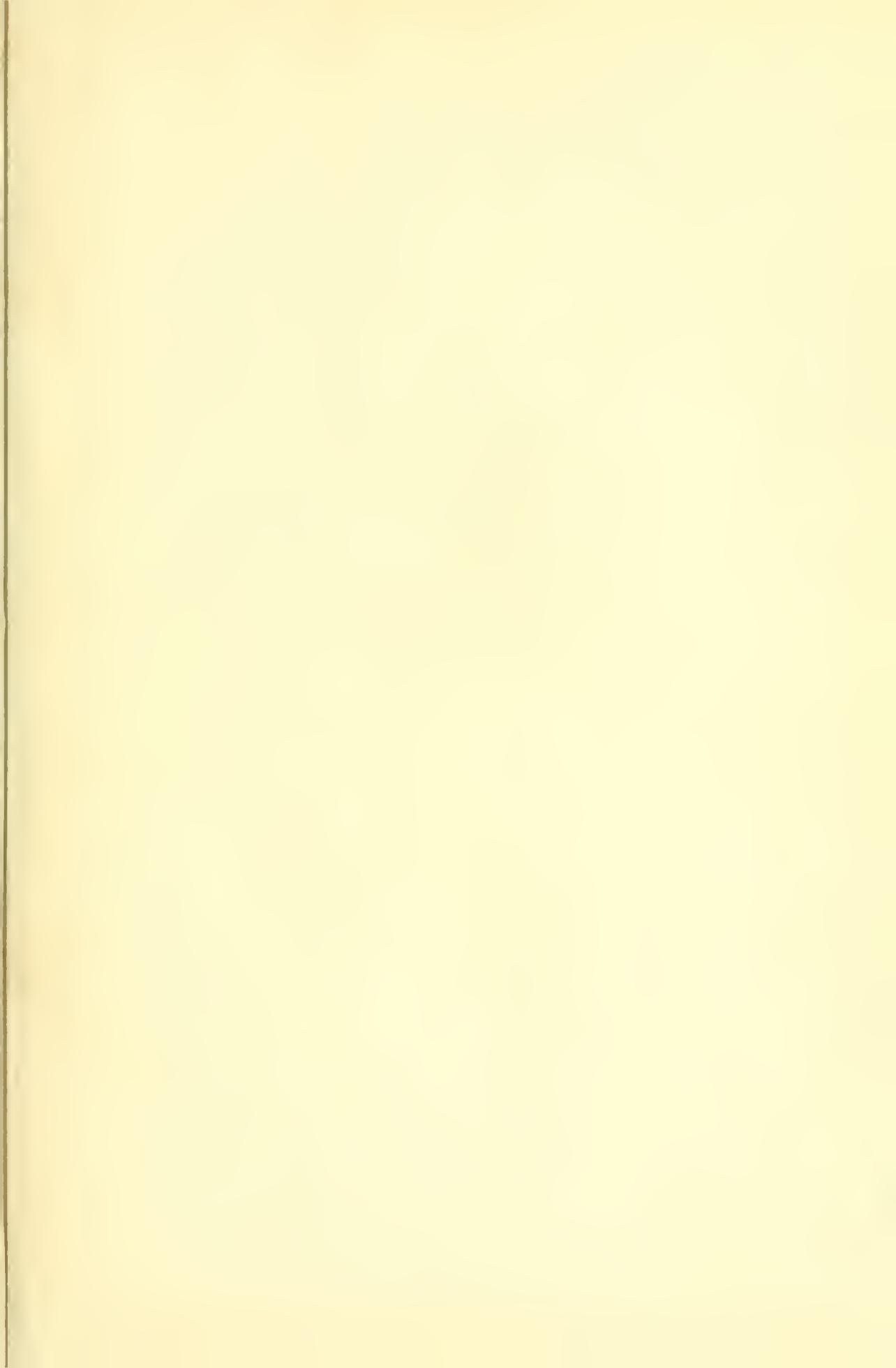
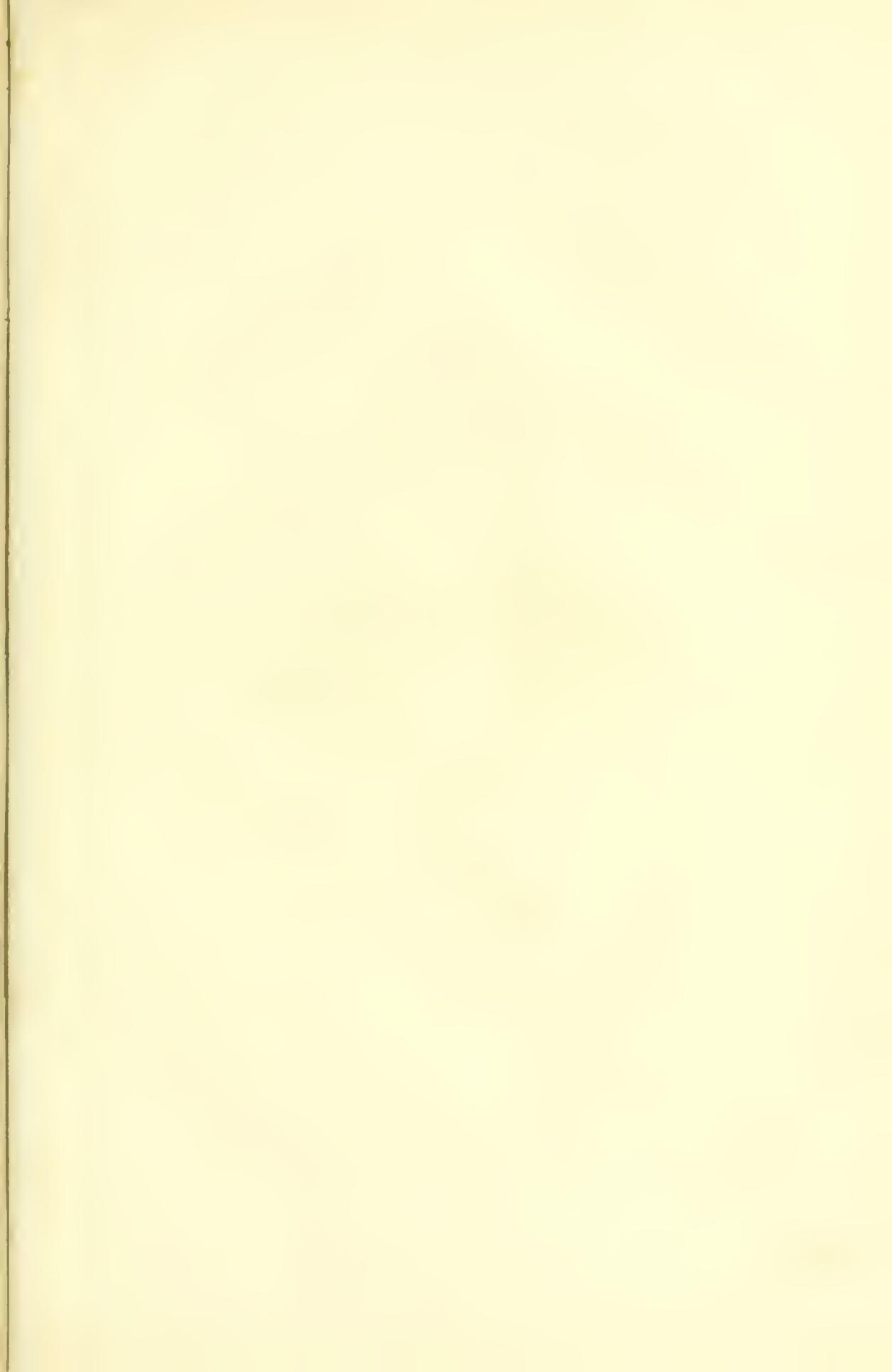


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Charles Henry Bell, LL.D.





Charles H. Bell

MEMOIR

OF

CHARLES HENRY BELL, LL.D.

BY

THE REV. EDMUND F. SLAFTER, D.D.,

MEMBER OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



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MEMOIR.

CHARLES HENRY BELL was born in Chester, New Hampshire, on the eighteenth day of November, 1823, and died in Exeter in the same State on the eleventh day of November, 1893. The emigrant ancestor of the family, John Bell, who was born in Ireland in 1679, but of Scotch descent, settled in Londonderry, New Hampshire, in 1720. He was one of the original grantees of Londonderry, and an active and foremost citizen in the affairs of the town. His son John, of the second generation in this country, held many local offices, was a delegate to the first constitutional convention of the State, a Representative and a Senator in the legislature for several years, an officer of the church to which he belonged, a devout Christian, of good judgment and sterling integrity. John, of the third generation, the father of the subject of this sketch, was a prosperous and successful man of business, first in Derry, New Hampshire, and subsequently in Chester in the same State. He was early a member of the House of Representatives, of the Senate, of the Governor's Council for several years, sheriff of the county, and was Governor of the State in 1828.

Charles Henry Bell in his early youth had the best opportunities for education which New England at that time afforded. At the age of twelve years he was entered as a student of Pembroke Academy. Here he remained two years. In 1837 he became a member of Phillips Academy, in Exeter, but the next year he returned to Pembroke where he completed his preparation for college.

He entered Dartmouth College in 1838, then not fifteen years of age. His brother had entered in 1837, which furnished a reason for placing the younger brother in college at that early age. The health of the elder became delicate, and after the expiration of the autumn term of 1838, the two young men were withdrawn, and their connection with the College severed for the time being. During the next two years Charles Henry remained, for the most part, at his home in Chester, devoting enough time to study to keep his preparations for college fresh in mind, while the residue he gave to such desultory reading and writing as suited his inclinations and taste. Some months, however, of this period, probably in the last part of 1839 and early part of 1840, he devoted to the study of civil engineering, under the direction of James Hayward, Esq., whose office was in Joy's Building in Boston.

In 1840 he re-entered Dartmouth College, joining the freshman class, then past sixteen years of age. He was a faithful and conscientious student, acquitting himself honorably in all departments, always ranking among the best third of his class; but he did not aspire to high attainment in exact scholarship, as ambitious young men often do. Impelled by an extraordinary love of knowledge, he was, during these years, an insatiate reader, and made himself familiar with the whole circle of English classics and with the best writers on both sides of the Atlantic.

While an undergraduate he became deeply interested in military affairs, both in the science and in the manual of the soldier. The students of Dartmouth at that time were required by law to muster annually, as a part of the militia of the State. They were, however, permitted to form a company by themselves, which was called the Dartmouth Phalanx. This company was made up of picked men from the whole college, and they were naturally men who had a taste, if not for military science, at least for military drill. The uniform of the officers was a black dress-coat, white vest, and white

pantaloons. The coat was trimmed with gold lace, the skirt being lined with white satin. The hat was a common beaver, bearing a cockade. The three officers wore at the side a highly decorated sword. The dress of the men was likewise a black dress-coat and white pantaloons, with knapsack, canteen, cartridge box and bayonet sheath, of approved pattern and make. While this uniform was sober and modest, it was nevertheless dignified and effective, and in all respects appropriate to a company of scholars. Under the discipline of a daily morning and evening drill, the Phalanx attained an excellence unknown outside of a military school. It became the pride of the college and the pride of the State. Mr. Bell was appointed captain of this company on the 22d of April, 1843, and retired from office on the 18th of April, 1844, a short time before his graduation from the college. His natural taste for military knowledge was cultivated and developed by the constant exercise of the company in the manual, and by the reading of treatises of a far wider scope than the exigencies of the case required. These studies, elementary indeed, became a not unimportant branch of his education, and were valuable to him in many ways, practically so when in after years, in Exeter, he was commander of the Sullivan Guards, and still later, when as Governor, he held an official relation to all the military organizations of the State.

On leaving college Mr. Bell immediately began the study of law in the office of the Hon. James Bell of Exeter, who was, perhaps, the most eminent lawyer at that time at the New Hampshire bar. He could not have chosen a better preceptor. Learned, dignified and judicious, careful and systematic, his office furnished a school of patient investigation, thoroughness and the best practical work. After two years the Hon. James Bell removed from Exeter, and Mr. Bell completed his studies under the direction of the Hon. Samuel Dana Bell, an able lawyer, and subsequently Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Hampshire.

He was admitted to the bar in 1847, and began the practice of his profession in Chester, the place of his birth, and where his mother after the death of his father continued to reside. This beautiful town had many attractions in itself, and many dear associations, but it offered little encouragement to the aspirations of a young lawyer.

In 1849 Mr. Bell entered into a partnership with Nathaniel Wells of Somersworth, who for some years had been conducting an important law business in the village of Great Falls in that town. Here Mr. Bell practically began his career as a lawyer. Mr. Wells was distinguished as a counsellor, for his office practice and his able and thorough preparation of cases for argument, but he rarely presented his own cases in court. In this new relation, Mr. Bell found an ample field for obtaining facility and skill, which only come of experience, in presenting to courts and juries questions of fact or of law. This department of his profession he here cultivated with assiduity and success.

In 1854 Mr. Bell removed to Exeter, where he found a larger field and a more satisfactory clientage. It not only furnished a wider scope for legal knowledge and talent, but it was the centre of a cultivated and refined society. The seat of Phillips Academy, unsurpassed by any other institution of the same class in New England, amply equipped with instructors of the best scholarship and varied learning, it had long before attracted other residents of congenial tastes and scholarly habits. Here Mr. Bell was happy to make his home, and here he passed the remaining years of his life.

In 1856 he was appointed solicitor of Rockingham county. This office he continued to discharge for the period of ten years, and at the same time he conducted an important civil business both in his office and in the courts. As a lawyer and an advocate, Mr. Bell had a profound distaste for the vulgar hectoring and black-

guardism in which members of the profession, even of distinction, sometimes indulge. He placed himself outside and above this by a manner eminently his own. At all times his conduct to witnesses, to the jury, to the court and to the opposing counsel was serious, courteous, respectful and dignified. From this bearing and courtesy to all in the court room, no personalities or ill manners could tempt him for a moment to depart. This method came not as the result of studied art and self-discipline, but as the natural offspring of a high sense of propriety and an innate sense of justice. He regarded every trial before the courts, in which he was engaged, simply as a legal investigation, whose function was to draw out and establish justice between man and man as interpreted by law and evidence. He wanted no more, he sought for no less. His method was a great power with juries and with courts. He possessed their confidence, and this confidence he never misled or betrayed. He was justly regarded by his compeers as an able lawyer and a skilful advocate.

A few sentences from the sketch of Mr. Bell contained in the "Bench and Bar," contributed by Judge Jeremiah Smith, LL.D., now Story professor in the Harvard Law School, and for some years on the bench of the Supreme Court of New Hampshire, will convey his estimate of him both as an advocate and a lawyer :

His arguments were generally brief but clear. He did not waste his own time or the time of the court. Almost never did he utter a superfluous sentence, and seldom an unnecessary word. "Clearness of statement," it has been well said, "is the great power at the bar." Mr. Bell possessed this faculty in a remarkable degree. His oral arguments had the crystal-like clearness which was so marked a characteristic of the written opinions of his cousin, the late Chief Justice Samuel D. Bell. It is safe to say he never sat down without making all his points fully understood. One great charm of Mr. Bell's speeches consisted in his admirable command of language. He always used the right word in the right place. . . . His experience with juries proves that courtesy and fairness are not insuperable obstacles to success, and that a man of ability and integrity can obtain

verdicts without resorting to any small artifices or objectionable methods. He did not fawn upon jurors or flatter them. He did not introduce irrelevant topics for the sake of exciting sympathy for his client, or prejudice against his opponent. But his straightforward method of trying a case was more effective than the flank movements which are sometimes adopted. It was probably the general opinion of Mr. Bell's friends that, though he was successful at the bar, yet the more appropriate place for him was the bench, where two near kinsmen had served with distinction. He certainly possessed marked qualifications for that position; a competent knowledge of law, practical experience, tact, sound sense, a dignified presence and a power of controlling men. Had he remained in active practice, he must ere long have been tendered a judgeship.

To these statements of Judge Smith, we are tempted to add the following brief sentence from a private note of Judge Charles Doe, LL.D., the present Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Hampshire :

A mind more capable of grasping, mastering and presenting legal questions, quickly, clearly and thoroughly, I have never known.

In dealing with legal principles and their practical application, Mr. Bell took great pleasure, but the conflict and wrangling of the court-room were alien to his nature and foreign to his tastes. After twenty-one year's experience, in 1868, he retired from active practice at the bar, and devoted himself to more congenial pursuits. After this period, however, he was often appointed a referee, whose duties he personally enjoyed, and which he discharged with unusual satisfaction to all parties. His findings, we have been informed on good authority, were without an exception approved by the courts, and, we think, no appeal from his decisions was ever made on points of law, or if made was not sustained.

In 1858, 1859, 1860, 1872 and 1873, Mr. Bell represented Exeter in the legislature of the State. He was a State Senator in 1863 and 1864. He was Speaker of the House in 1860, and President of the Senate in 1864. In his first year in the House he

was made chairman of the judiciary committee, a very unusual honor to a young member. In the later years of his membership he was the acknowledged leader of the House, and one of the most useful and influential of its members.

In 1879, by the appointment of the governor, he became a member of the United States Senate, to fill a vacancy until an election in the following June.

He was governor of New Hampshire for a term of two years from June, 1881 to June, 1883. In his political affinities, Governor Bell was a republican from the organization of that party. He was, however, never a politician in the modern vulgar sense of the word. He sought no political advancement. The office sought him, not he the office. He was, however, thoroughly loyal to his principles and to his party. When it called him to a public service and pledged him its support, and he had accepted its pledges, he occupied a new relation. If he had any personal ambition, it was closely bound up with the success of the party. He stated publicly and privately, frankly, clearly and fully the principles and spirit that would animate, shape and control his administration. This frankness was doubtless a potent cause of his popularity. He administered the trusts committed to him under the dictates of a deliberate and well informed judgment. His administration bore the test of time and experience. His wisdom was justified by events. The citizens trusted him and were never deceived. When he was nominated for governor of the State by the republican party of New Hampshire, it was by acclamation. There was no dissenting voice. His election, subsequently, we are informed, was by the largest number of votes ever cast for a governor in the State of New Hampshire. He discharged the duties of the office with dignity, impartiality and wisdom, and we may add with the approbation and satisfaction of all parties within his jurisdiction.

In 1889 Mr. Bell completed his public service in the interest of

the State by presiding over a convention, called to revise its Constitution and adapt it to the expanding growth of the State in population and wealth. It was an important and influential position to occupy, and he was highly gratified to be honored in being called to preside over a political body of such distinction and dignity. It was a courteous testimony of confidence and respect from his fellow citizens, and a pleasant rounding off and completion of his political career.

Mr. Bell took an active personal interest in education in all its stages, branches and instrumentalities; in schools, lyceums and libraries. While he was governor of the State, he was a trustee, *ex-officio*, of Dartmouth College, and was a constant and punctual attendant upon the deliberations of the Board.

He was an active member, from the start, of the board of trustees of the seminary, established in Exeter by the munificent legacy of William Robinson, a native of Exeter, but at the time of his death a citizen of Augusta, Georgia. The endowment was about \$250,000, and by the provisions of the will, established a school for girls only, thus supplementing the interests of education in Exeter by furnishing for girls what Dr. John Phillips had done for boys in the later years of the preceding century. During the period between the signing of the will and its execution, a great depression of values had taken place, and it was found that Mr. Robinson's family was not as generously provided for as the testator had intended. Mr. Bell, and another member of a committee appointed by the town, visited Mrs. Robinson in Georgia, and after a thorough investigation made an adjustment which was entirely satisfactory. A plan for the organization of the school was elaborated with much care, suitable action was taken by the legislature, and in 1867 the school was put into operation. In all this Mr. Bell took an active and leading part. On the fourth day of July, 1868, he laid the corner-stone of the school building of the semi-

nary, with elaborate Masonic ceremonies, on which occasion he delivered a discourse in which after a rapid glance at the educational interests of the town from the beginning down to the present time, he closed with a graceful and eloquent peroration on the breadth and extent of this noble endowment. Mr. Bell served on the board of trustees of the Robinson Seminary for the period of ten years, when he resigned.

In 1879 he was made a trustee of Phillips Exeter Academy, which office he continued to hold, and was president of the Board at the time of his death. The high character of this school, the large number of its scholars and the distinguished ability required in its teachers, and the consequent and imperative importance of keeping every part of the institution in a sound and healthy condition, made the responsibilities of the trustees, especially of those resident in the town, constant, and often delicate and perplexing. Mr. Bell's eminently judicial mind, his calm and even temper, his wise forethought, his care to know thoroughly every question that required deliberation, made him during all these years a useful and influential trustee of the Academy. From the meetings of the Board, sometimes held in Exeter and sometimes in Boston, he was rarely, if ever, absent.

