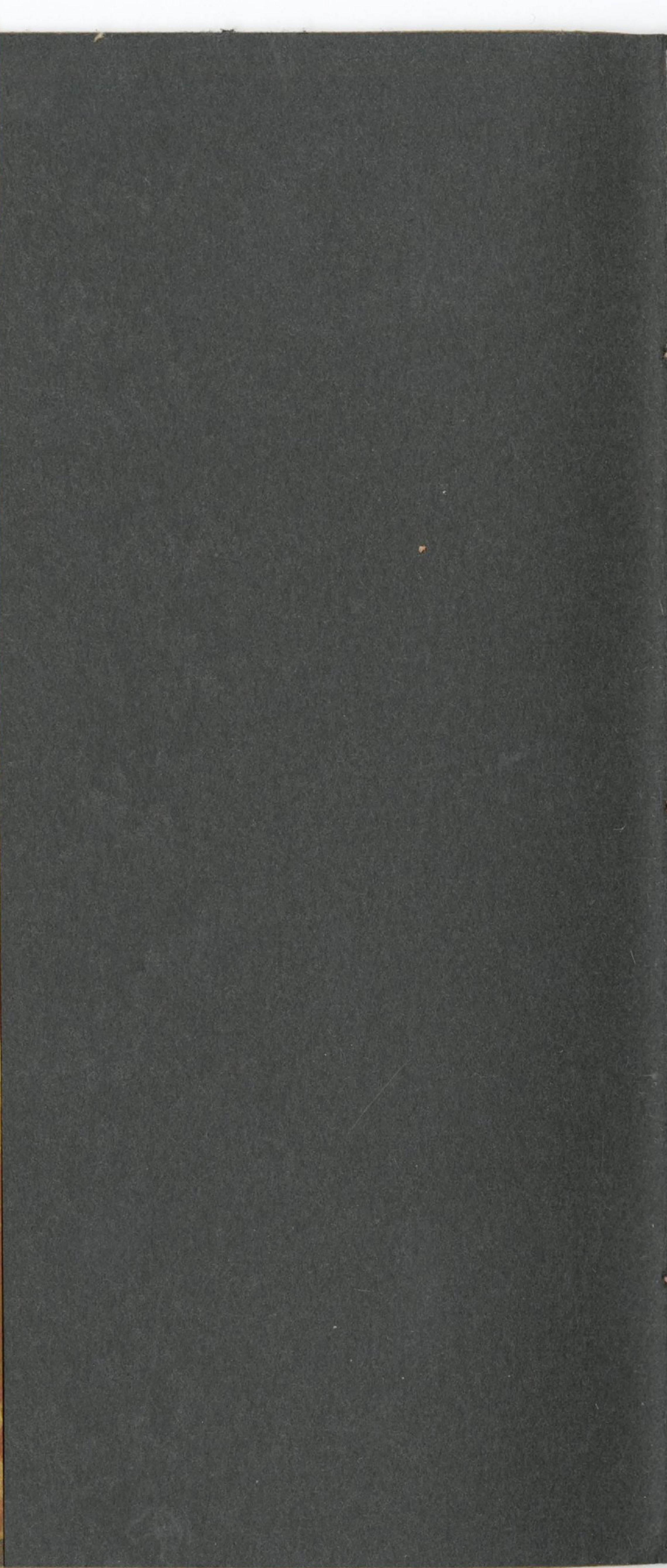
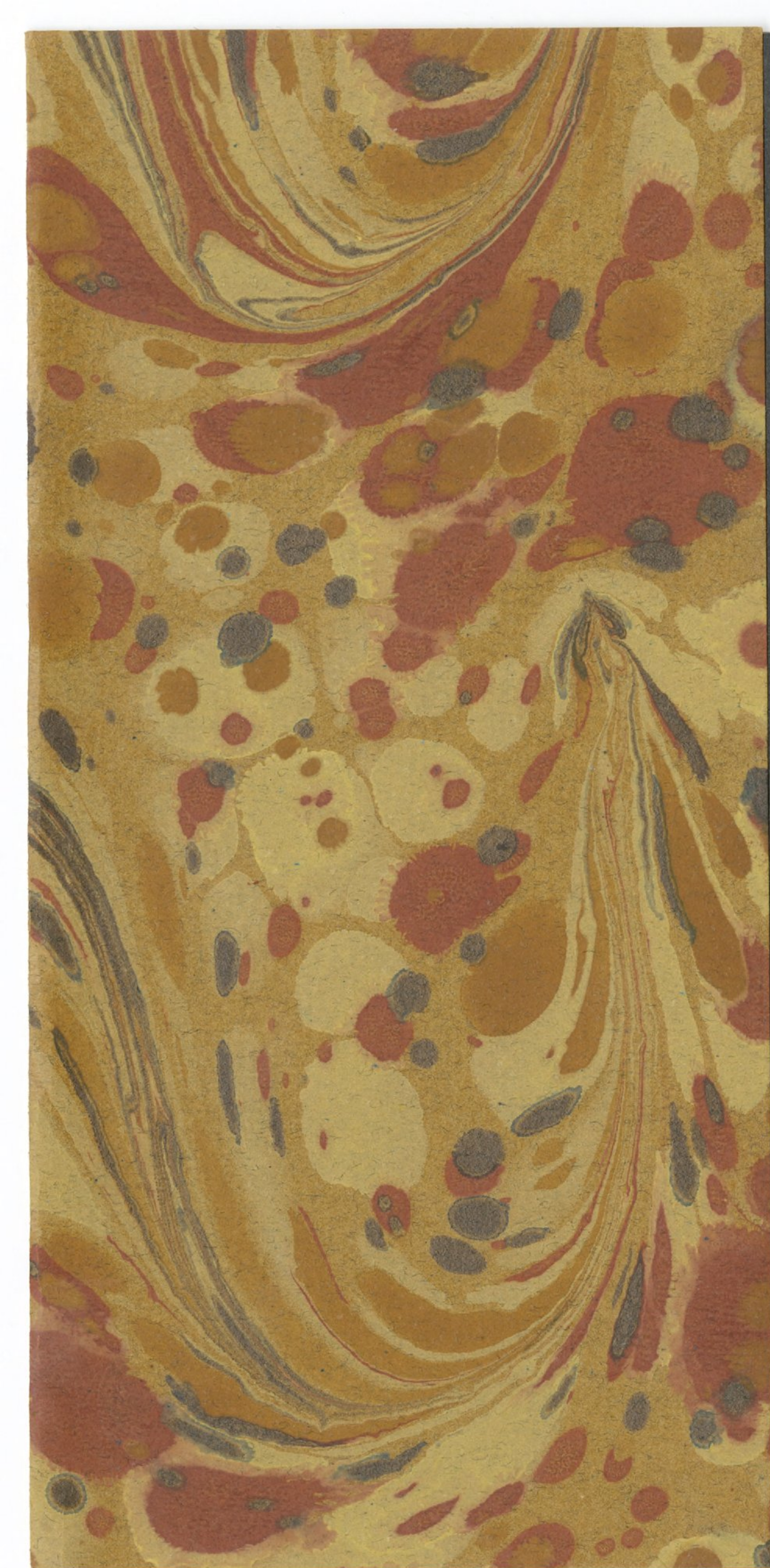




