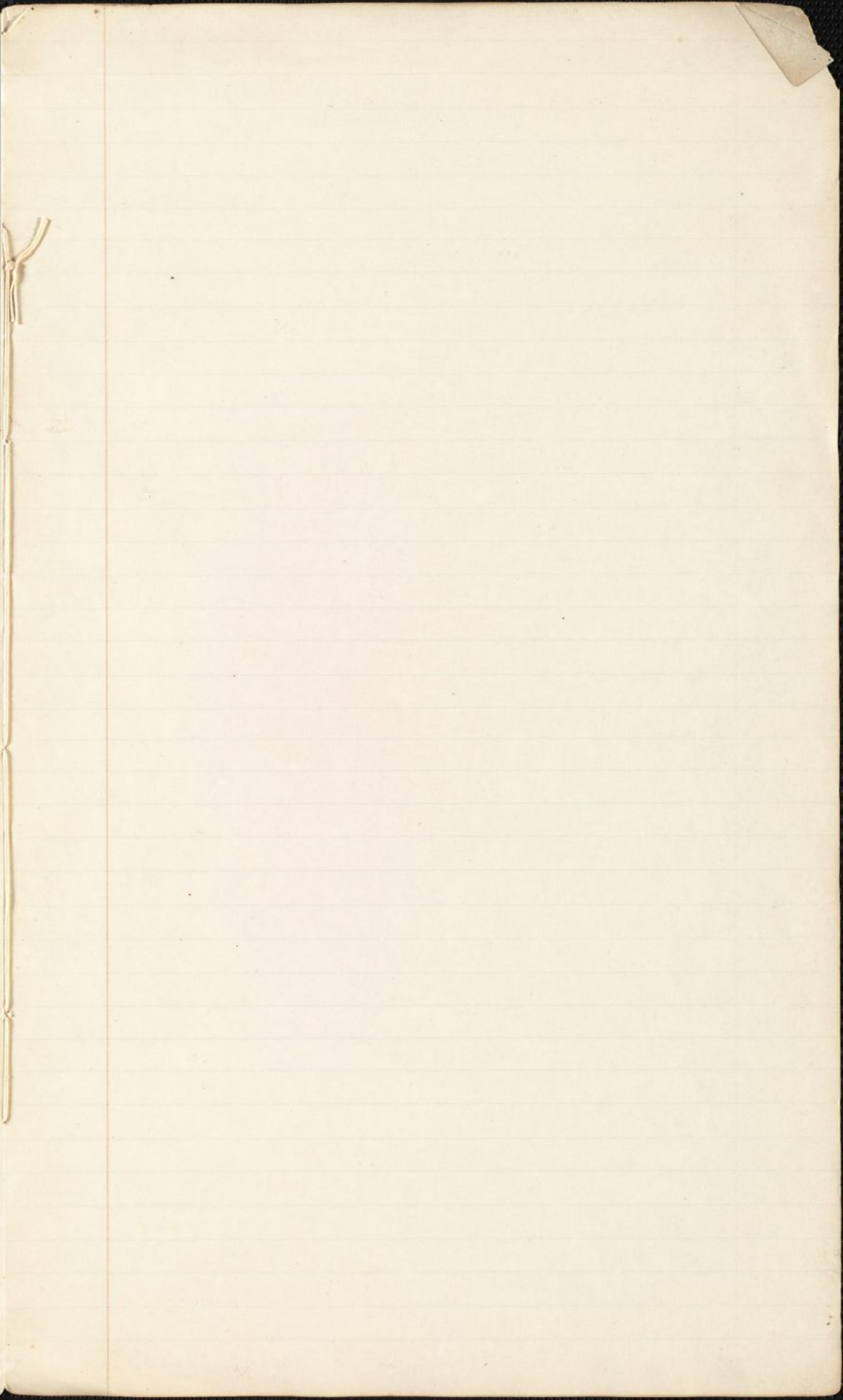