Since his death, Mr. Charles Marselles of Exeter has presented to the Board of Trustees for the Academy Gallery a crayon portrait of Governor Bell executed by the distinguished artist, William Kurtz of New York.

Mr. Bell wrote and delivered numerous discourses on education in its various relations to human progress, which remain in manuscript. Among others a discourse on "the comparative advantages of the Lyceum at Athens in ancient Greece and the Lyceums of our own country"; one on "the changes in the methods of instruction in the last half century in our New England schools"; and another on "the high aims and lofty purposes that ought to animate

and control the scholar." The treatment of these and kindred subjects occupied such hours as he could spare from the duties of an exacting profession.

After his retirement from the bar in 1868 Mr. Bell had ample leisure for such occupations and pursuits as were most agreeable to his inclinations and tastes. He did not announce to others, or even propose to himself, a literary career. He simply did in the field of literature whatever seemed to have obvious claims upon his attention. In nearly every undertaking there was some plain personal or other adequate reason for its performance by him rather than by any one else. He engaged in no work that was trivial or unimportant; neither did he wait for some great subject to present itself, in the treatment of which he might anticipate personal distinction and fame. He plainly acted on the excellent maxim, "a wise man will do always and thoroughly the duty that lies nearest to him."

Mr. Bell's first literary venture was the *Life of William M. Richardson, LL.D.*, late Chief Justice of the Superior Court in New Hampshire. This little twelvemo volume of 90 pages was published in March, 1839, only four months after the author had completed fifteen years of his age. While it contains the marks of a youthful hand, it nevertheless contains a clear and systematic compendium of the life and career of its distinguished subject. It remained for more than half a century a valuable memorial of a man of singular merit, of judicial ability and learning, and has not even now been superseded, unless by the more compact and mature contribution by the same author, in his "Bench and Bar" of New Hampshire.

On the 10th of June, 1869, Mr. Bell, by invitation, delivered an oration in Derry, New Hampshire, at the 150th Anniversary of the Settlement of Old Nutfield, comprising the towns of Londonderry, Derry, Windham, and parts of Manchester, Hudson and Salem. The subject of this discourse is the character of the early settlers of

Londonderry and the influence of the settlement upon the community. It is not, therefore, an historical sketch, but an illustration of these two themes by a general statement of the history of the colonists, the trials and difficulties through which they passed, the dangers of a frontier settlement in the depths of a primeval forest, the education of their children and the maintenance of their religious institutions; their hardy and robust physiques, their intellectual strength and vigor, their stern, unbending religious principle, the great achievements of many of their descendants, their prudence, their industry, their sound judgment and self-reliance; all these points are discussed with great fullness, but nevertheless without any invidious distinction or eulogy of individuals, with the single exception of a few resolute and brave men, who, in the wars of the country, covered themselves and their names with glory by their noble and heroic conduct.

Mr. Bell published in 1871 an octavo volume of seventy-three pages, entitled "Men and Things of Exeter, New Hampshire." This historical brochure was replete with interest to the dweller in Exeter. It described the early settlement of the town; recounted many striking colonial events; the stirring occurrences of the revolution; the outbreak of the popular feelings at different times and their causes; the visit of the celebrated English evangelist, Whitefield, in 1770, and that of Washington in 1789; the religious establishments of the town from the beginning, and the character and influence of their various ministers down to the present time.

The same year, on the 18th of March, 1871, Mr. Bell delivered a discourse in Boston, on the invitation of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, at the dedication of the Society's House. It was published by the Society with the proceedings on the occasion.

The discourse recites compactly and clearly the growth in this country of historical sentiment and interest during the last gen-

eration; it points to the patronage of the government, its publication of certain historical works at the public cost and its sanction by the people. It informs us that new workers are constantly coming into the field, historical libraries are multiplying, and memorials of the past are brought together to illustrate its history. We are reminded of the unexampled riches and extent of the field and the prolific sources of historical material. Dangers are pointed out. Hasty and superficial work is deprecated. Faithful and conscientious work is already everywhere recognized and appreciated, and a brilliant career in the future is predicted for the able, broad-minded and accomplished historian.

In 1873 Mr. Bell delivered an address before the New Hampshire Historical Society, being the semi-centennial anniversary of the founding of the Society and the 250th anniversary of the settlement of New Hampshire. In this discourse is sketched an outline of New Hampshire's early colonial history, a brief mention of its organization as a State, the birth of the Historical Society, its distinguished early members and workers, its special labors and achievements in the past, and the broad and inviting domain that stretches out for its occupation and cultivation in the future.

Mr. Bell published a pamphlet entitled "Exeter in 1776. Sketches of an old New Hampshire town as it was a hundred years ago. Prepared for the Ladies' Centennial Levee held in Exeter, February 22, 1876." The title of this paper explains its purpose. The limits of the little village as it was in 1776 are defined; the old houses, public and private, are described; the methods of business, the customs and habits of the people are pictured with the personal character of the prominent men, enlivened by numerous illustrative incidents and anecdotes.

The same year an important volume was issued, entitled "John Wheelwright, his writings, including his fast day sermon, 1637, and his *Mercurius Americanus*, 1645, with a paper upon the

genuineness of the Indian Deed of 1629, and a Memoir." This volume, published by the Prince Society in 1876, is one of the series of its valuable historical publications. It is a small quarto of 253 pages. The memoir by Mr. Bell is the first complete biography of the Rev. John Wheelwright ever published. It was carefully prepared, largely from old manuscript records, after the most thorough researches, and is an important contribution to New England history. The paper on the Indian deed of 1629 presents clearly and fully the arguments for and against the genuineness of the document. At the time of the publication of this volume in 1876, no evidence had been produced proving that Wheelwright was not in this country in 1629; and if he were here, there was a strong probability that the deed was genuine. Subsequently, records were found establishing the fact that he was in England at the time of the alleged execution of the deed. This rendered it nearly certain that the instrument was a fabrication. Mr. Bell made this known in a letter published in the *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register* for July, 1891. A careful examination of Mr. Bell's treatment of the subject will show how completely he was able to see all sides of a difficult and controverted subject.

In the month of July, 1876, Mr. Bell, accompanied by his family, made a voyage to Europe, where he passed a year, returning in July, 1877. His travels extended to England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy, passing several weeks in the great cities and central points of interest in each of these countries. In this period he not only visited the many objects and places of antiquarian and historic interest and fame which fell in his way, but he made a survey, more or less satisfactory, of the finest existing works of art, in painting, sculpture and architecture.

In the series of Memorial Biographies published by the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, Mr. Bell contributed in

1880 a memoir of Daniel Webster. An outline of Mr. Webster's whole life is compressed, in this paper, into twenty pages. It presents, of course, only the prominent and striking incidents of his extraordinary career. Its brevity is characteristic of the author's method, and illustrates his style, at once concise and comprehensive. One great event passes so easily and naturally into another that this brief summary has the appearance of a complete and finished whole. We have seen no better epitome of Mr. Webster's life.

The same year, Mr. Bell delivered a discourse before the Alumni Association of Dartmouth College, in memory of the Hon. Ira Perley, LL.D., late Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of New Hampshire. This was one of a series of discourses delivered at the request of the alumni in honor of graduates of that institution who were distinguished in judicial stations. The writers were limited as to time, and this, as was the brief paper on Mr. Webster, is an illustration of succinctness and completeness combined, and is a finely drawn outline of the character and career of that remarkable scholar and jurist, who in ability is ranked by Mr. Bell "with our Marshalls, our Parsonses and our Kents."

In 1881, at the anniversary of the New Hampshire Alpha of the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Dartmouth College, Mr. Bell delivered an oration which was published by the Society. The subject was, "The Worship of Success." He pointed out that in this country the avenues to success are open to all, and that the struggle for it is excessive and indiscriminating. The means of attaining it are often unworthy and debasing. They cloud the moral vision, warp the judgment and obliterate the distinction between right and wrong. There is a noble and an ignoble ambition. The passion for wealth, fame and power should be limited, and subordinated to a high moral purpose. Honest labor is dignified and noble. "It is not the sphere of one's work, but the work one does in his sphere, that determines his rank as a benefactor of the world." The edu-

ated class can do much to free society from ignorant pretention and unworthy ambitions, from the moral obliquity that blindly worships unworthy success.

Mr. Bell published in 1883 an octavo volume of somewhat more than a hundred pages, entitled "Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire."

It contains a complete outline of the history of the Academy from the beginning, a full memoir of Dr. John Phillips, the founder, the design of the Academy as indicated by its charter, some account of its distinguished preceptors, and much detail relating to the changes, progress and growth of the institution. The volume contains a complete and authentic list of the trustees and teachers from 1781 to 1883.

In 1885 Mr. Bell wrote a memoir of the late Dr. John Taylor Gilman of Portland, Maine, which was privately printed.

It was intended to put upon record the estimate, both public and private, of the character and career of this distinguished physician, for the gratification of his family and friends. The story of his life, domestic and professional, in this pamphlet of thirty-six pages, is gracefully told.

Mr. Bell delivered an address in Exeter, June 7, 1888, on the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of the town, entitled "Exeter Quarter-Millennial." The period treated by this discourse is divided into five sections, each covering fifty years. While it is the principal aim of the address to show how Exeter discharged its duties as a town, how it met its obligations to the State of New Hampshire and to the general government, at the same time it gives much information of a local character, such as its contributions in men and money and influence in the several wars through which the country has passed, and the distinguished citizens who took part in these numerous conflicts. It is a purely historical document, and was well adapted to the very interesting occasion for which it was prepared.

The same year, 1888, Mr. Bell published "The History of the Town of Exeter, New Hampshire." It is an octavo volume of more than 550 pages. The subject of the work is treated topically and not chronologically. The character and career of the Rev. John Wheelwright, the founder of the town, the Exeter combination and the allotment of lands, are fully delineated. The religious societies, the Indian and French wars, the revolution and other wars, schools and academies, the press, manufactures, burial places, ornamental trees, old houses, prominent families, lawyers and medical men; all these are treated as distinct and separate subjects, a method unusual, but which offers nevertheless some important advantages. The gathering together of the material of this large volume, the organizing and marshalling its scattered fragments into form for the reader, was the patient work of many years, and it must remain an indestructible monument to Mr. Bell's loyalty and devotion to the interests of the town, where he passed so many happy and useful years.

At the anniversary of the Bunker Hill Monument Association on the 17th of June, 1891, Mr. Bell, by invitation of the Association, delivered a discourse on the battle of Bunker Hill, in which he points out the particular part performed by the New Hampshire troops. The history of the whole battle is outlined with great clearness, but the part taken by the New Hampshire regiments is described with rare distinctness and fulness, and on evidence which admits of no contradiction. New Hampshire had waited too long for a writer competent to perform this valuable service. To his graphic description of the action, Mr. Bell gives brief memoirs of the prominent New Hampshire men who were engaged in this renowned conflict.

The last work published by Mr. Bell is the "Bench and Bar of New Hampshire." It is an octavo volume of 795 pages, and bears the imprint of 1894. It contains memoirs of eighty judges of the

highest courts of the Province and State, and memoirs of seven hundred and ninety-one lawyers, who had practised their profession in New Hampshire. In addition to these the volume contains the names of seven hundred and eleven lawyers now living, who have at some period been in practice within the limits of the State. The work had just reached its completion, and was nearly through the press, when the author was suddenly summoned away by death. An index was added by the publisher, and a few other accessories by Mrs. Bell. In a literary point of view, in the extent and completeness of the work, this is the *magnam opus* of all the author's publications. The collection of the material for even brief sketches of eight hundred and seventy-one judges and lawyers could not but occupy the vigilant thought and assiduous labor of years. Each of the sketches is complete in itself, and is greater or less in extent according to the material accessible and the prominence and importance of the subject. There are certain characteristics or lines in the career of men in the same profession which are similar, and sometimes seem to be almost identical. The reader of these sketches will, we think, be surprised nevertheless to see how widely one sketch differs from another. The skill and ingenuity of the author have caused the narratives to spring up and take shape from those elements which are personal and peculiar, and consequently each narrative is different from all others, and has a coloring, freshness and individuality of its own. Many of the sketches are illustrated and enlivened by anecdotes and incidents characteristic of the men and of the times. We think it no exaggeration to say that this volume is the richest and most valuable contribution to the history of New Hampshire which has been made in the present century. In the preface the author says, "The preparation of this work has been to me a labor of love, and I now offer it in partial satisfaction of the debt I owe to a noble profession."

Subsequently to 1868, after his retirement from the bar, in addi-

tion to the preparation for the press of the numerous publications to which we have referred, Mr. Bell gave much of his leisure to various historical and antiquarian studies. The early colonial history of New England, and of New Hampshire in particular, always claimed an engrossing interest. He made himself familiar with its outlines and its important details. He appreciated the value and importance of getting at the heart and core of history, and to do this he not only studied from original sources the habits, customs, education and religion of the people, but the motives and springs of action which animated and controlled their rulers. With the governors and lesser magistrates, the leading men in all grades of civil and military affairs, their power and method of using it, he became intimately acquainted. He carried the same method into the study of the American revolution and the history of the United States. Coördinate to these studies, or as a supplement to them, he made collections of autograph letters and engraved portraits, sometimes adding an engraved representation of the home of the subject, or a brief sketch of his life in print. Each one of them was an object lesson in history. Around them clustered by a law of association the incidents and events of a whole career, or a whole life. They were gathered into groups in order to illustrate some period or great event in history. Mr. Bell made a large number of these illustrative collections. One group included the distinguished characters who played an active and important part in the period immediately preceding the American revolution; another included Washington and those most closely associated with him; a third, the distinguished men in any way connected with General Burgoyne and his campaign; in like manner those who figured in the siege of Boston and in the capture of Yorktown. Several other groups were formed not less interesting and important. Besides these, Mr. Bell took great pleasure, as a pastime and an historical study, in illustrating in the same way his *History of Exeter*, his *Life of John Wheel-*

wright, Sparks's *Life of Washington*, Belknap's *History of New Hampshire*, and several other smaller works. This combination of study and amusement not only absorbed agreeably many leisure hours, but it served to daguerreotype upon the mind men and events in a way never to be effaced. Of those whose autograph letters and portraits he deemed worthy of preservation, he obtained from all accessible sources a distinct and full knowledge. There was scarcely a general or regimental officer in the Revolutionary war, of whose value and importance in the service he had not arrived at an accurate and distinct opinion.

In these studies, in which taste and pleasure and intellectual profit were so happily combined, Mrs. Bell was always a sympathizing co-worker, and did herself much interesting and valuable coordinate work.

Mr. Bell made a collection, to which he gave his attention for many years, of books and pamphlets printed in Exeter. He obtained two hundred and ten titles of these imprints alone, mostly published before 1840. This collection he bequeathed to the town library, in which he had always taken an active interest. At the time of his death he was chairman of a committee appointed by the town for the erection of a library building. In this building, since completed, we learn that a special book-case has been set apart for the safe-keeping of the Exeter imprints, and as a memorial of the giver.

He also made a similar and much larger collection, which he presented to the New Hampshire Historical Society. It contains eleven hundred and five volumes and about one thousand pamphlets. It was made on a definite and systematic plan. It comprises three classes: first, publications printed in New Hampshire; second, those by New Hampshire authors but printed elsewhere; third, such other publications as are in some special manner connected with the interests or history of New Hampshire. This collection, thus

brought together, is unique, and its importance and historical value, particularly as a bibliography of New Hampshire, can hardly be over-estimated. We learn that it is very properly kept in a separate apartment of the library, exclusively appropriated to its use, on which is inscribed the BELL ALCOVE.

For many years he was assiduous in collecting an historical library for his personal use. No description of it can be attempted in these pages. It will suffice to say that the collection constitutes not only a very complete working historical library, but is likewise rich in rare and valuable Americana.

Mr. Bell gave some attention to numismatics, especially to American medals and coins. Of the colonial and United States coins and paper money he made a valuable collection.

Besides his other occupations he was a voluminous contributor to the journals of the day on many important and interesting subjects. Some of these papers might well have been noticed in these pages did space allow.*

For twenty-five years, with the exception of one year abroad, Mr. Bell passed his summers at the seashore in his cottage at Little Boar's Head. He took a leading interest in the local affairs of the place, and was president of its "Village Improvement Society" from its organization. His commanding and dignified presence will not soon be forgotten by those who resort to that quiet and attractive shore.

In social life Mr. Bell was somewhat reticent, especially in matters relating to himself, modest, and even diffident. There was a subtle magnetism in some way connected with his personality which drew others to him as by an invisible cord. He rarely indulged in what is commonly called "small talk," but was courteous and

* The following are some of them: Remarks before the New Hampshire Historical Society on the presentation of the Webster papers by the Hon. Peter Harvey. The vindication of Gen. John Sullivan. Remarks at a meeting of the citizens of Exeter, April 19, 1865, on Abraham Lincoln. A sketch of the life of the late Commodore John Collings Long. Biographical notice of the Hon. Samuel D. Bell.

cordial, a ready listener and an unusually good conversationalist. He did not expand and adorn his subject with figures of speech, or the flowers of rhetoric, but gave the pith and core of the subject in hand in clear, direct and graceful language. He charmed his hearers by showing them the richness of pure, simple, unadorned truth. In private circles and with his most intimate friends he often indulged in a playful humor, and occasional flashes of wit, but this propensity, dangerous when given a free rein, was always under restraint, and rarely appeared in his intercourse with general society, or indeed in any of his published writings.

The attractions of home were dear to him. Within its precincts centred his supreme happiness. It was to him all that the poets have made it :

"The abode
Of love, of joy, of peace and comfort, where,
Supporting and supported, poll-sh'd friends
And dear relations mingle into bliss."

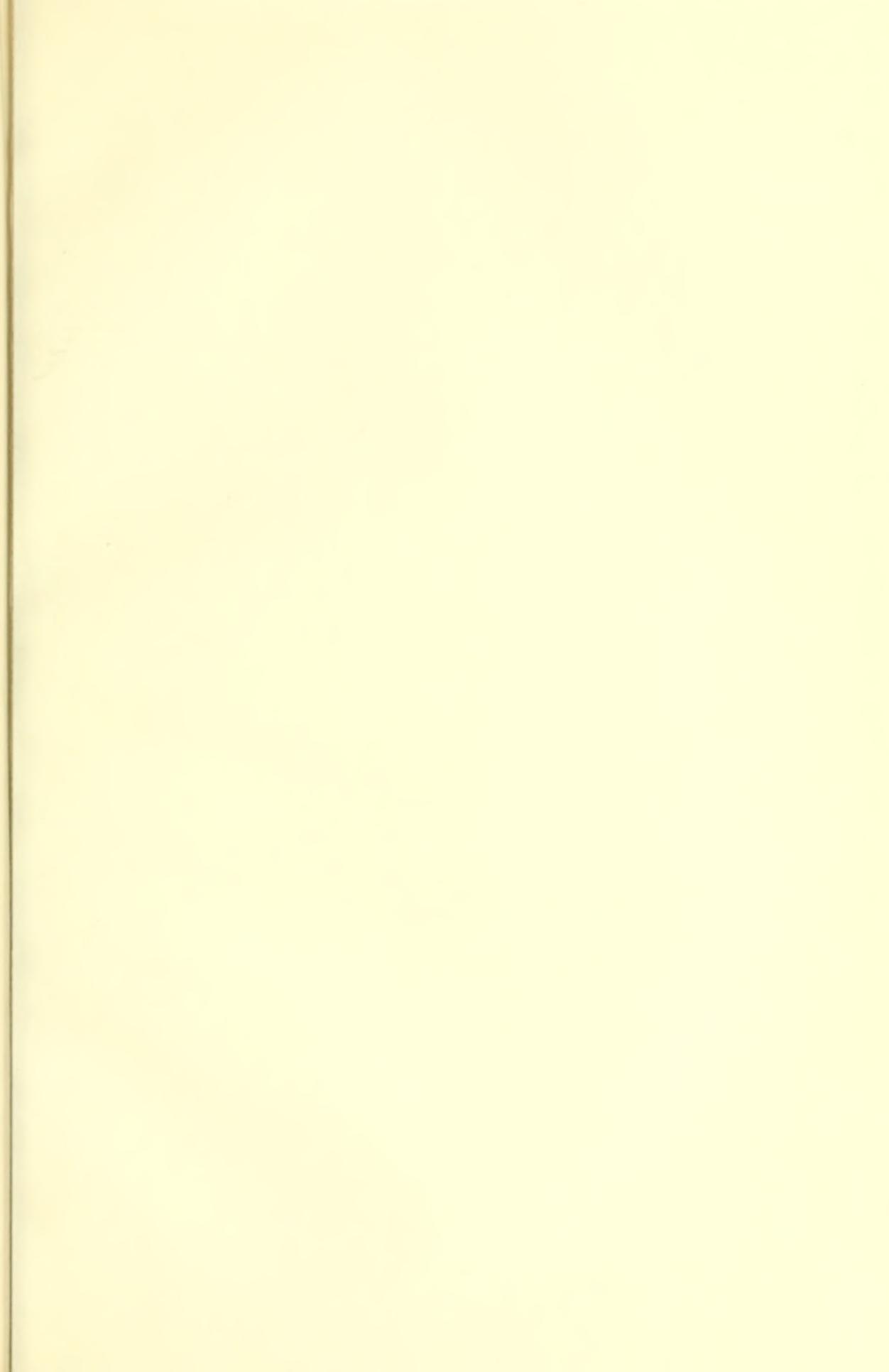
Dartmouth College conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws in 1881.