SIX-PIECE SUITE

A. R. Ammons



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by

A. R. AMMONS

Palaemon Press Limited

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I

led by words into a multiplicity of contact, word to thing,
system to system, a reading out by one reading out about
the same way with another, one loses any kind of deep

reliance on one or the other, content to let words or things
come or go and to find a way within a way, whichever: if
it snows tomorrow, one will do what one can still to get

around, and if it turns to slush, slogging boots will be a
measure worth taking: those concisions that run burning
like gullies through landscapes fall out from something

already too concentrated sharp: and the wide floods that
sit metal still and polish everything (brush) off the ground:
when one is certain the word can reach, one seldom reaches

II

poetry though a big sport helps one bear what love
bears: what love enjoys enjoying nearly uses up or
needs no word to help hold attention to it or siphon it off:

but the abused child, three and a half years old, dug up to
check evidence, is reburied in starved wood, the real ceremony
over, mere officials, priest, police, perhaps the held

father, standing by for the remarriage of astonished innocence
with the ground: what love bears in silence it needs a word
for occasionally and the sense that if everything opens up

wide enough even grief can be swallowed: the wind, especially
as night closes in, is a good figure for this, it waves
everything, pond, leaf, curtain to constitute a waving away

III

so many things sound contradictory because they have to
come round: such as, mind is completest where
mindless: in the lower reaches mind is firm with concretion

but without transmission, motion: but the higher one goes
toward the higher reaches, the more mind lets go or, rather,
dissolves, flows definitions like fencerows or hedgerows

melting as if snowed under, mind fully present only when
the last shred of evidence, stricken, has found the concealment
of joining: at this height, nothing separable, nothing changes:

but from such severity, as if to tragic relief, one drops to jostle
back, the enmeshing hardening, to our place, leaves to rake,
apples to sort, mind against change where change is all