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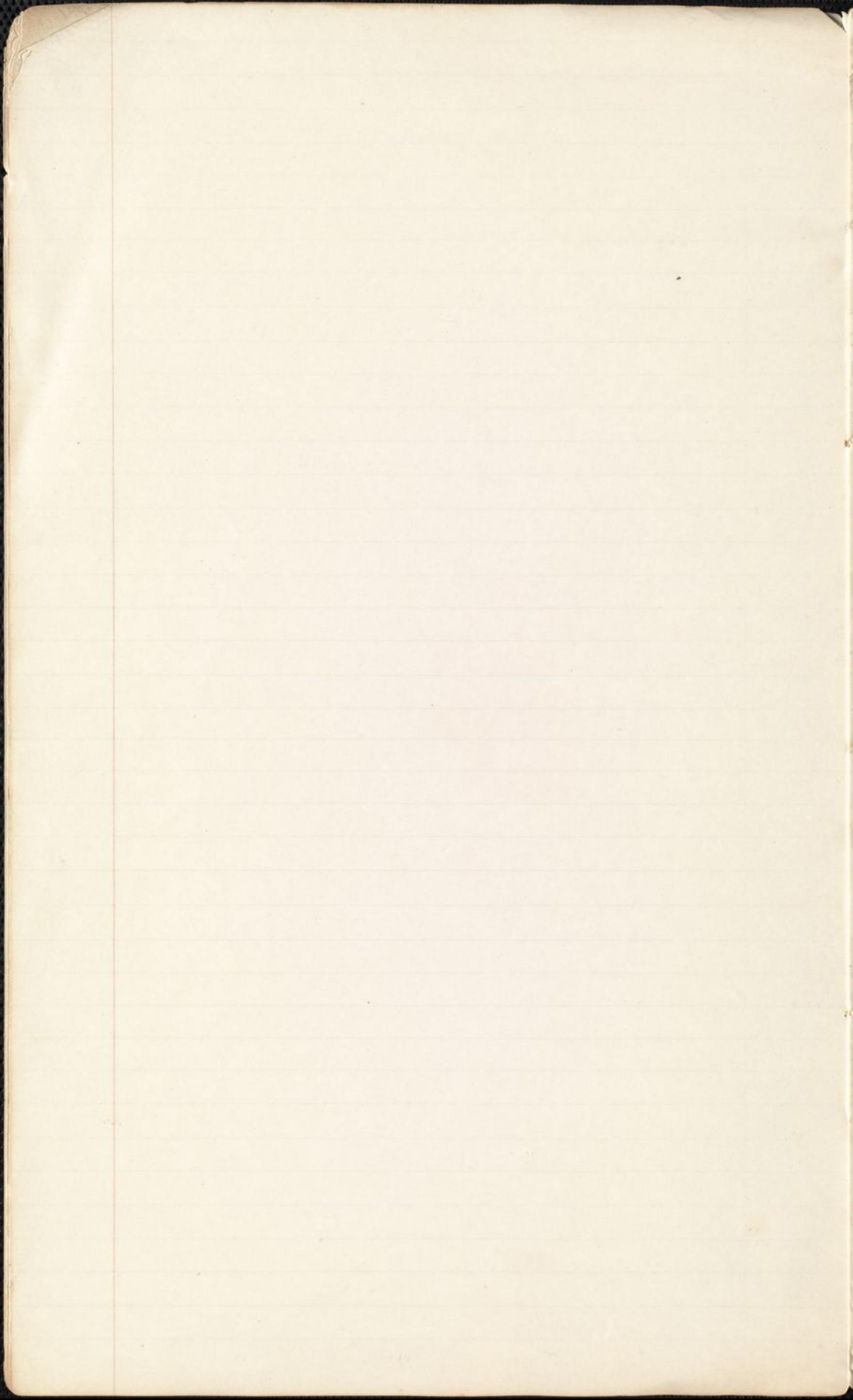