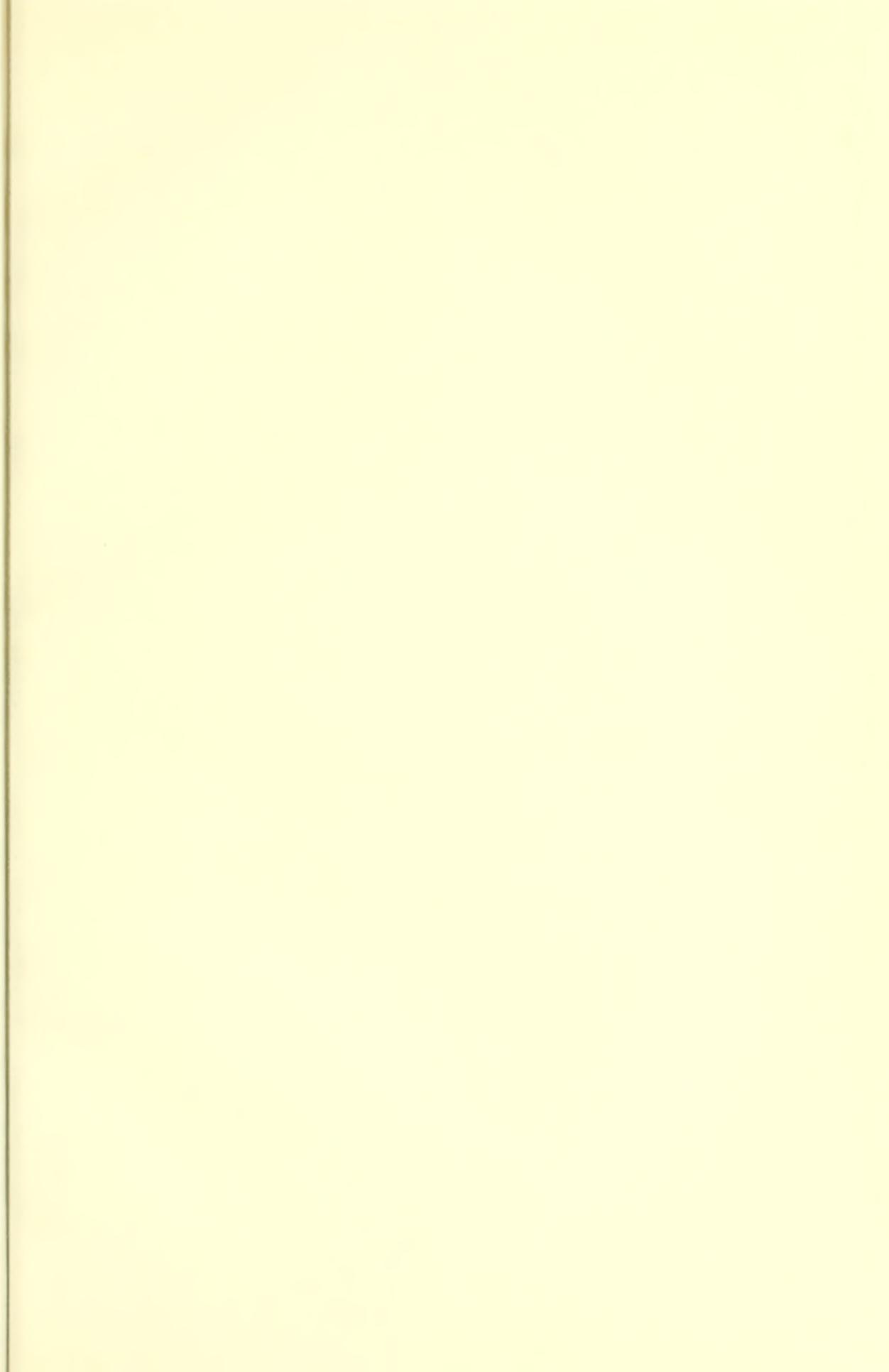
Mr. Bell was a member of many Historical Associations. The New Hampshire Historical Society was nearest his heart, and to it he devoted his best thought and unwearied labor. He became a member in 1853, thus giving to it the active service of forty years. He was president of the Society nineteen years, from June, 1868, till his resignation in 1887. Not only did he enrich it by the large gift of selected volumes, to which we have already referred, but he attracted gifts to it from many sources by his discreet and wise suggestions, and by the confidence in its purpose and administration which he everywhere inspired. He was a vice-president of the Prince Society, and was a member of its Council twenty-one years. He edited one of its publications, and was always an active and influential member of its Council. To the New-England Historic

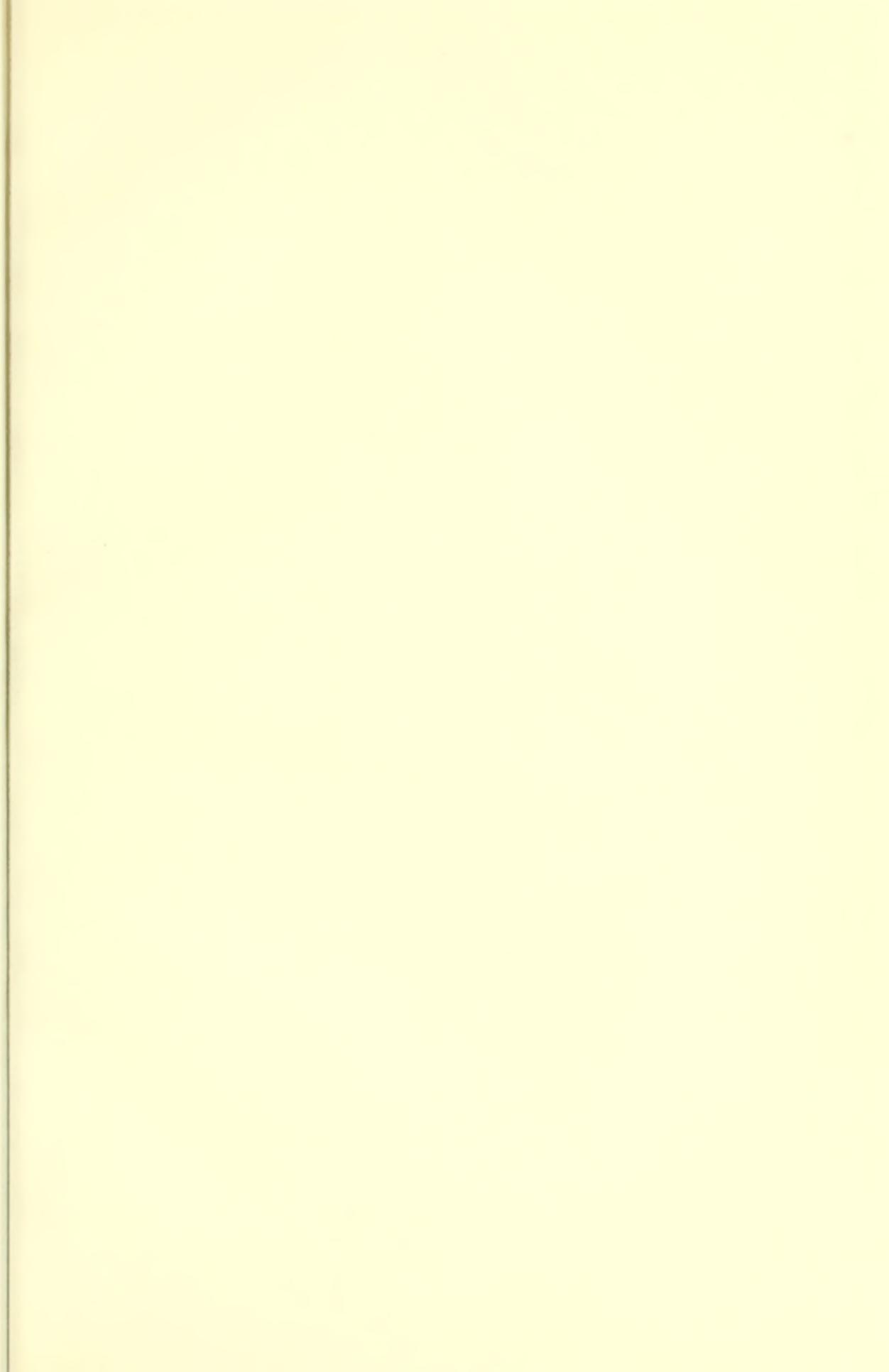
Genealogical Society, of which he was a member twenty-three years, he contributed from time to time valuable historical papers. He was a member of the American Antiquarian Society, also of the Royal Historical Society of Great Britain, and a corresponding member of the Massachusetts Historical Society and of many others.

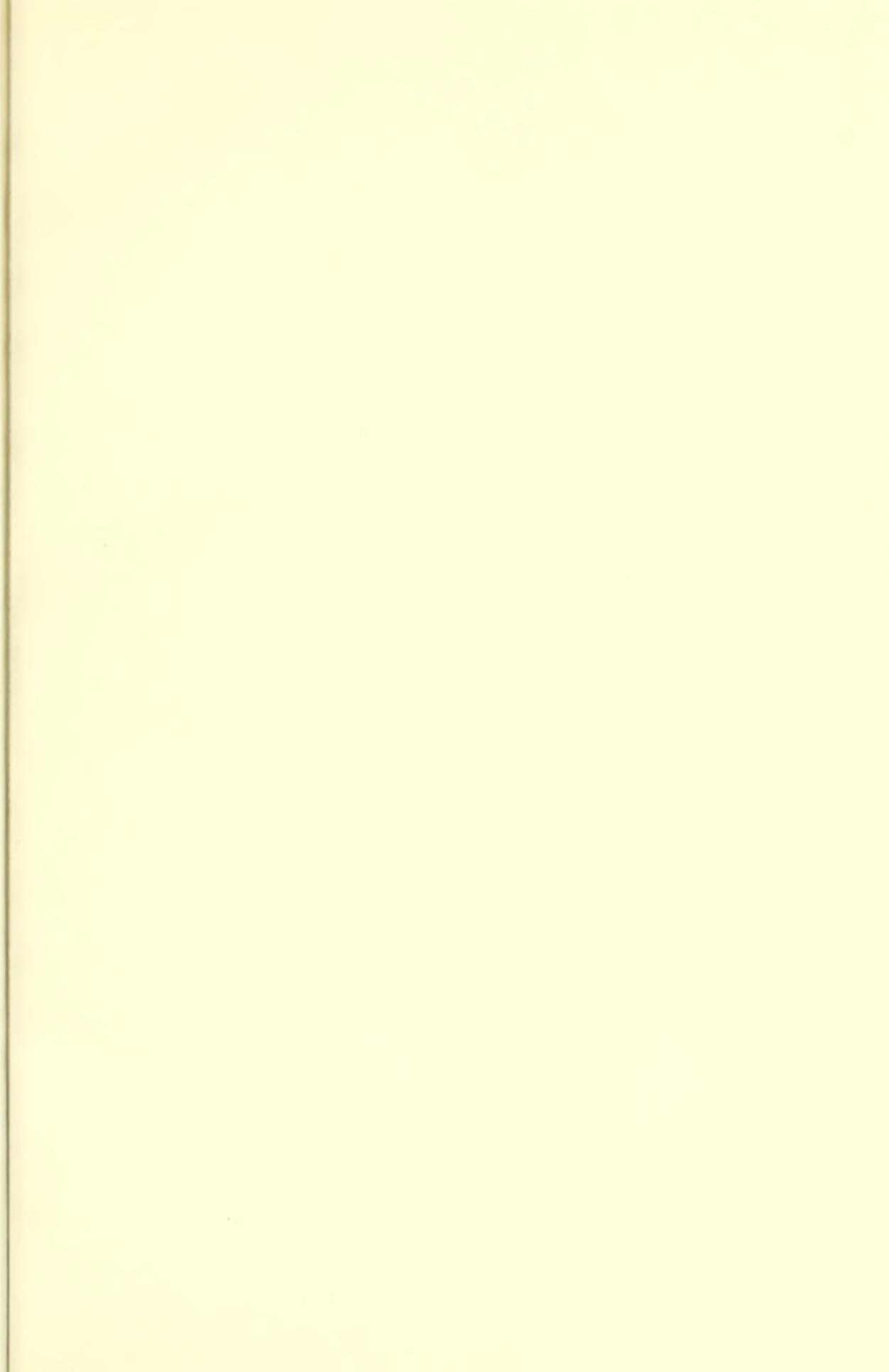
Mr. Bell married, on the 6th of May, 1847, Sarah Almira Gilman, daughter of Nicholas Gilman of Exeter. She died August 22, 1850, leaving two daughters; Helen, the wife of Professor Harold North Fowler, Ph.D., of the Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio; and Persis, the wife of Hollis Russell Bailey, Esq., of the Boston bar. He married 2d, June 3, 1867, Mary Elizabeth Gilman, daughter of Harrison Gray of Boston and widow of Joseph Taylor Gilman of Exeter. She survives him, as do likewise three step-children, Daniel, Col. Edward Harrison, and Mary Long Gilman, all residing in Exeter.

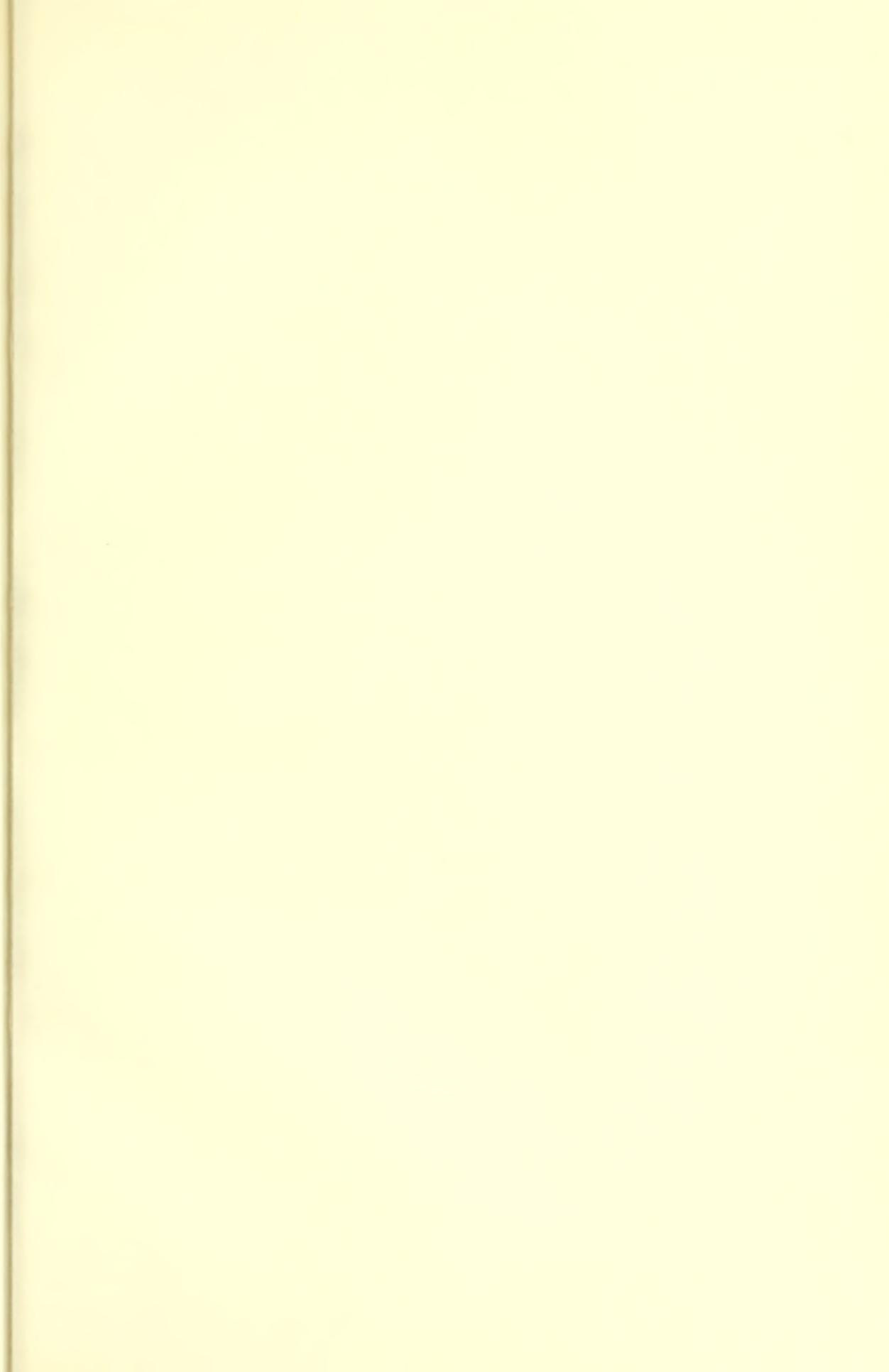
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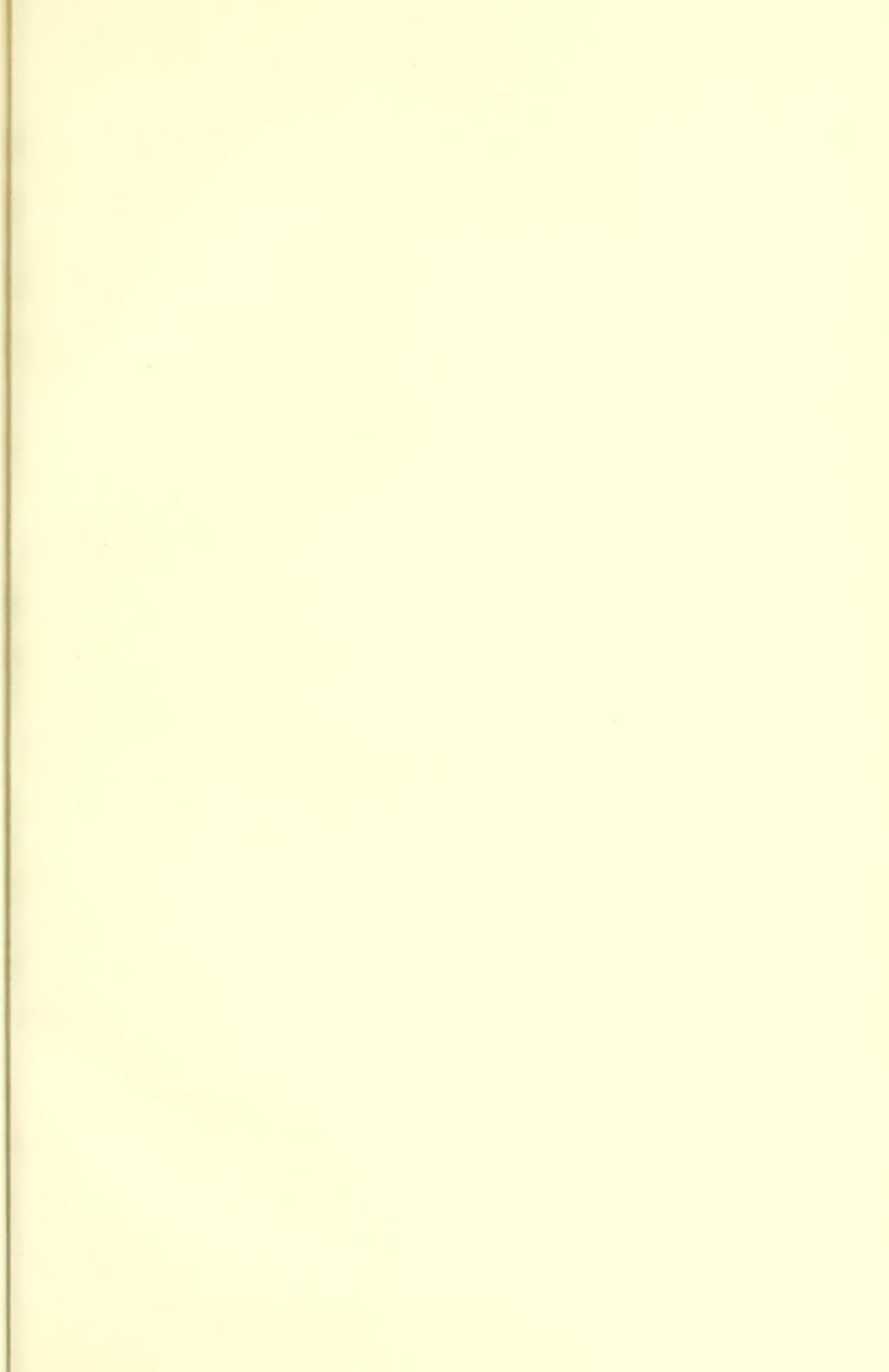