IV

hope until there is no hope is hardly hope but being cheerful about chances yet to take, evidences to turn here and there with: it is hard to hope when there is

no hope: I knew an old woman who knew when that time had come and that's what she told me, it's hard to hope when there is no hope: she died naturally: hope springs

eternal sounded to her like an intolerable foolishness, a gaiety unhonoring honor: I used to know a lot of old people and they've all died, except for the two youngest

aunts, now in their eighties: when snow gets in your hair, you just can't wash summer back in: hope, as we use it, means till you're better, better be cheerful than mopey

V

the years pile up substanceless, busted dreams, sharp deductions, a large sense of a lost missing, cluster of turns taken from familiar to unfamiliar, the popping new present, never

a return to the old known vanished, such a pile up of years underfoot, between oneself and the ground, one thinks if anyone dies it won't be me, my real self, child brilliant in a

midst, too far lost behind to be buried or recovered: it is a nice thing, as if one may dream death and not die, only adding a certain increase in height of another event

that left behind rooms, domes of perception, empty by recollection of reality, lost but kept: blanketed with this spent fluff, reality becomes air-pliable, blows up and away, not death

VI

how snow can cling, interpenetrant with the needles, to those long-shoal spruce boughs: a forty mile wind, gusty, only worries the heavy woggles around: crows follow

garbage routes, cluttering the air where dog, wind or snowplow has overturned and scattered: a weak high between storm watches clears the morning, though, and I say, I

have to go upstairs and watch the sun shine on the jade plant, and I do, it is so beautiful and rare: earlier this morning, I went to the art museum but all there was

dead, so I went to the art school but everything hung up looked hanged, and I said, everything, the ridge so bright, is beautiful except man's work, why is that, why is that, for whom

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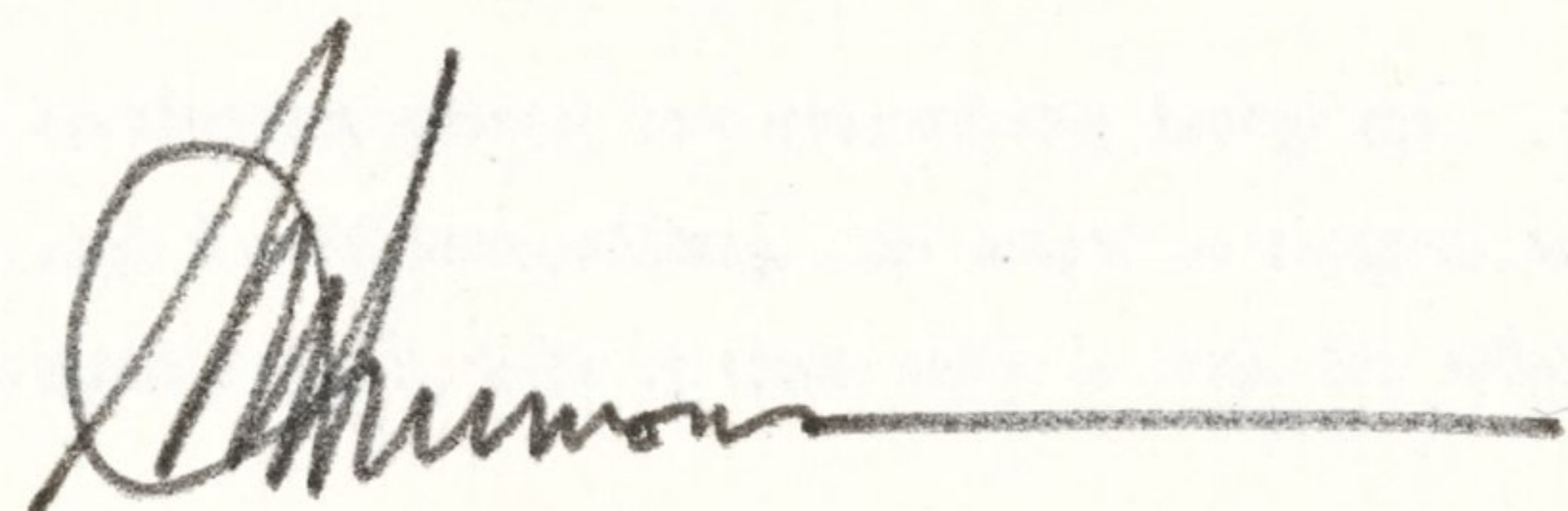
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