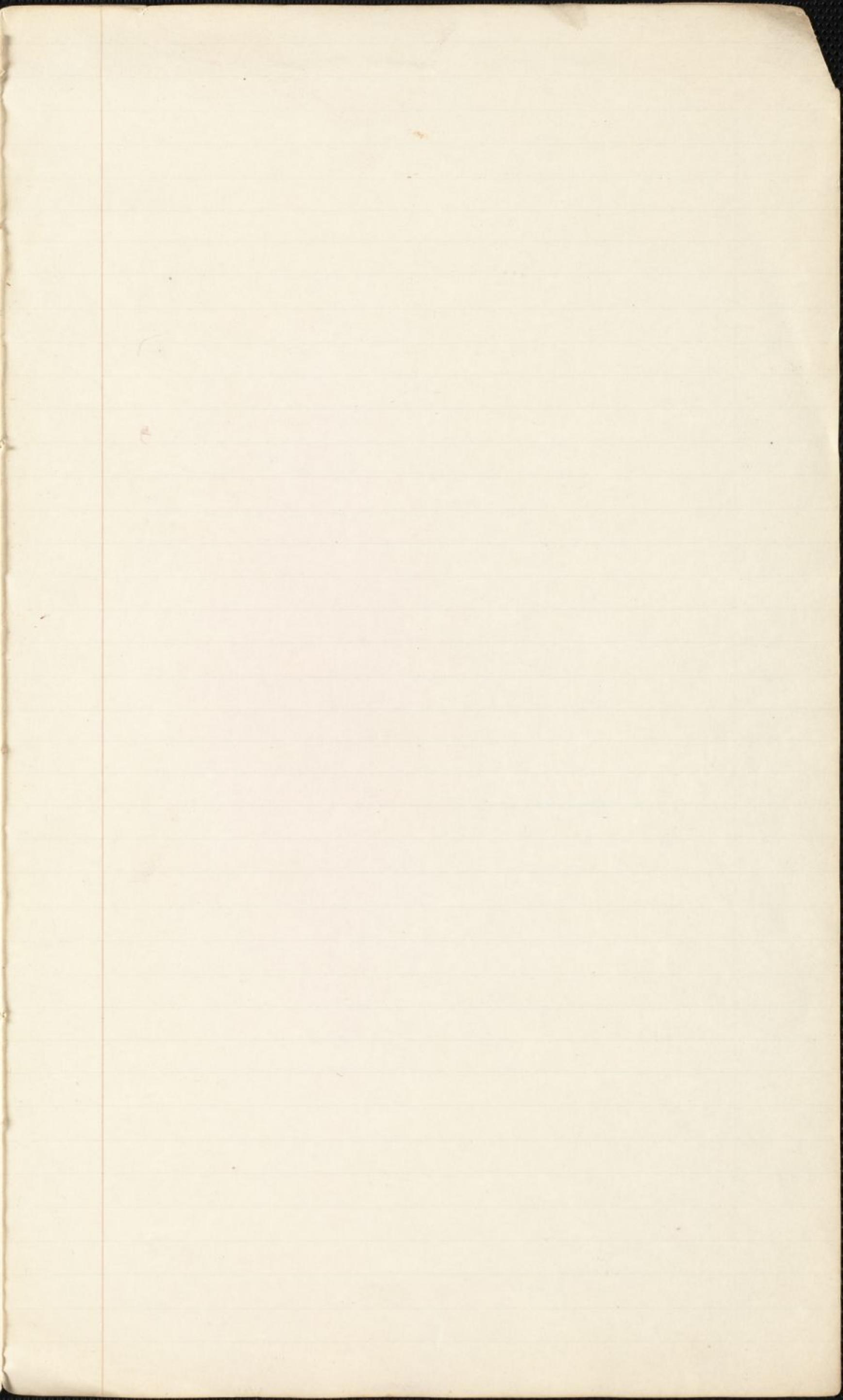