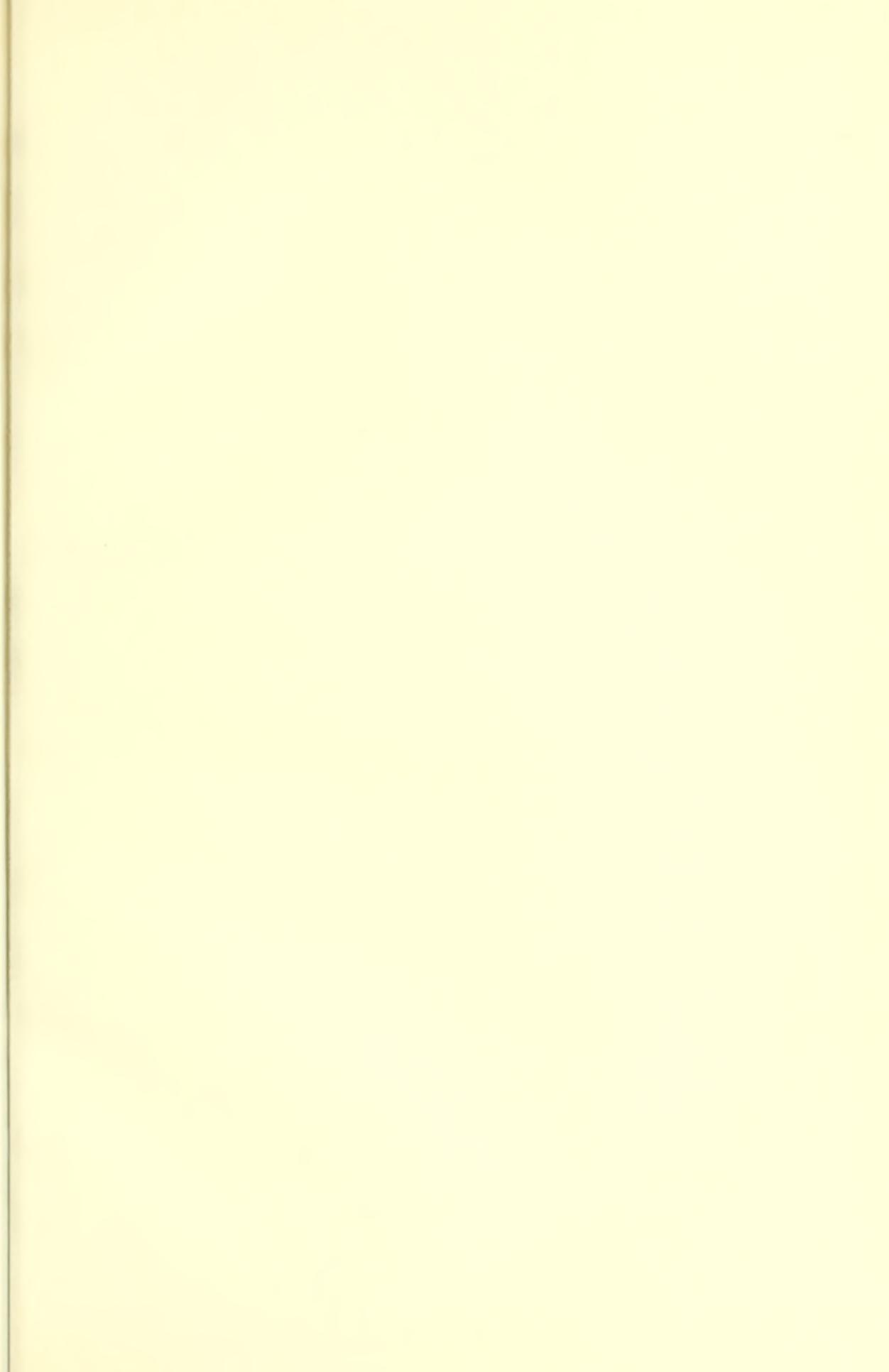


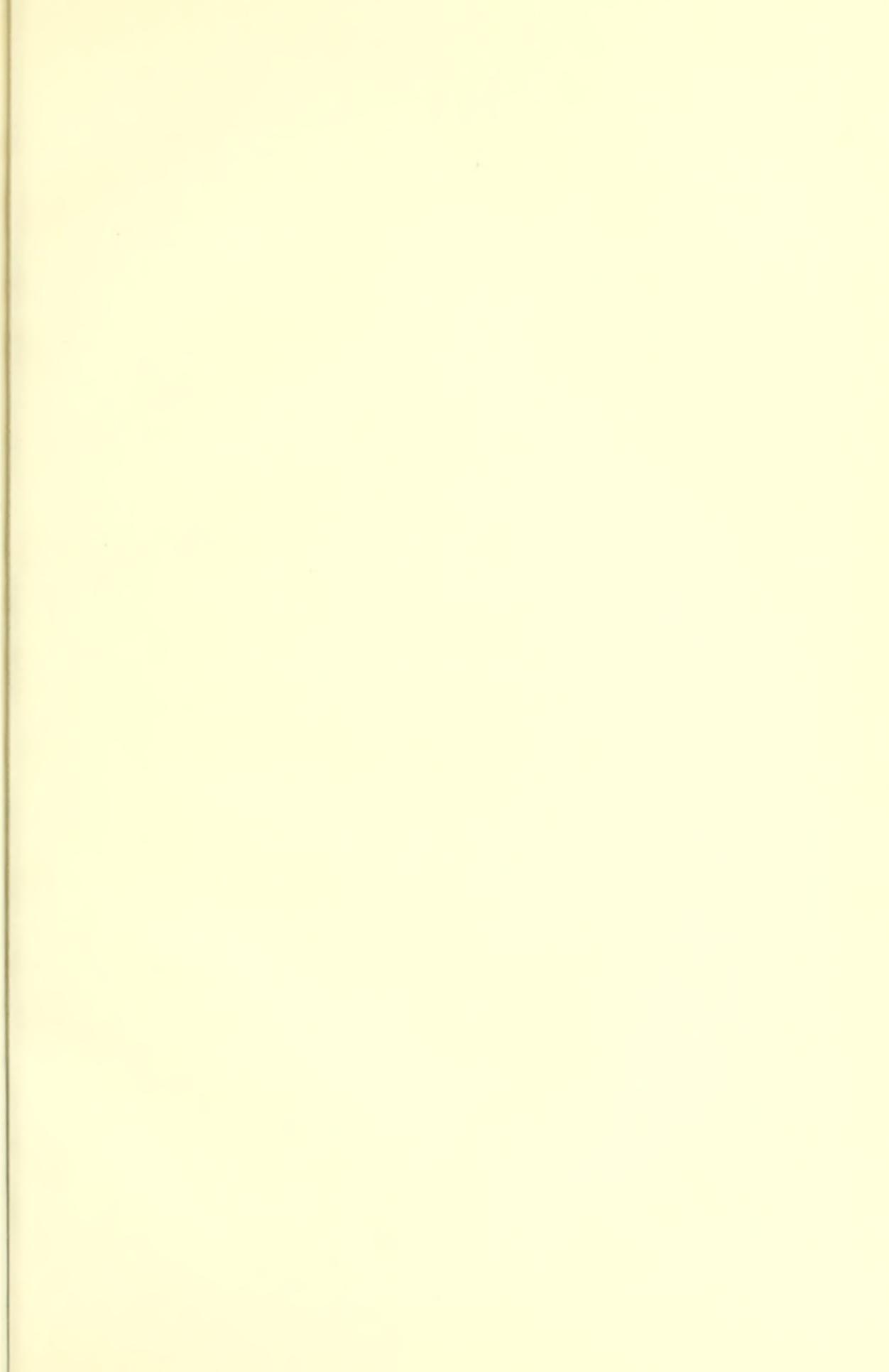


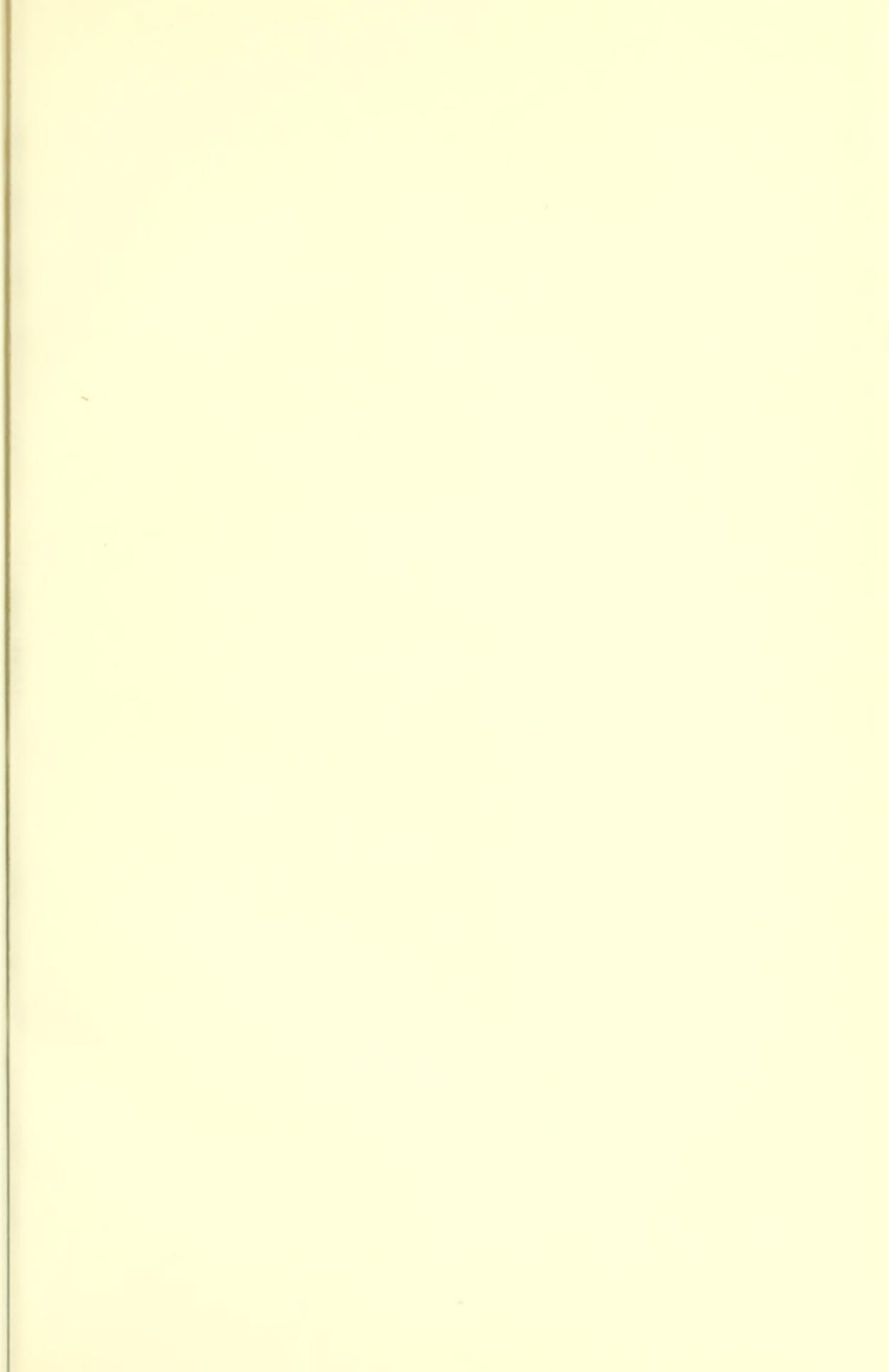


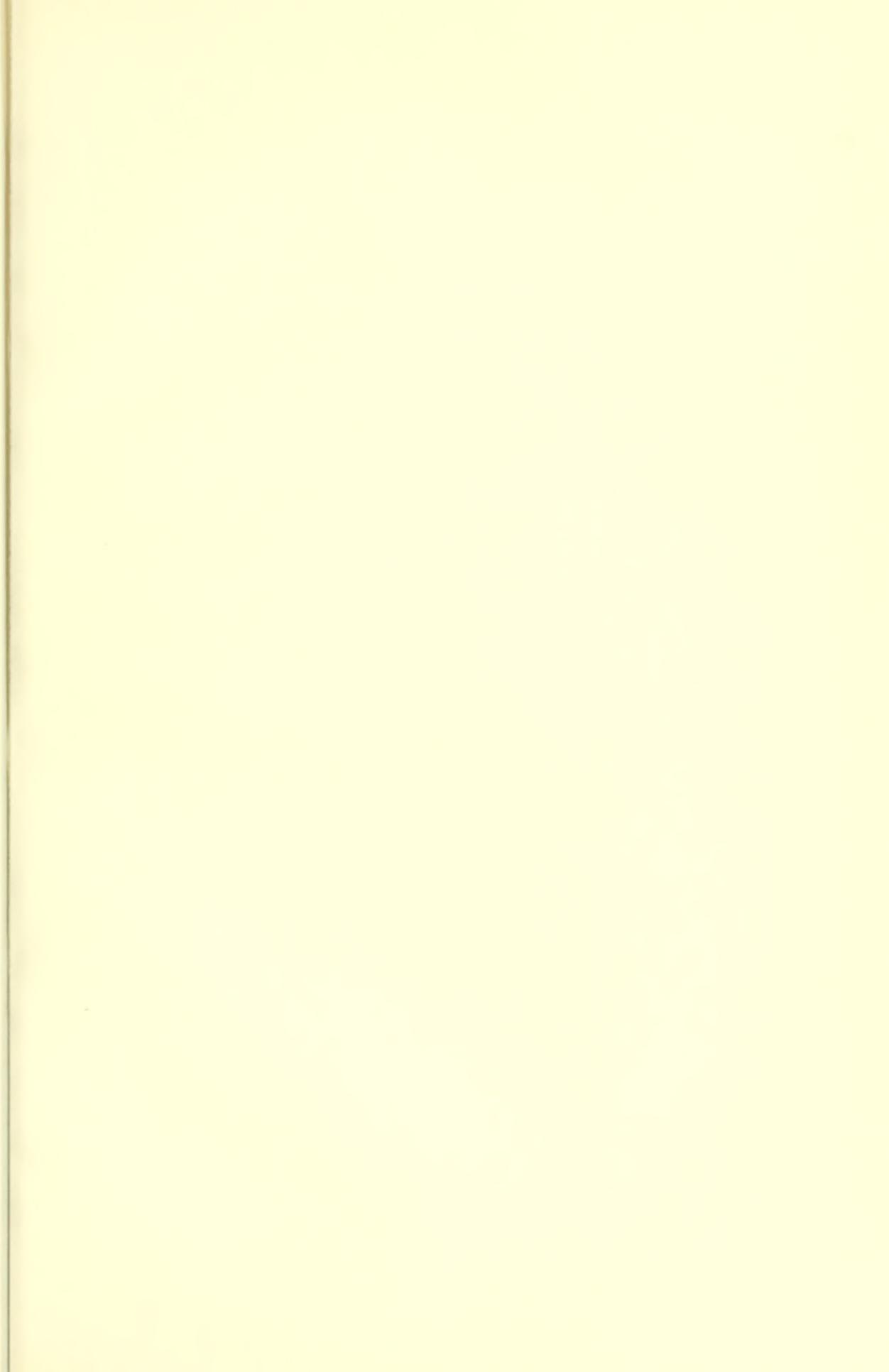


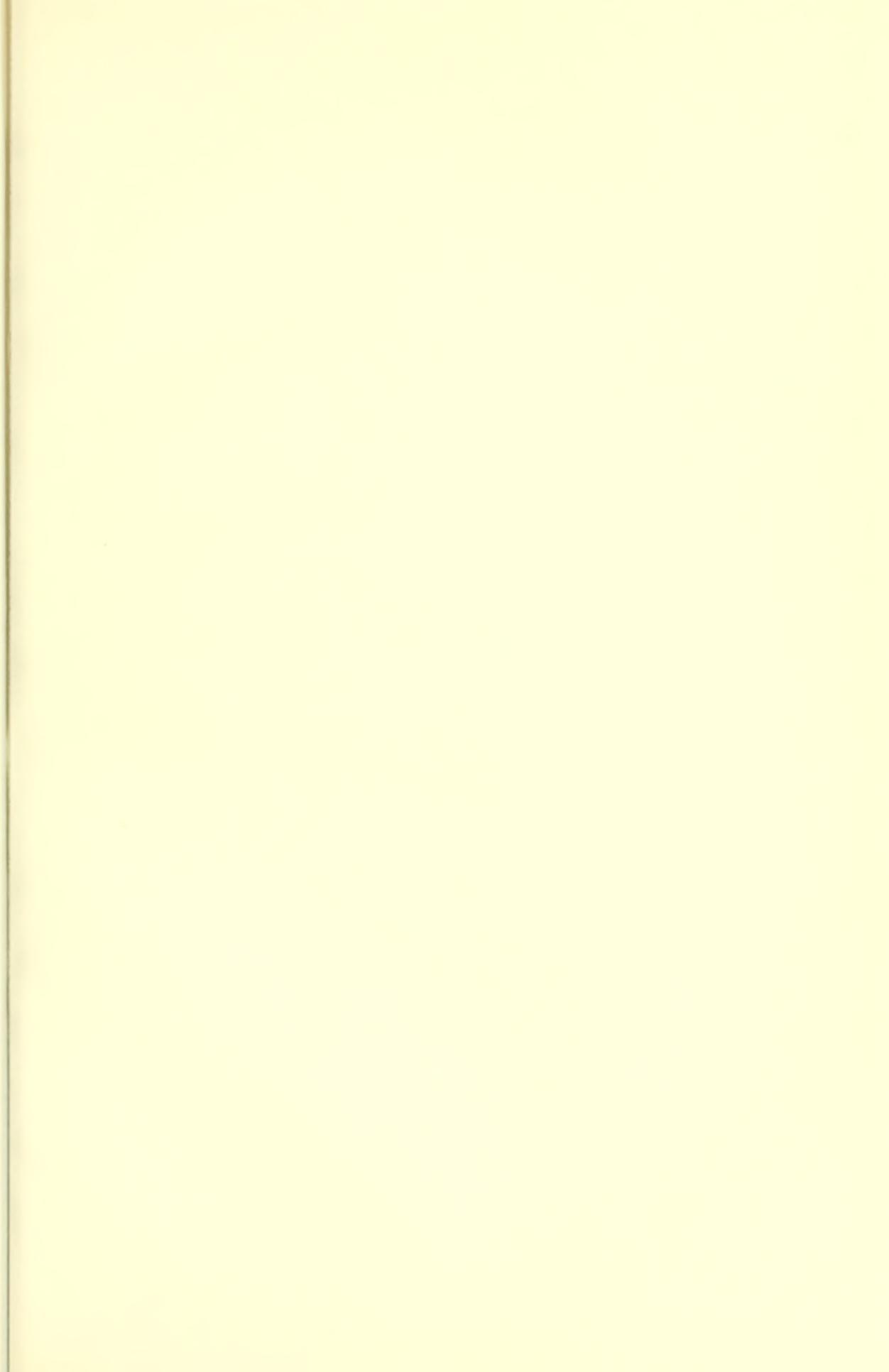


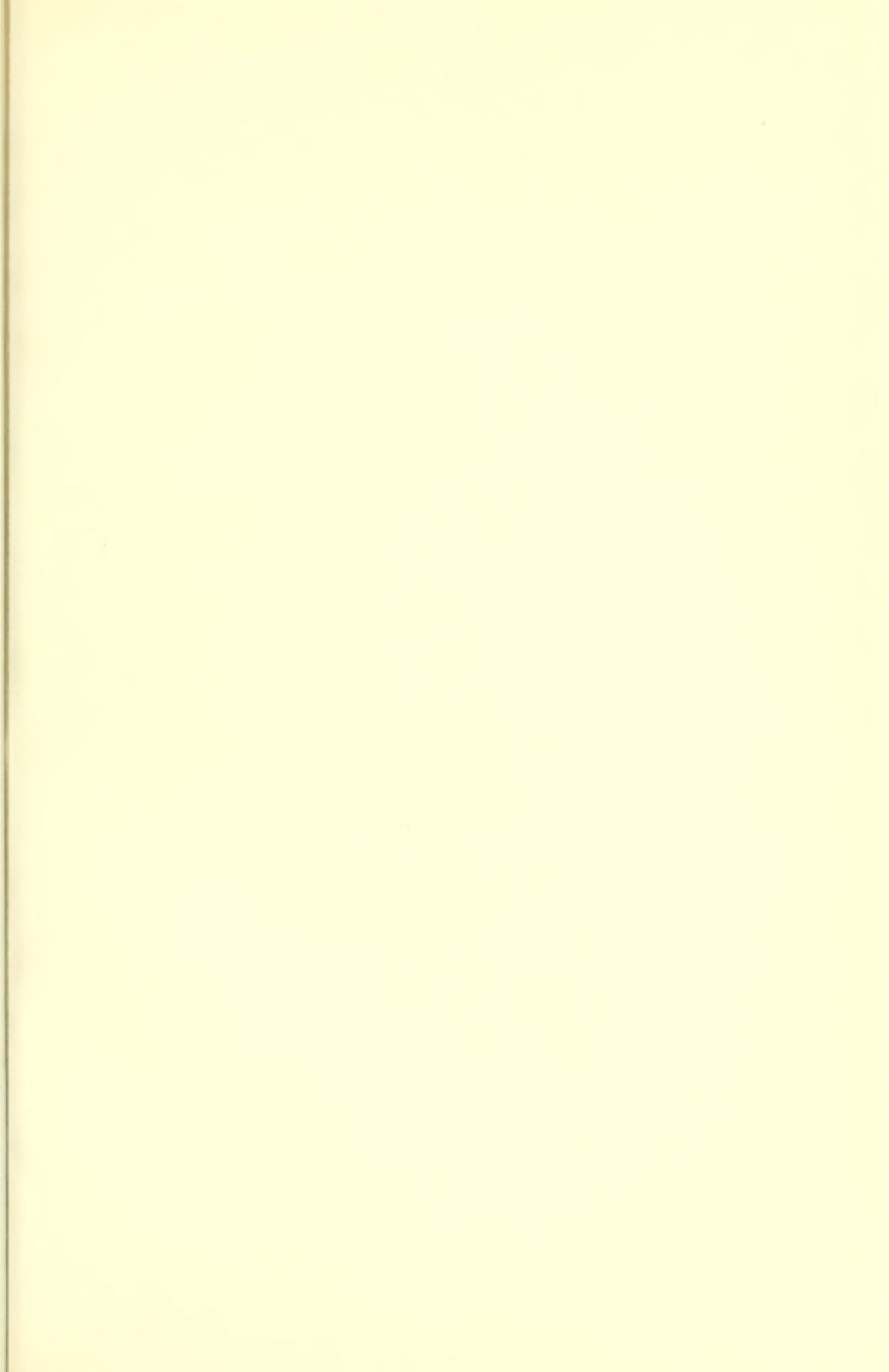


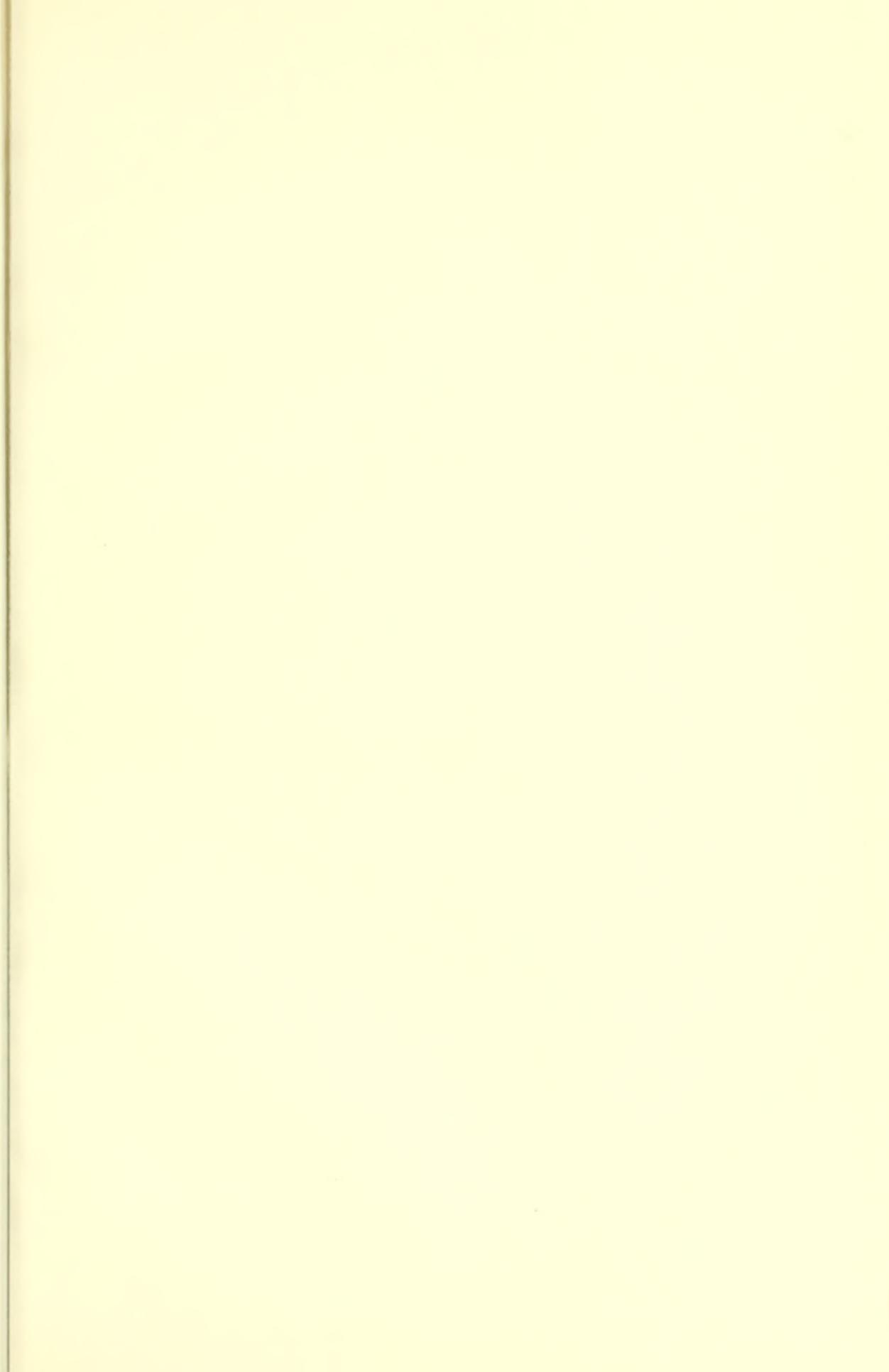


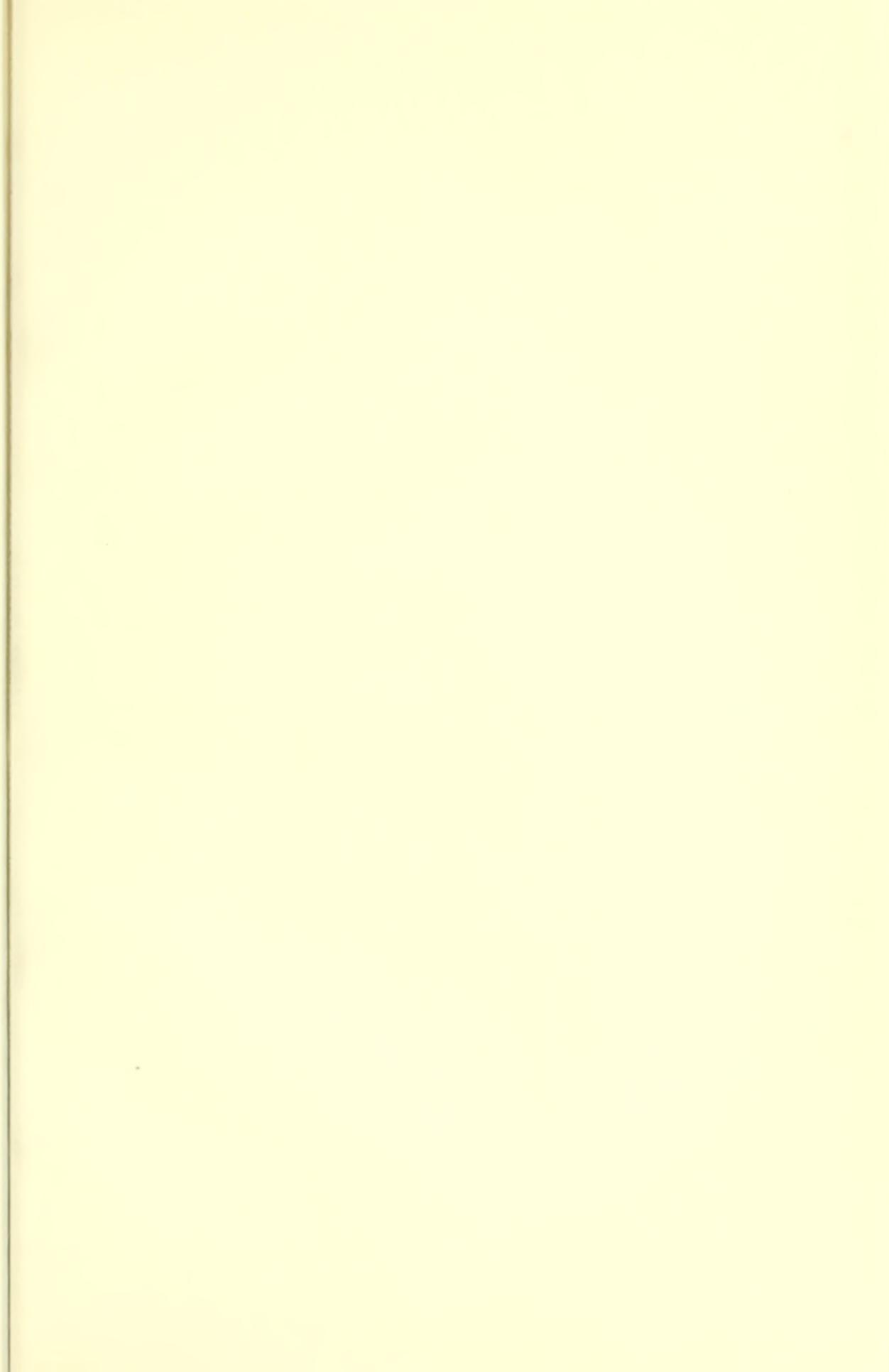


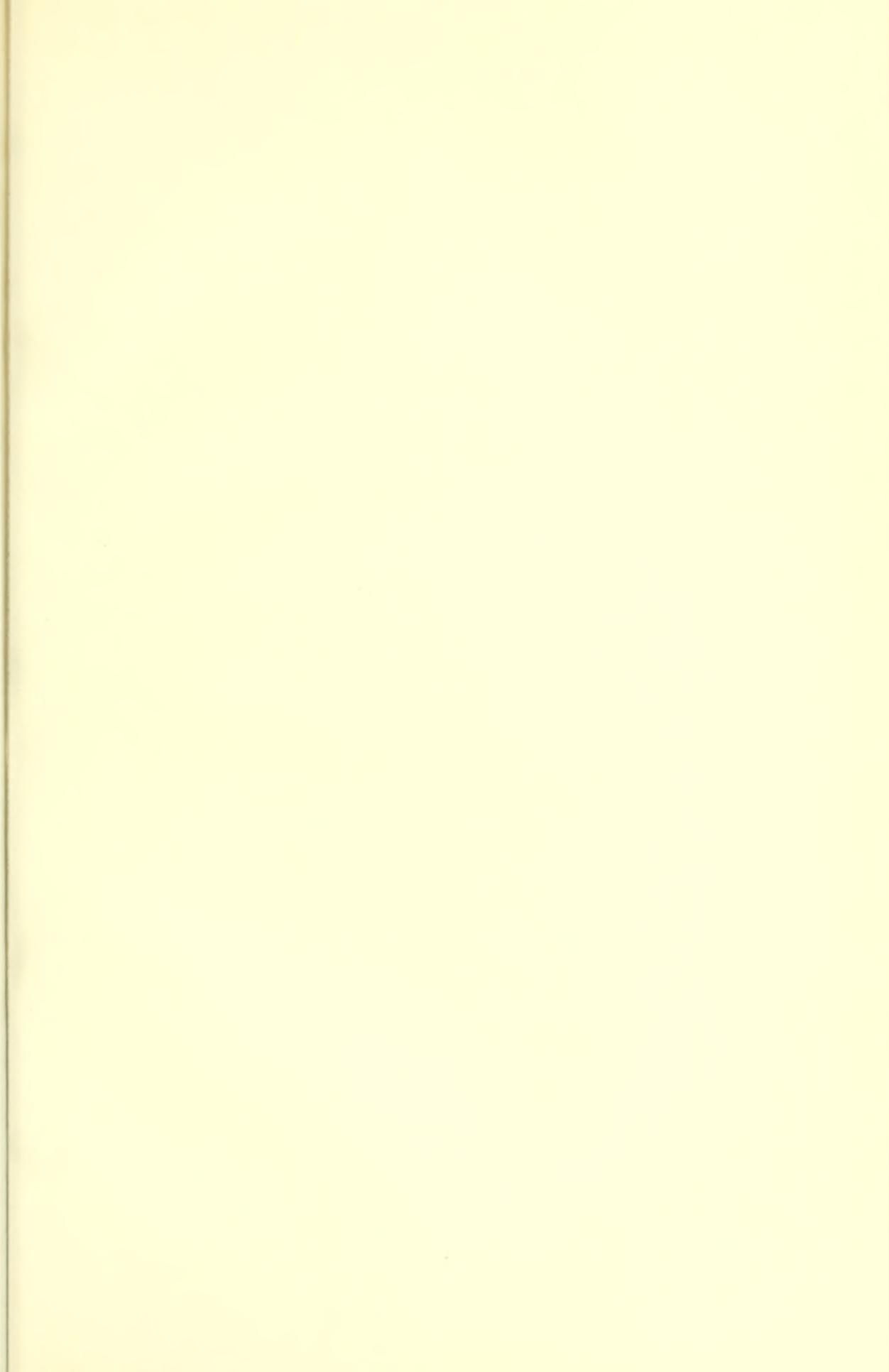


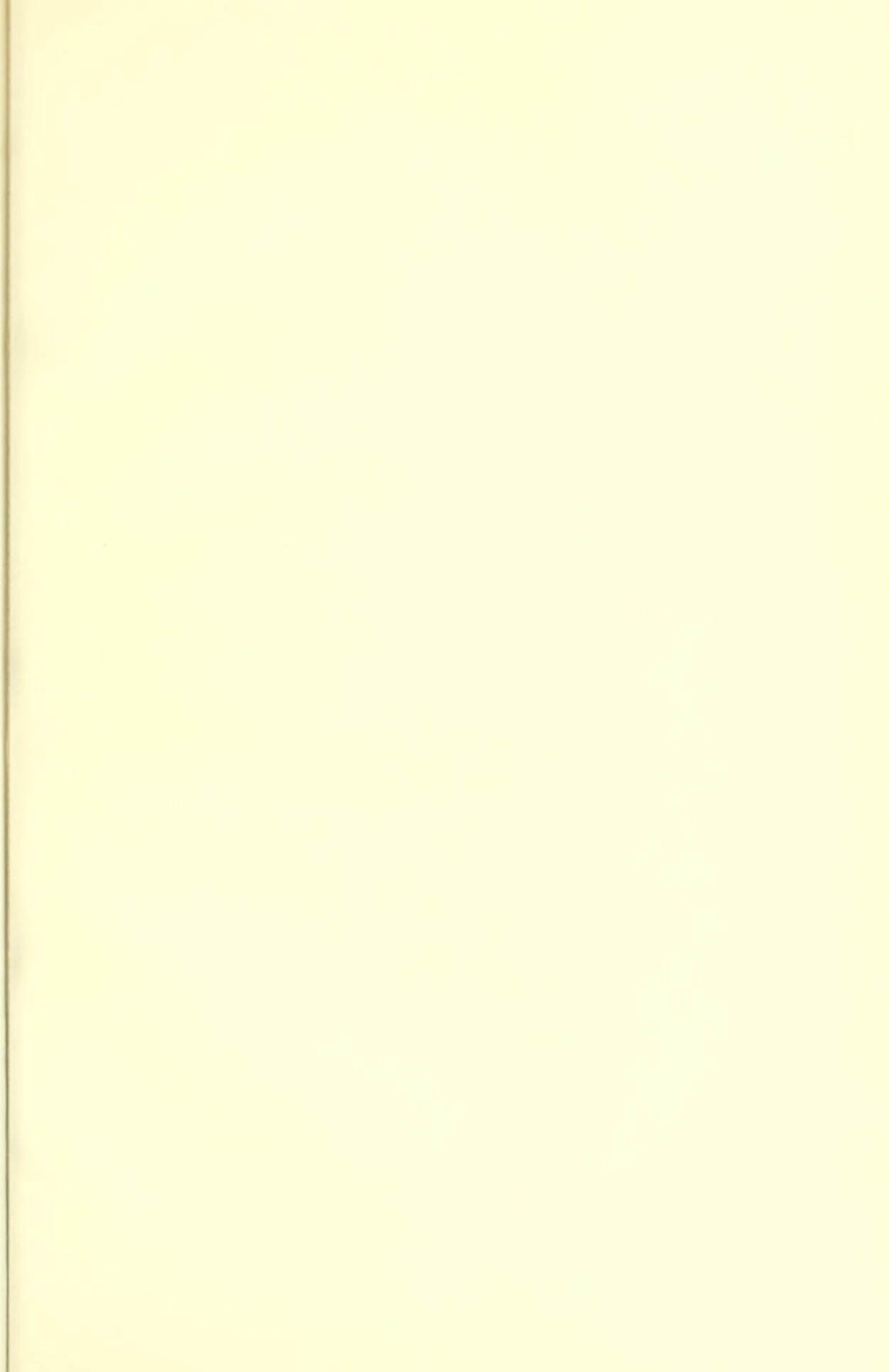


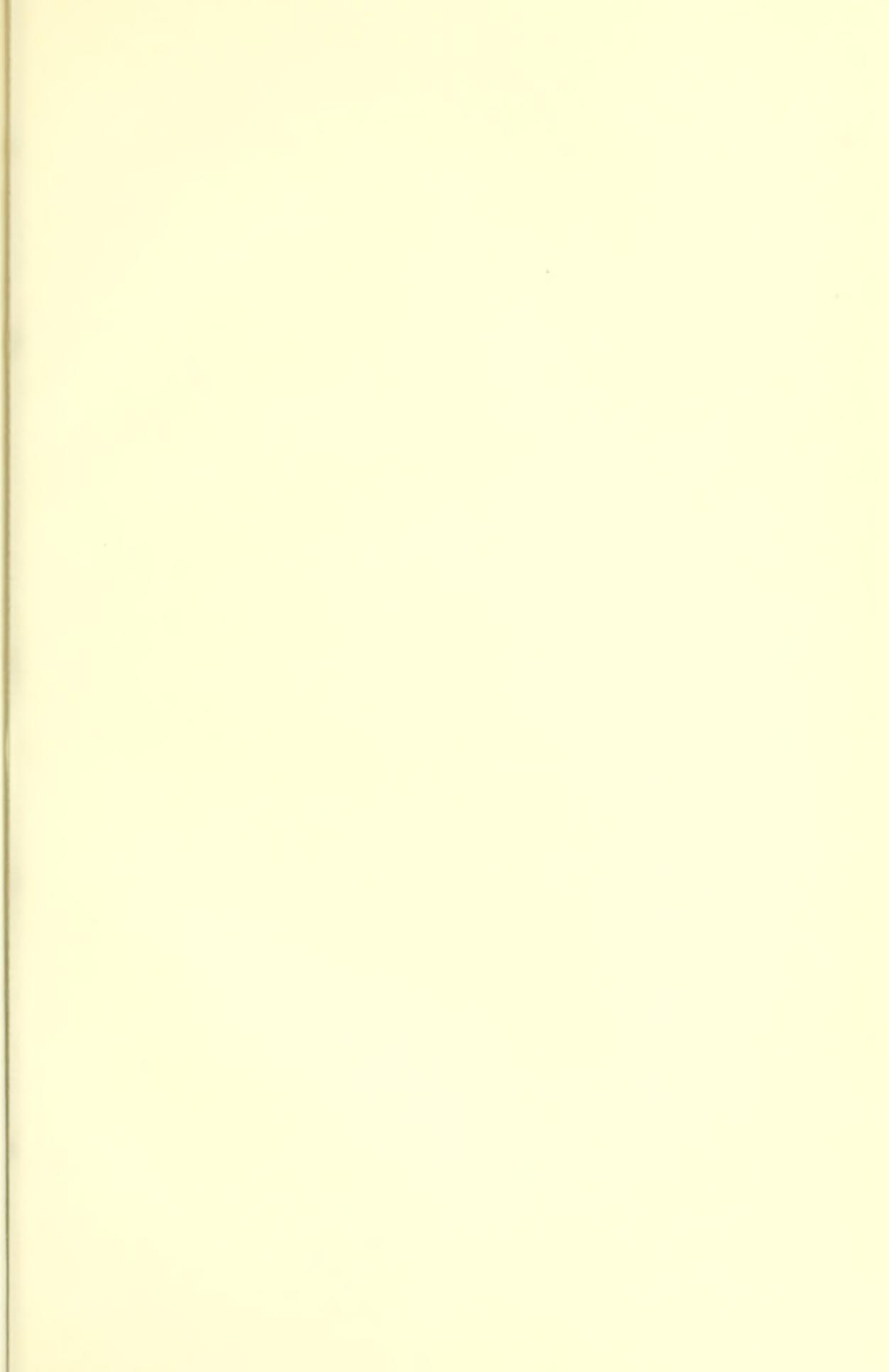