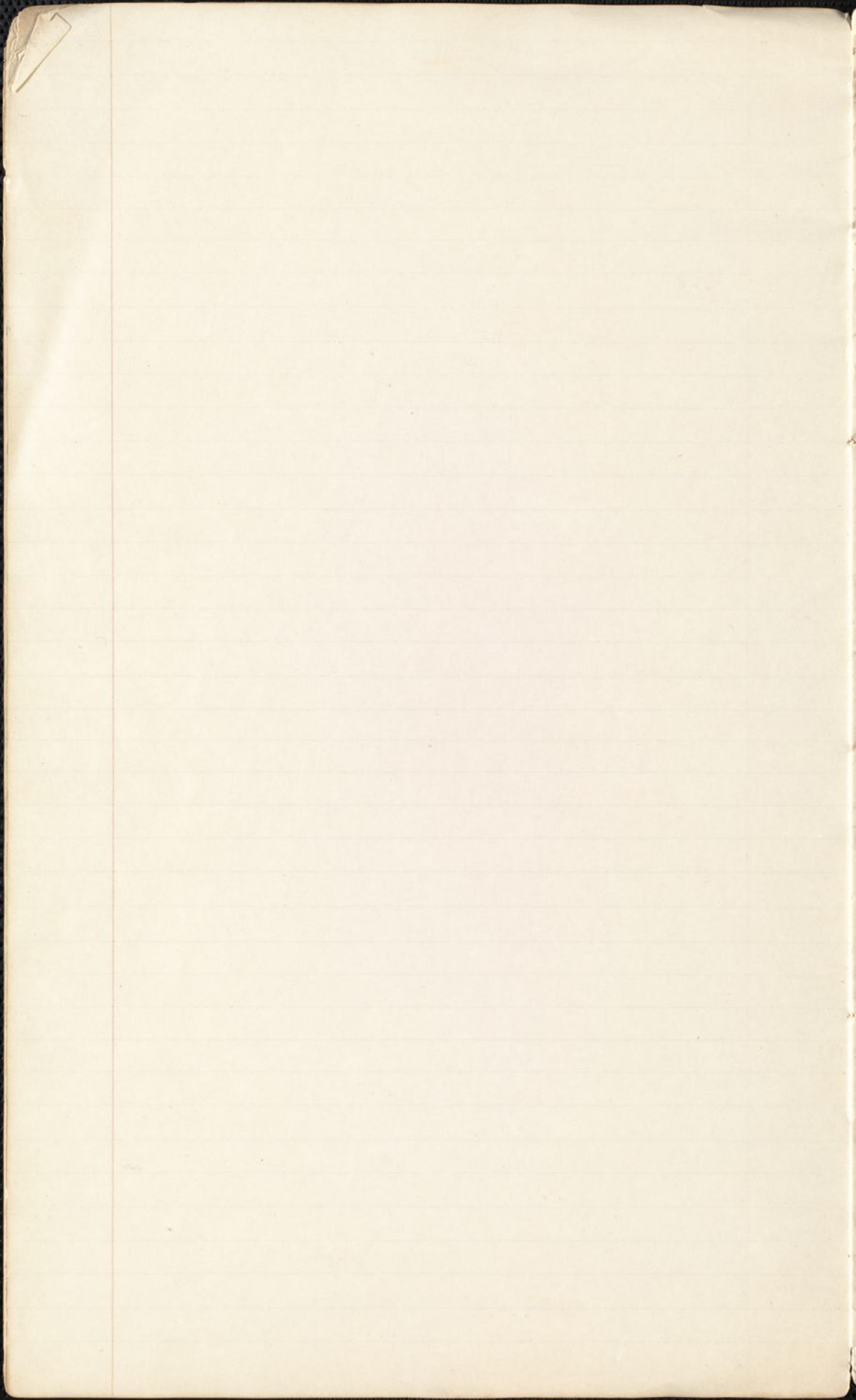


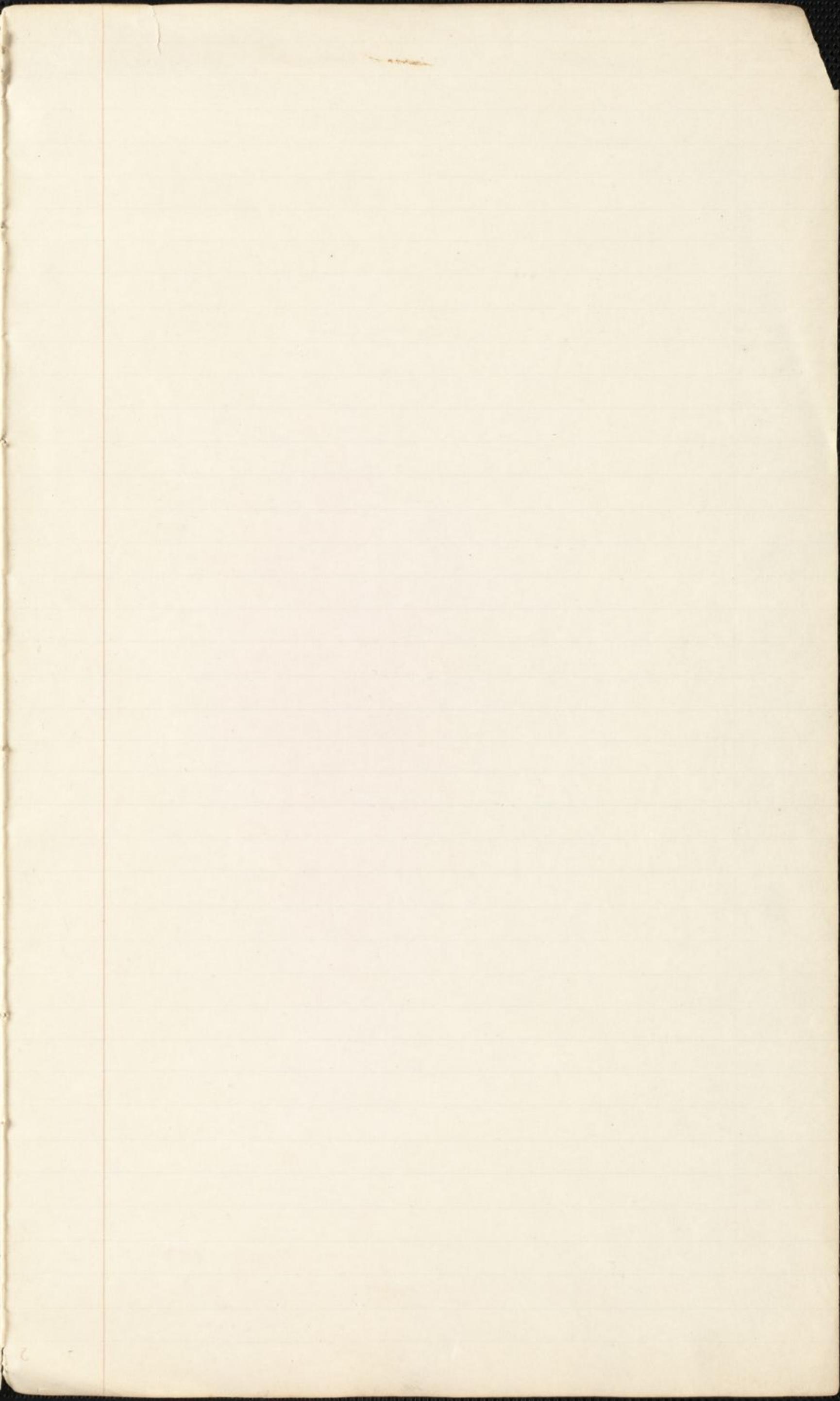