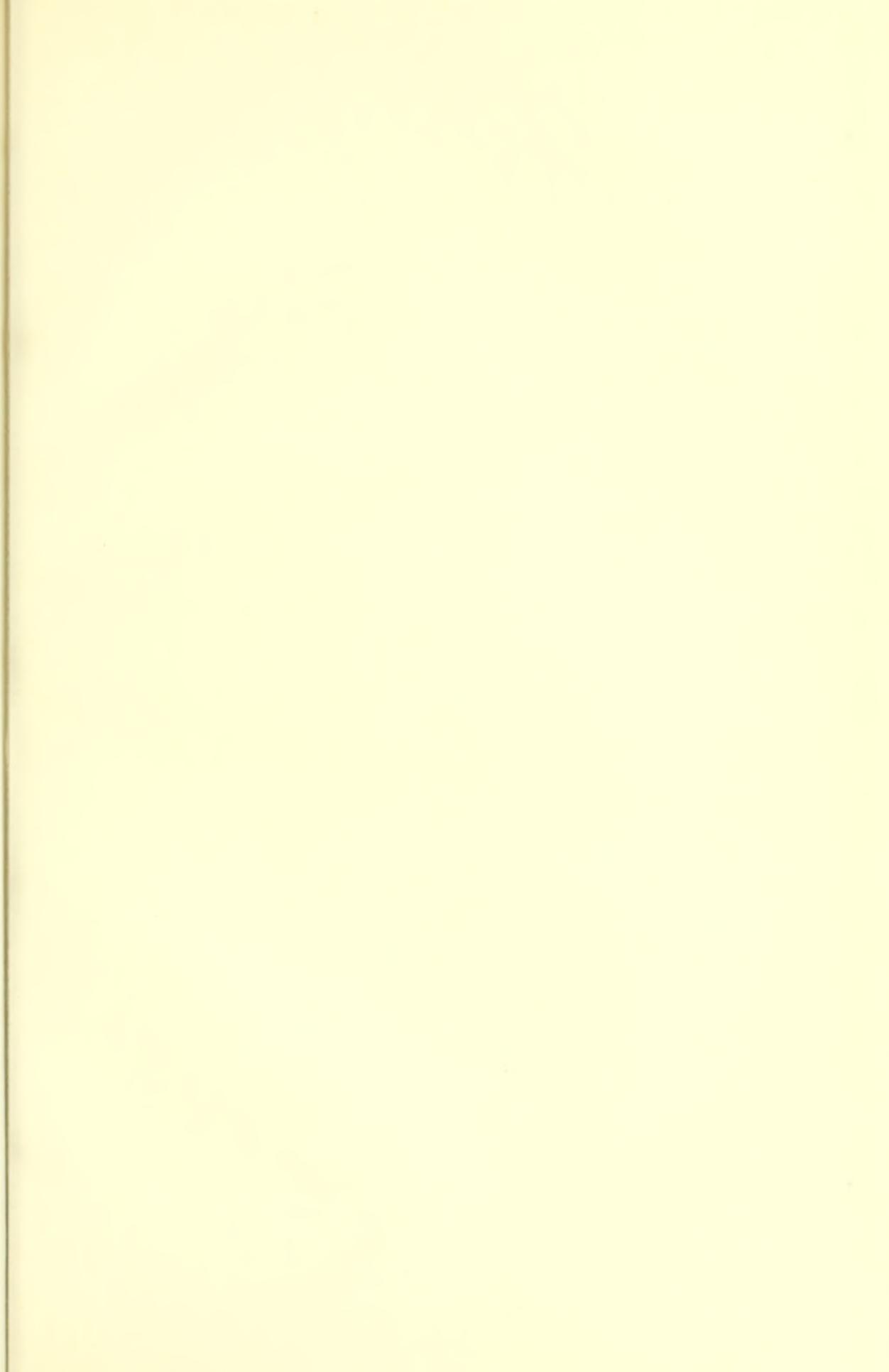


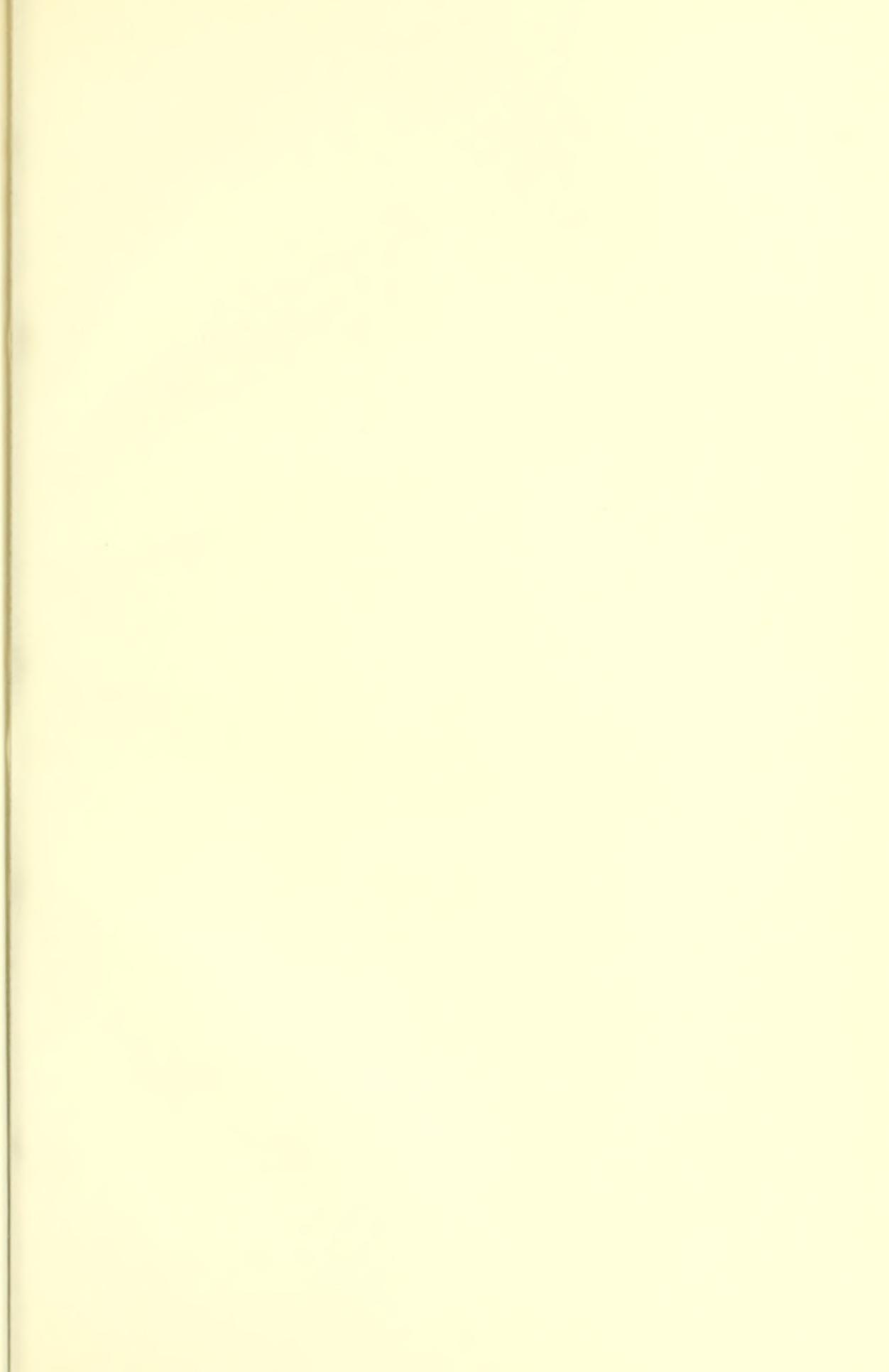


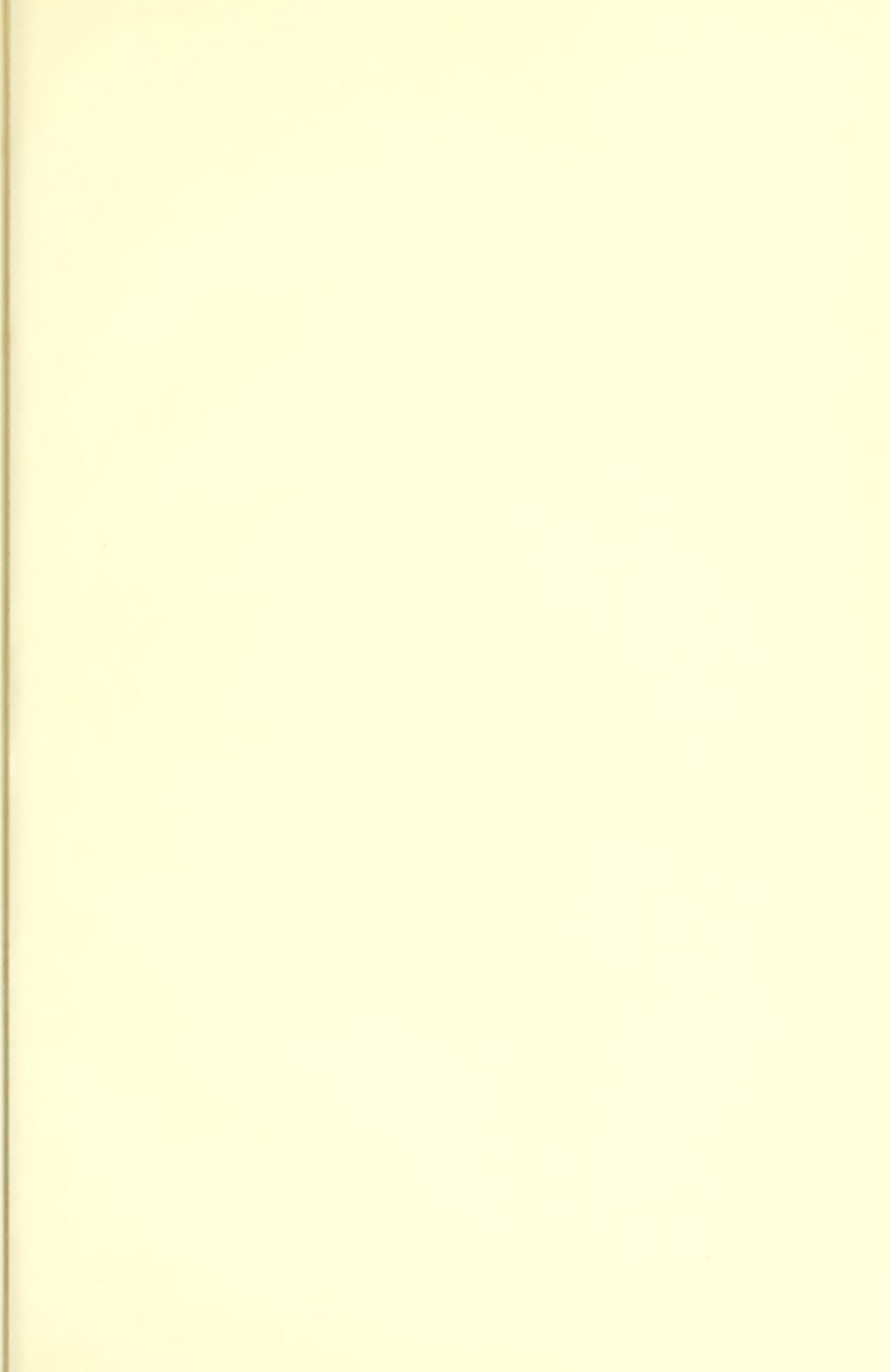


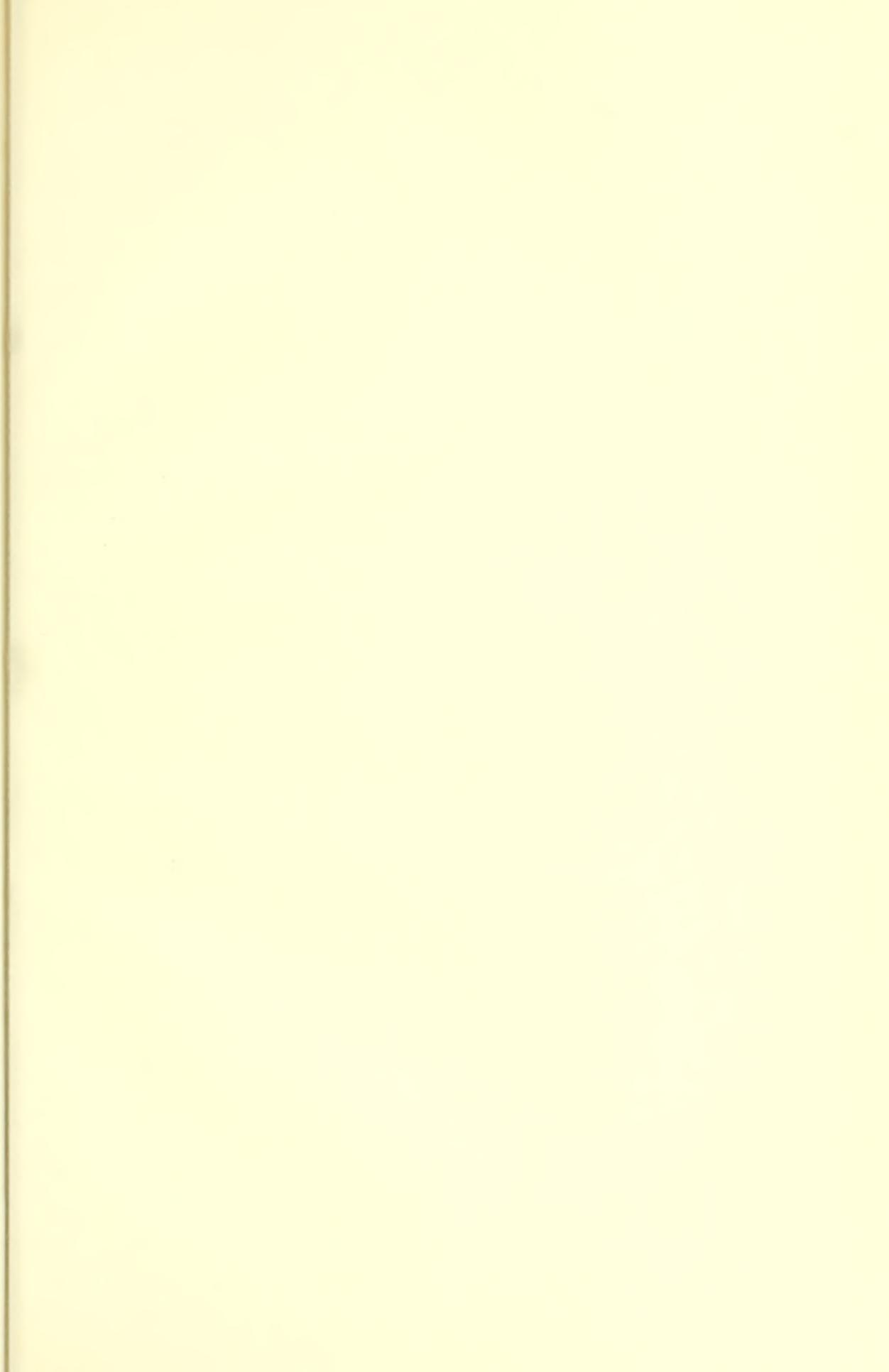


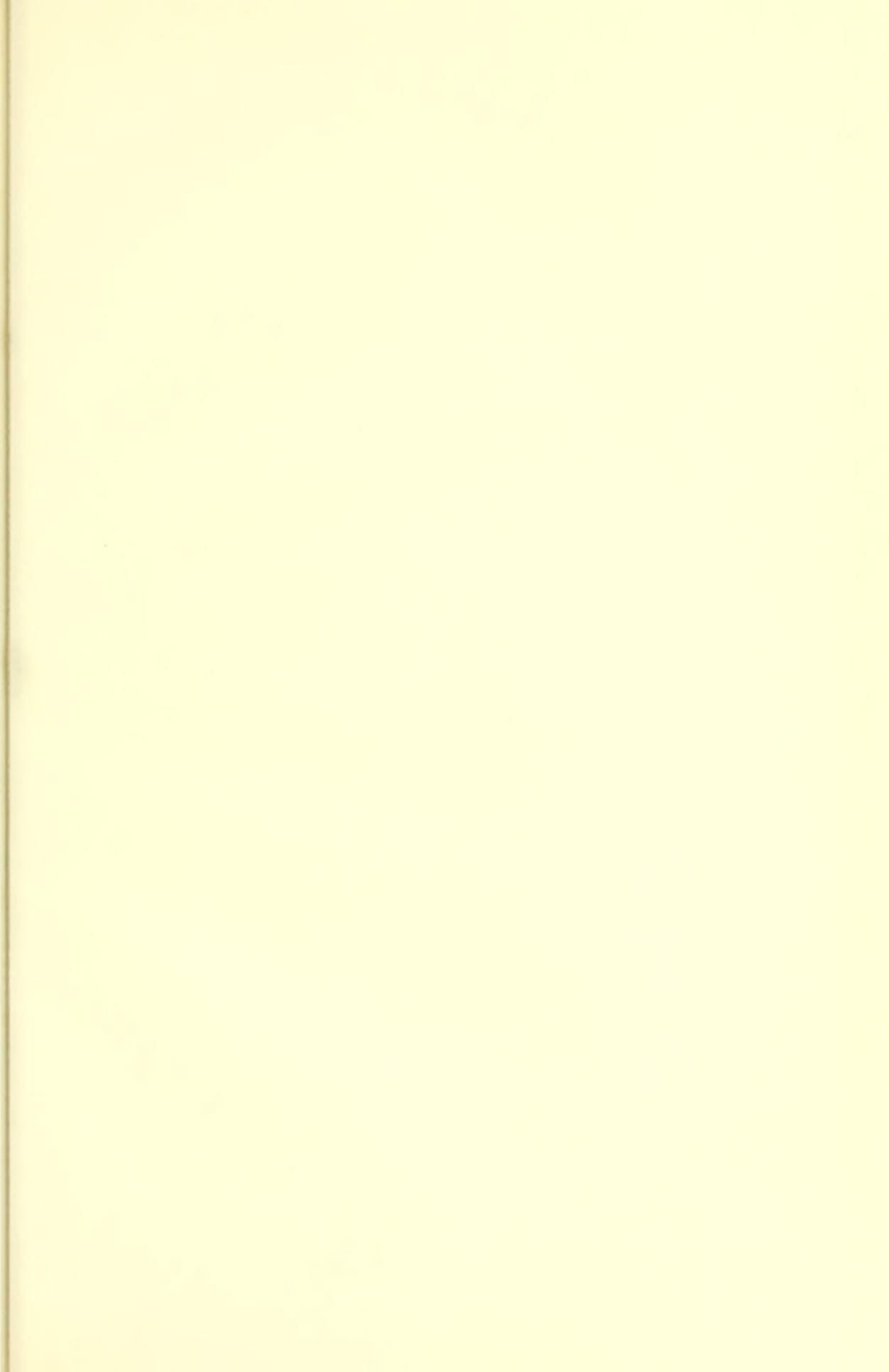


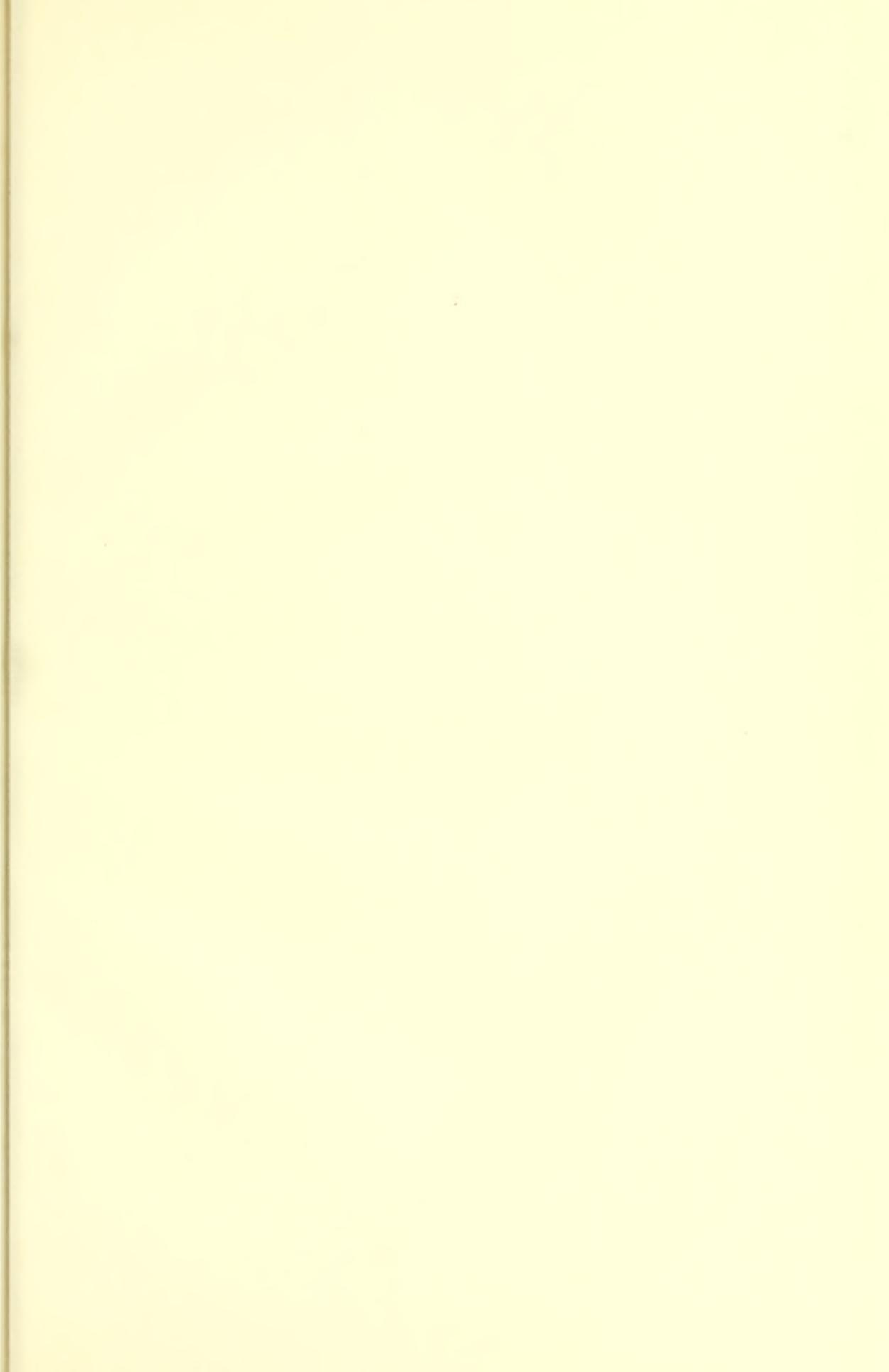


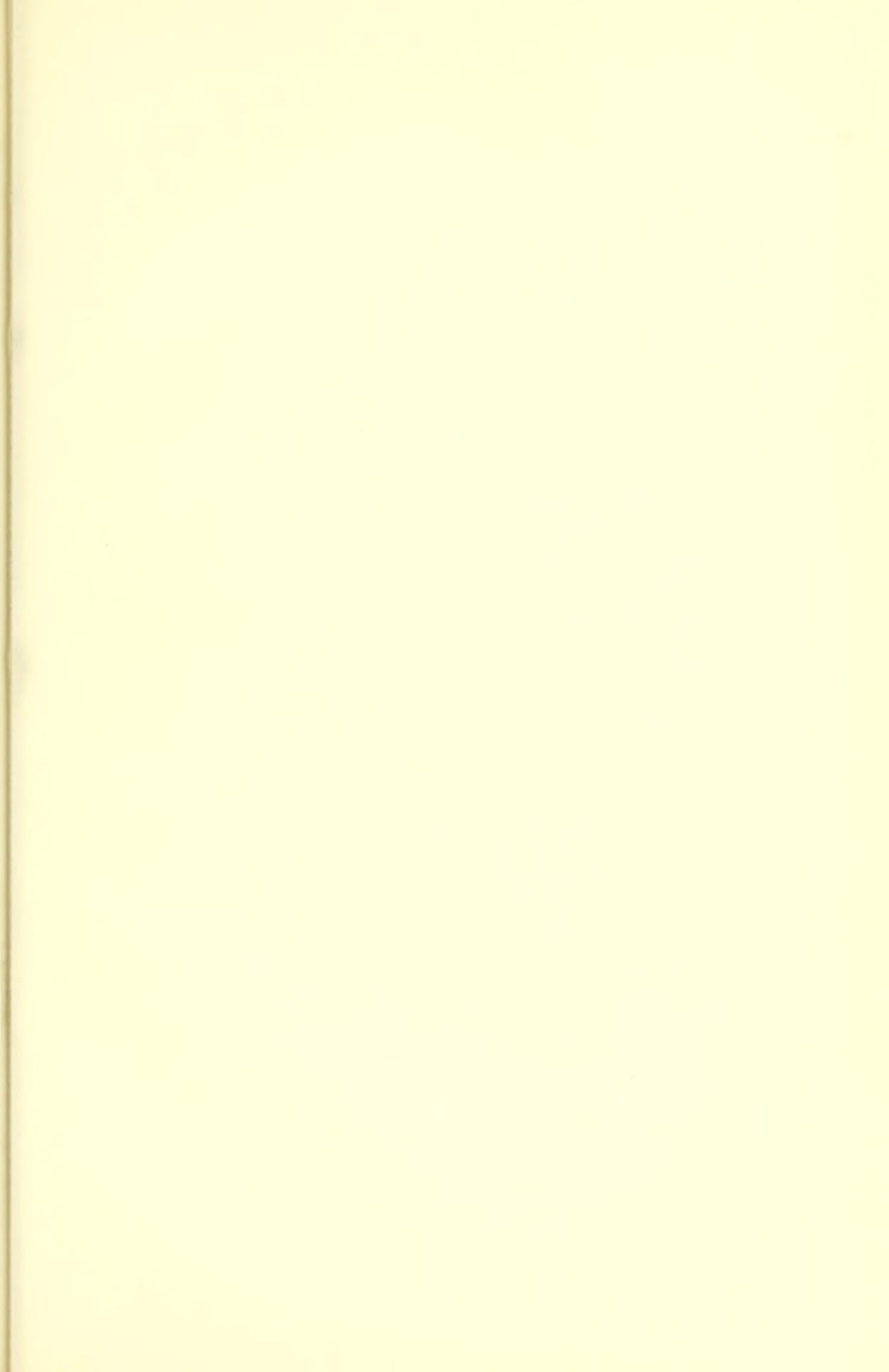


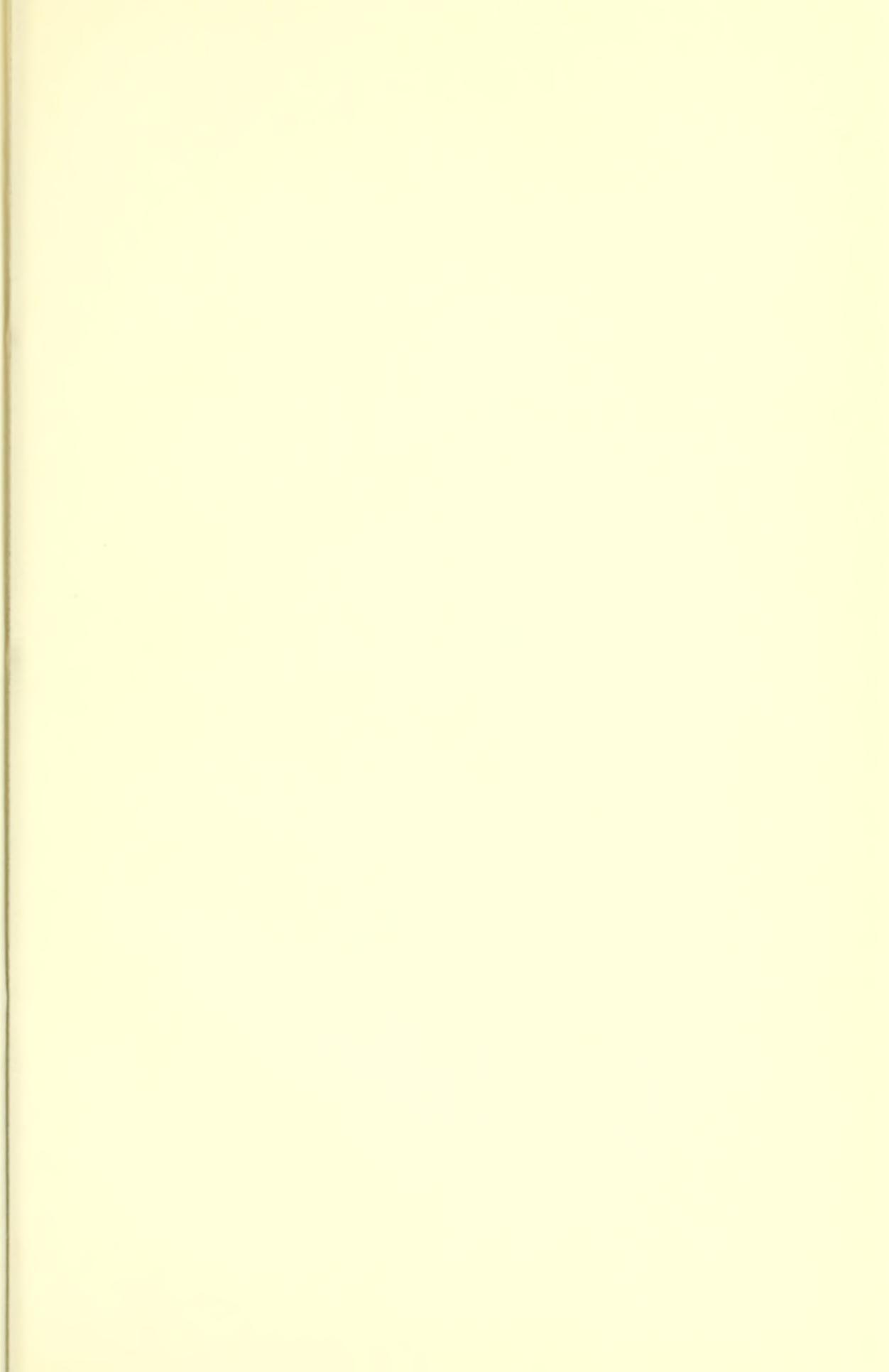


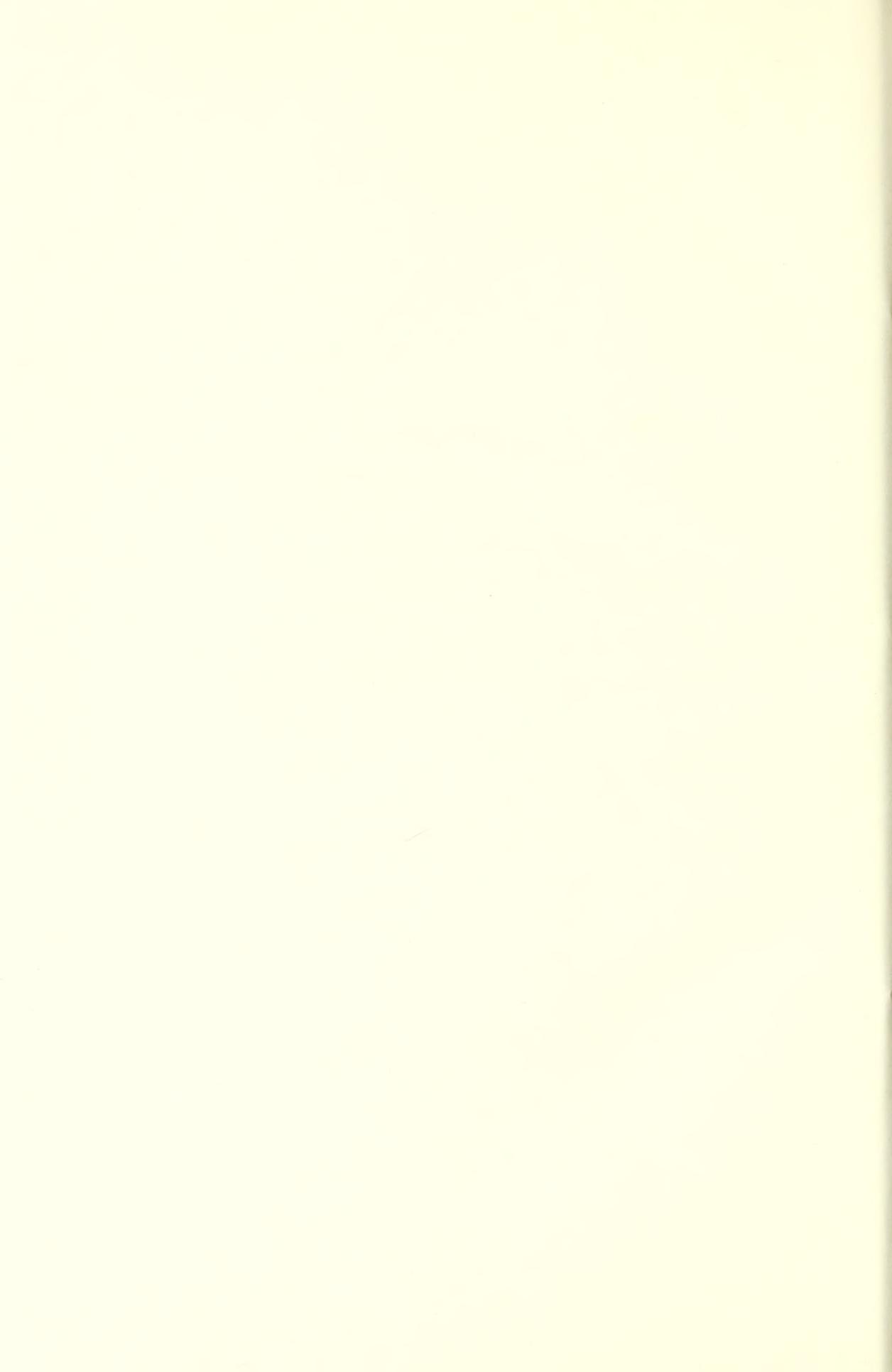


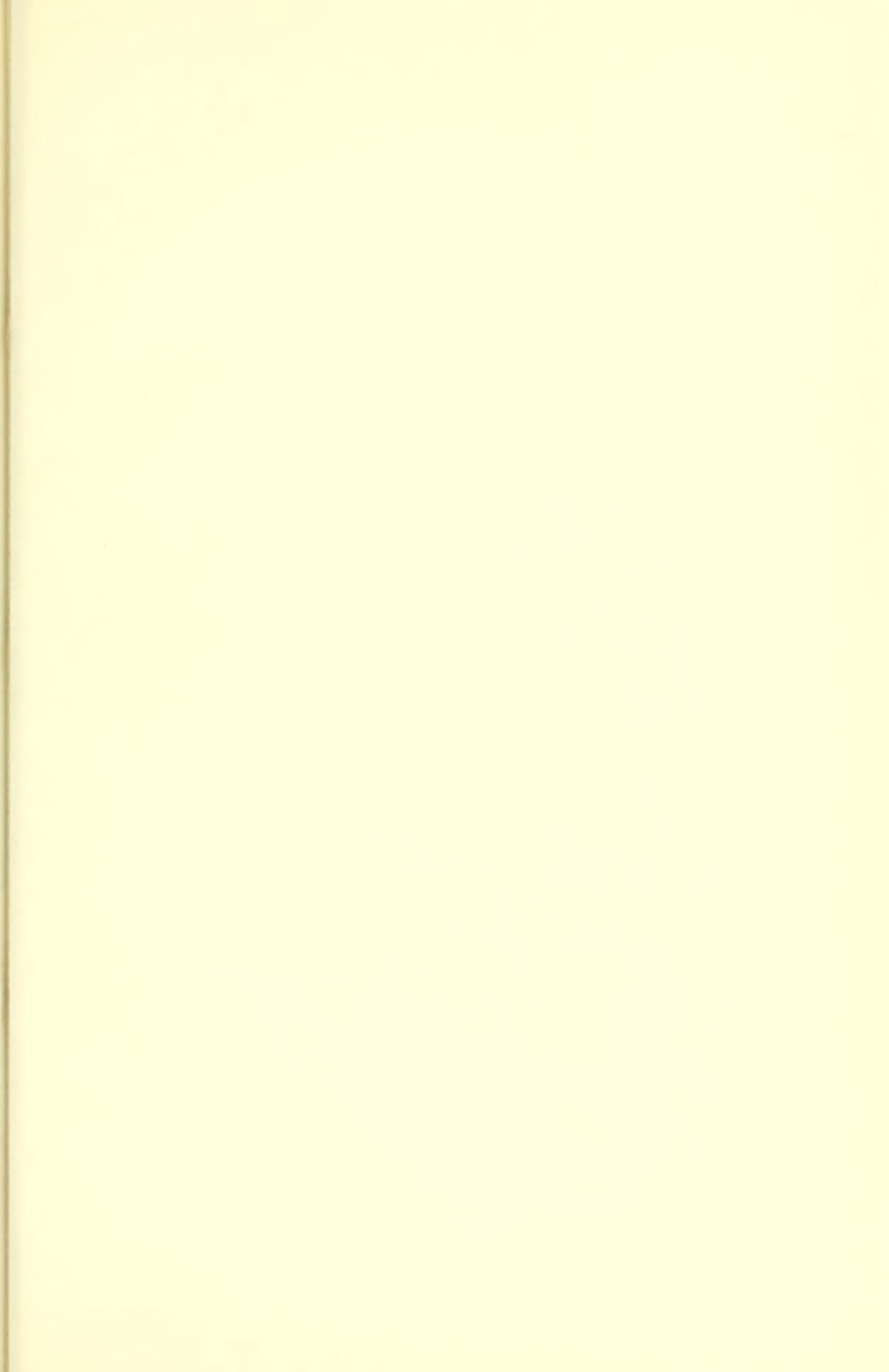


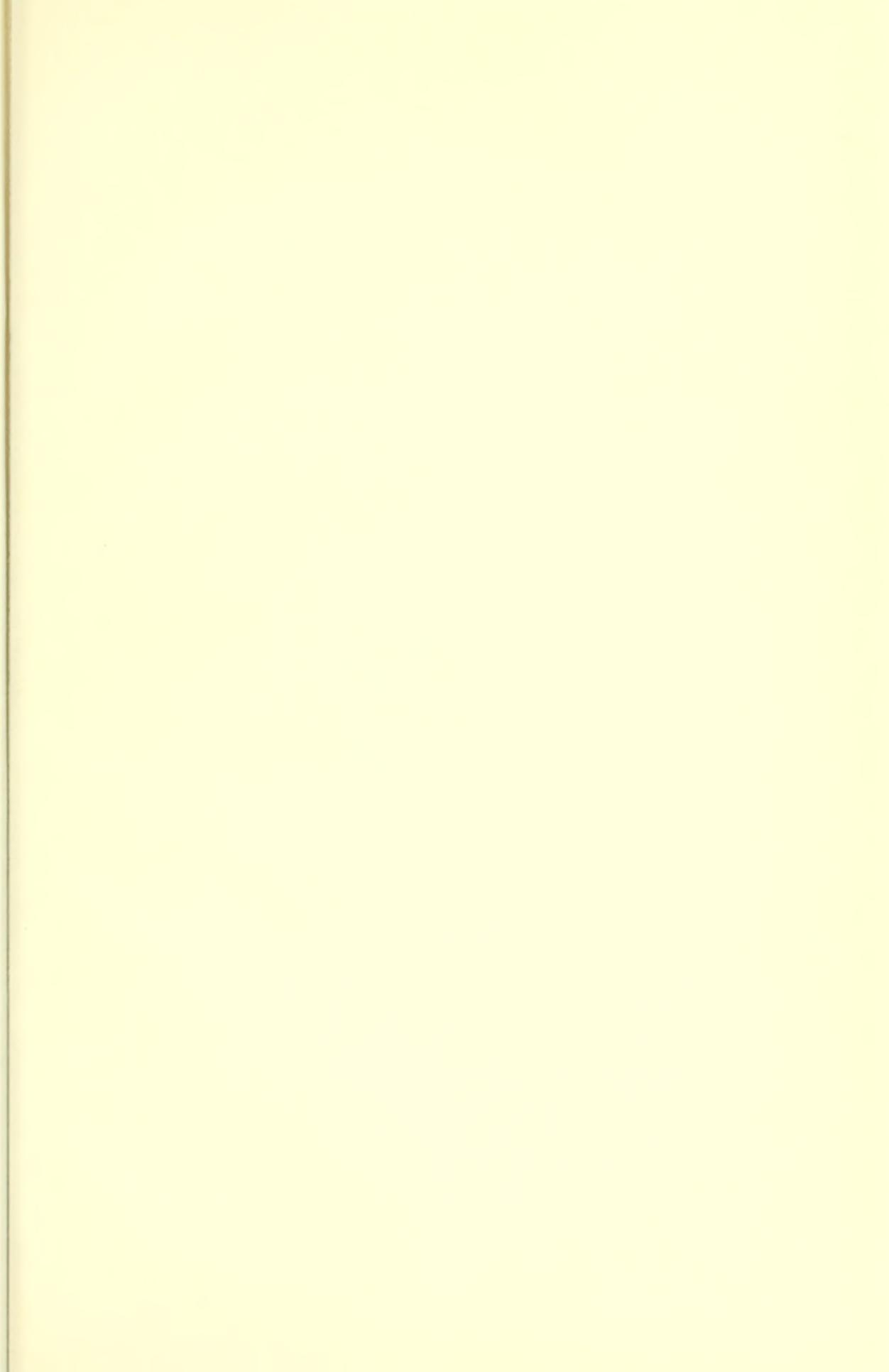