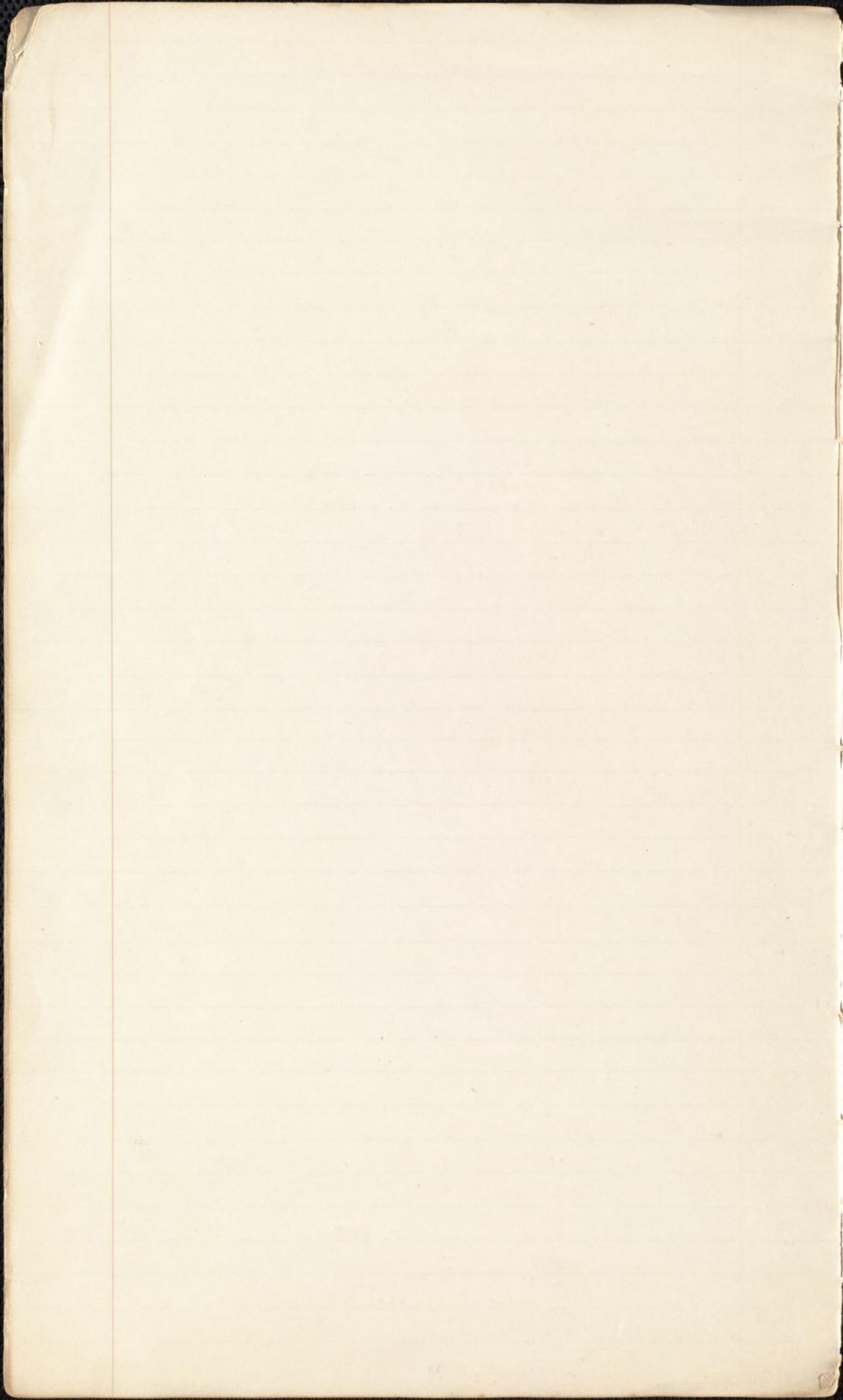


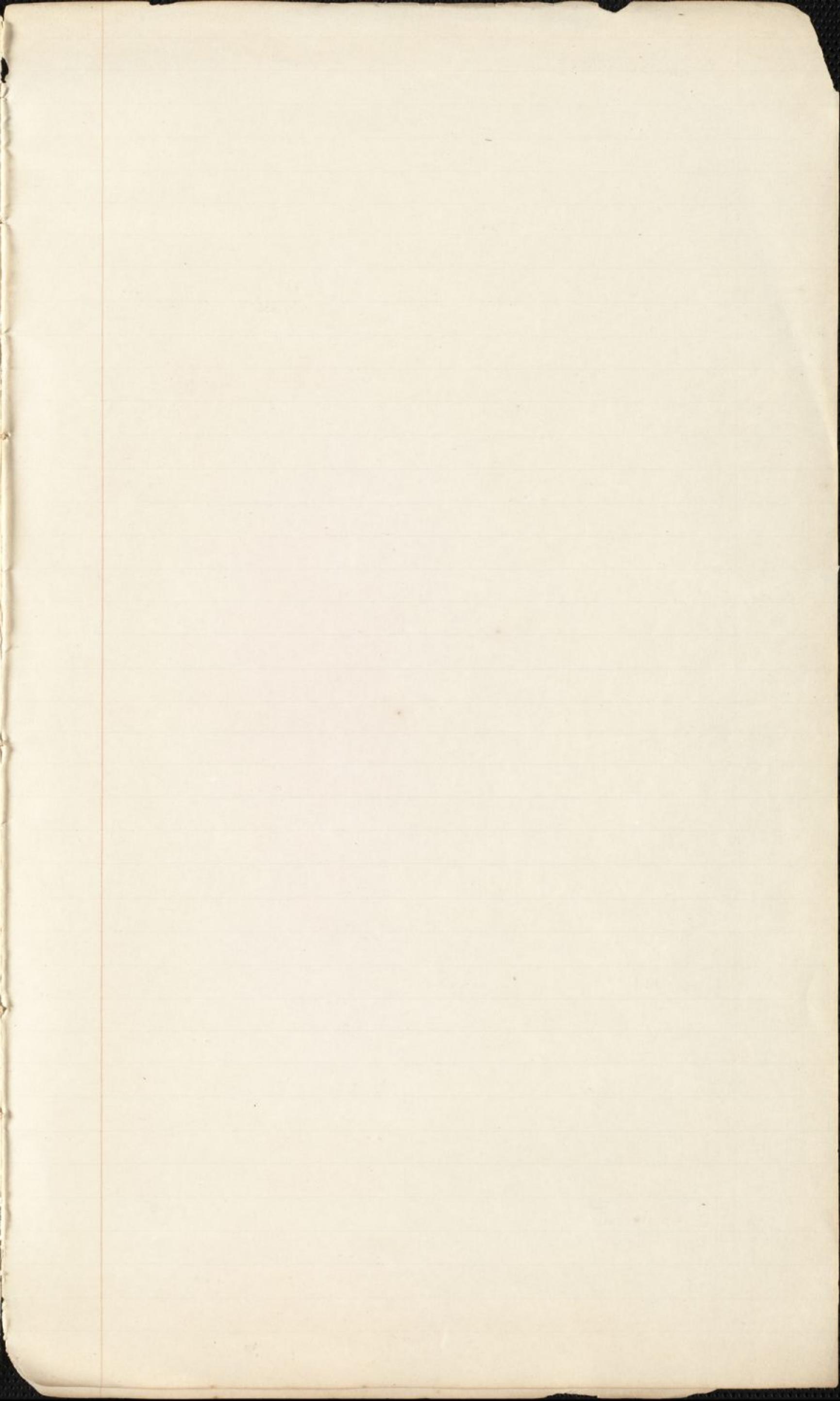


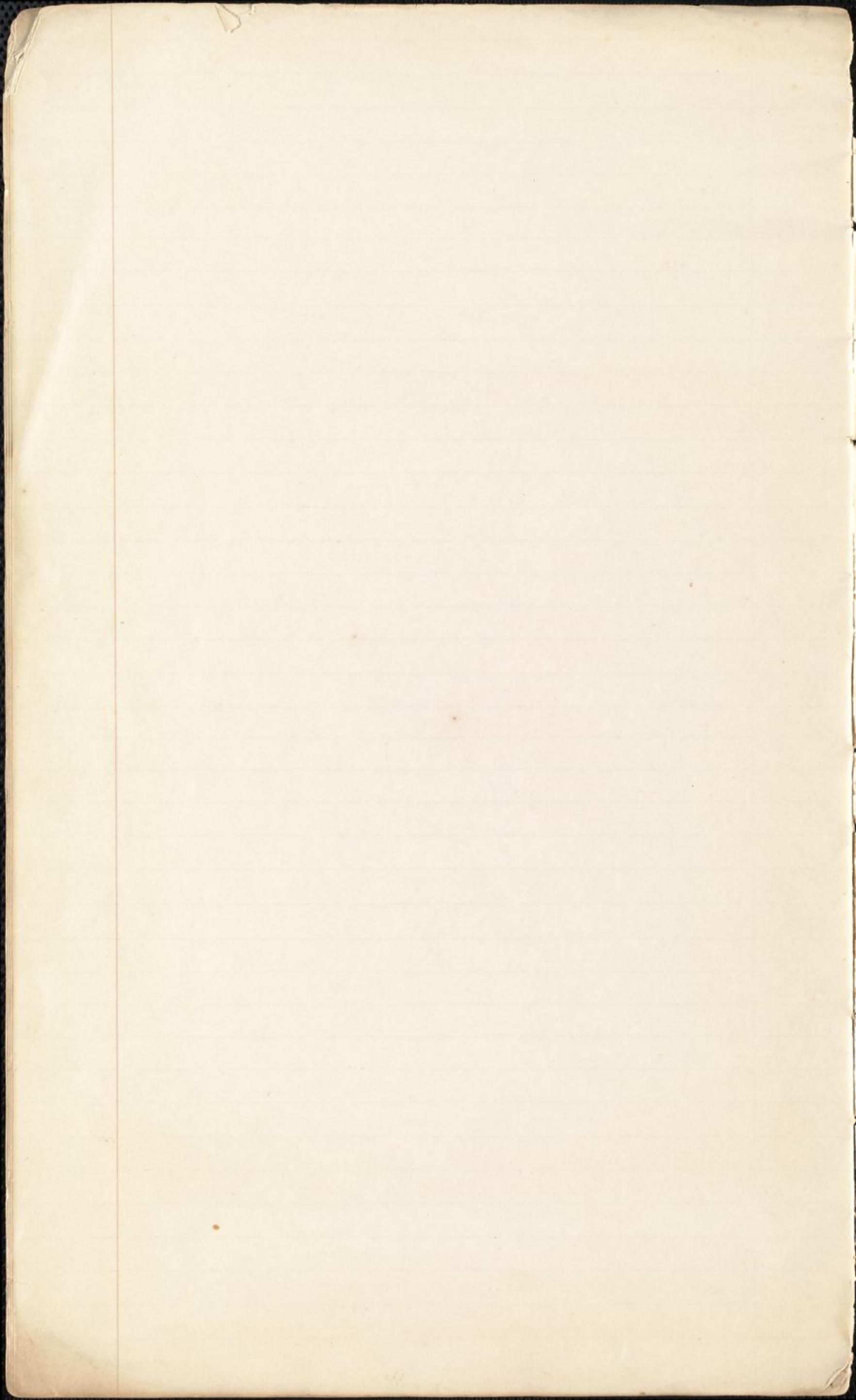


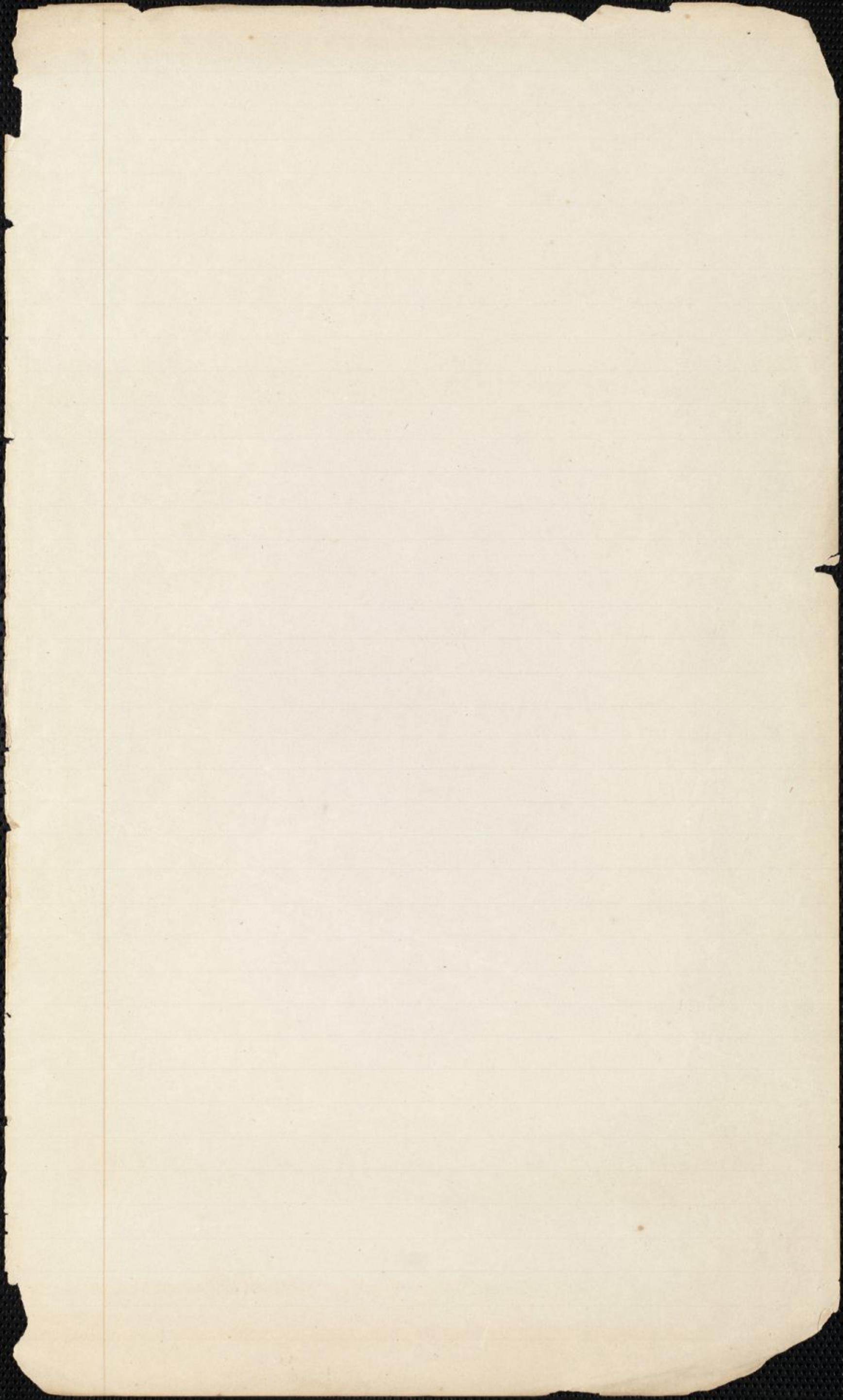












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