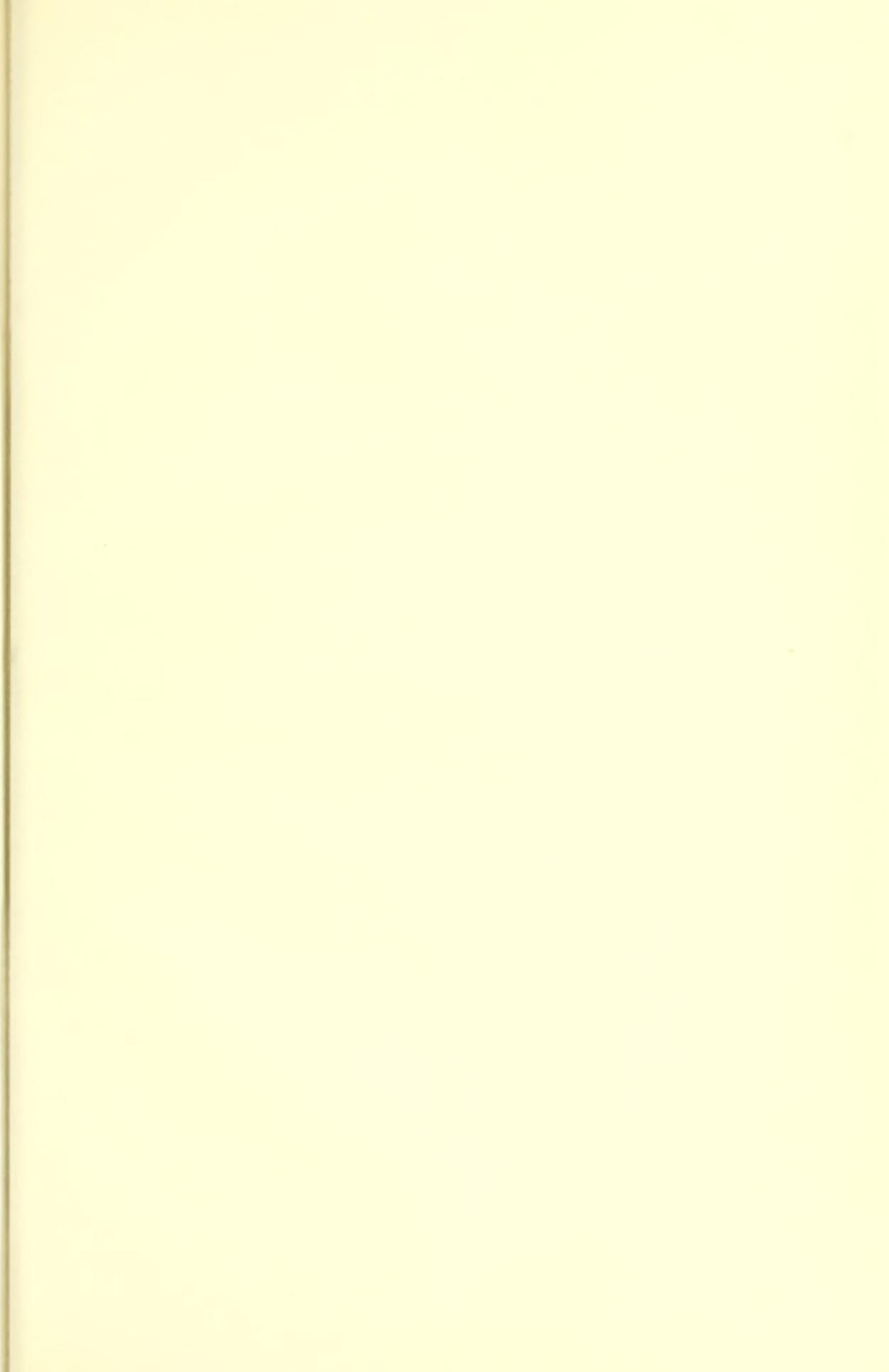


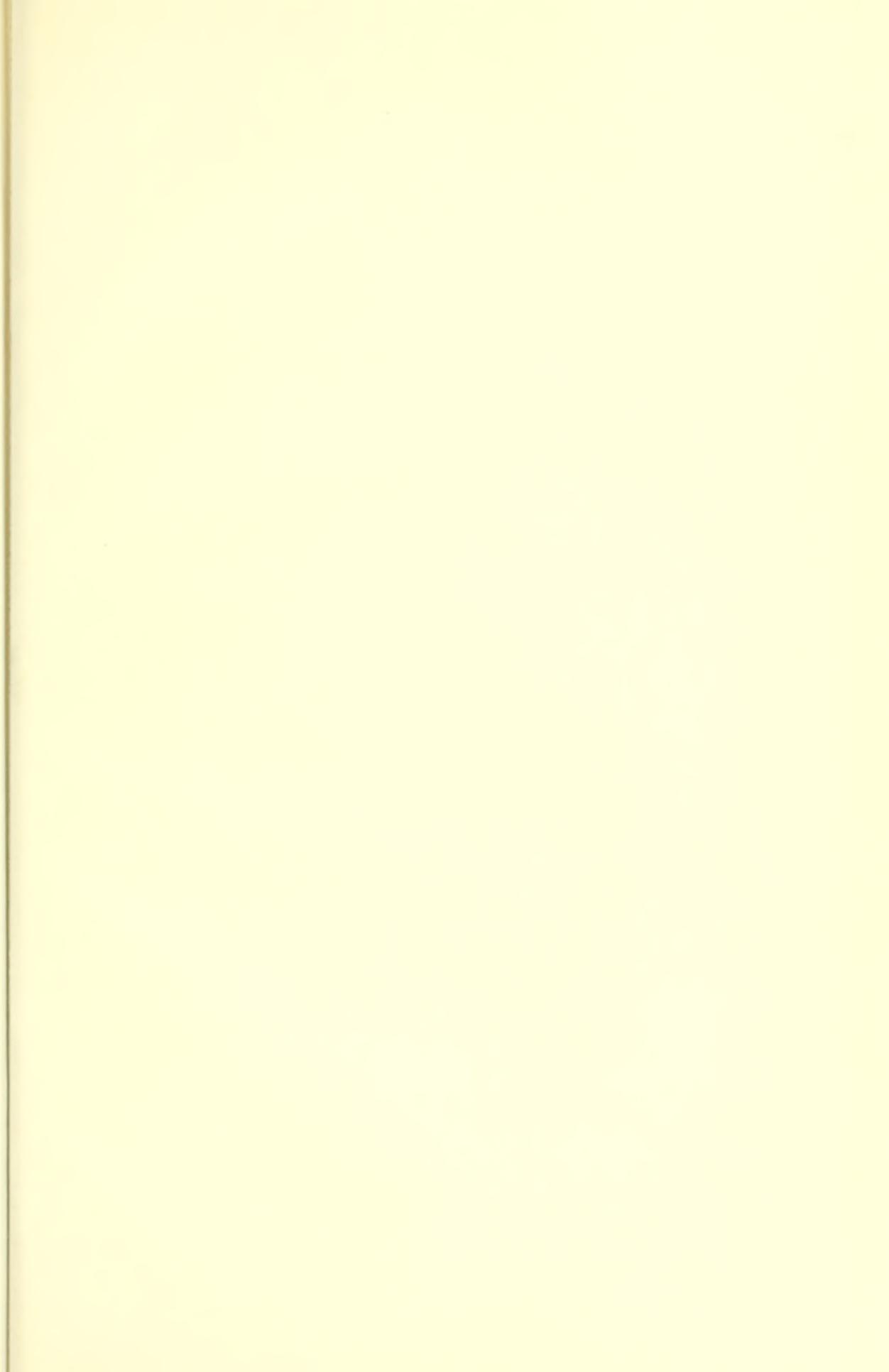


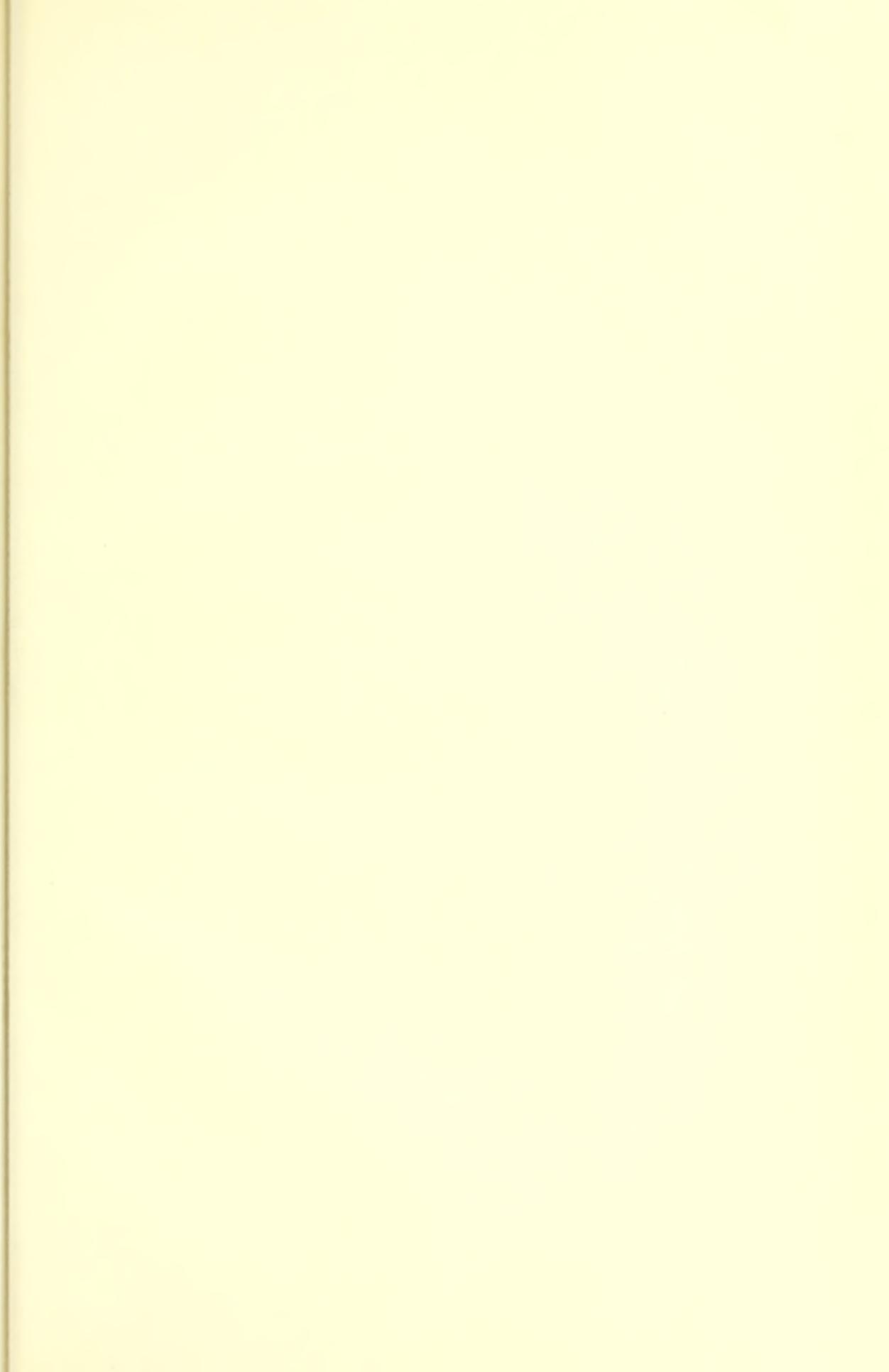


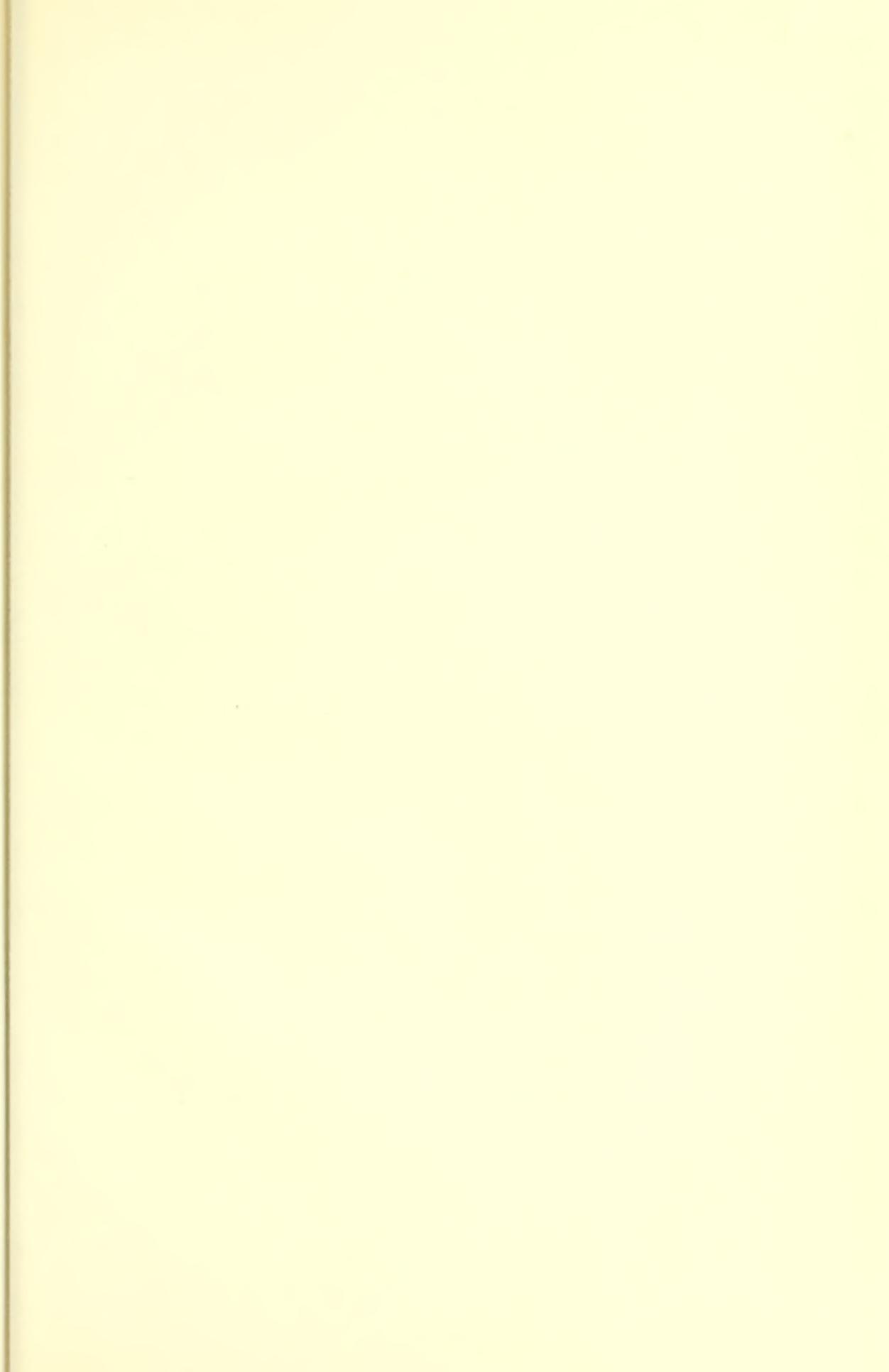


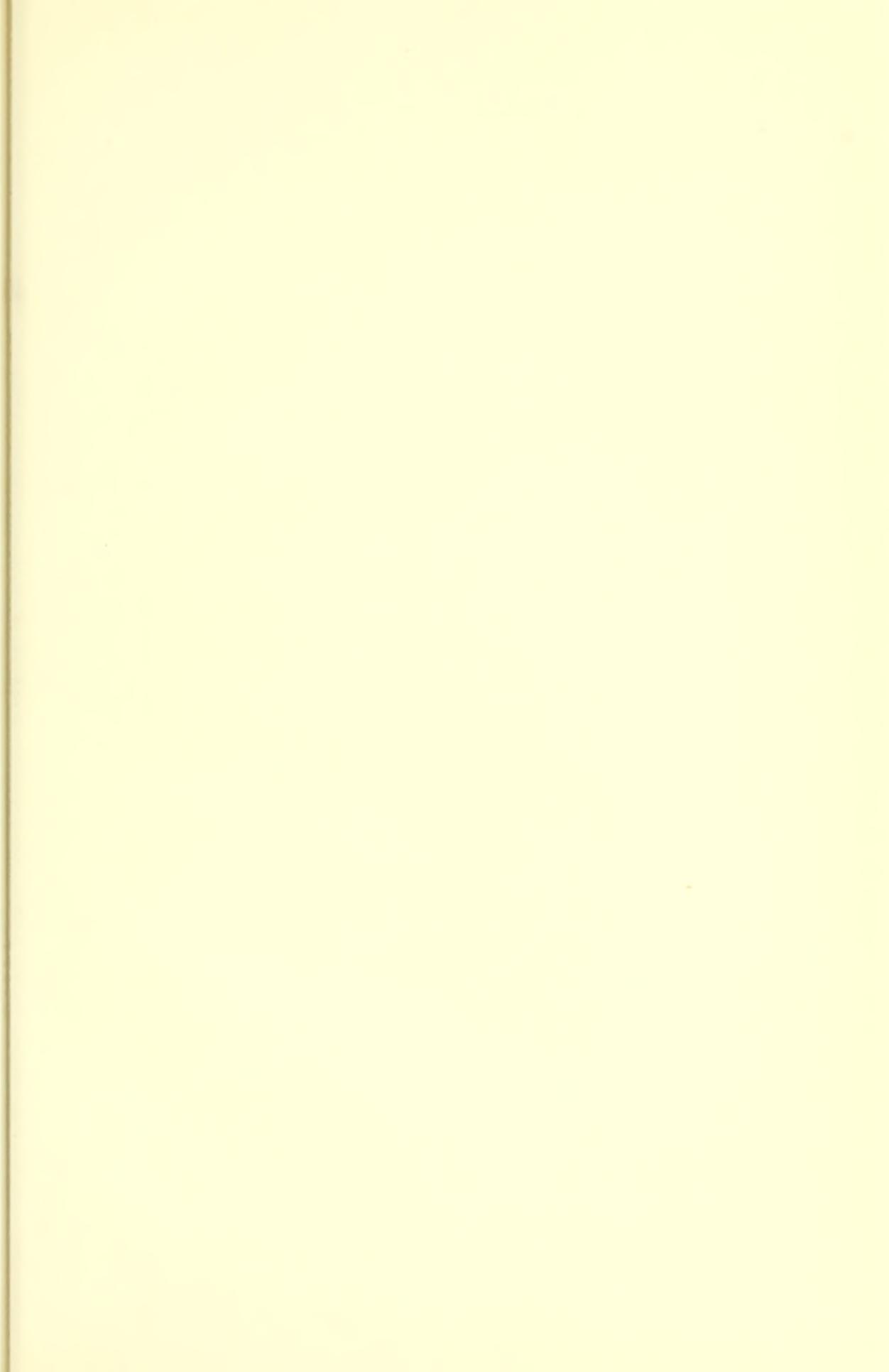


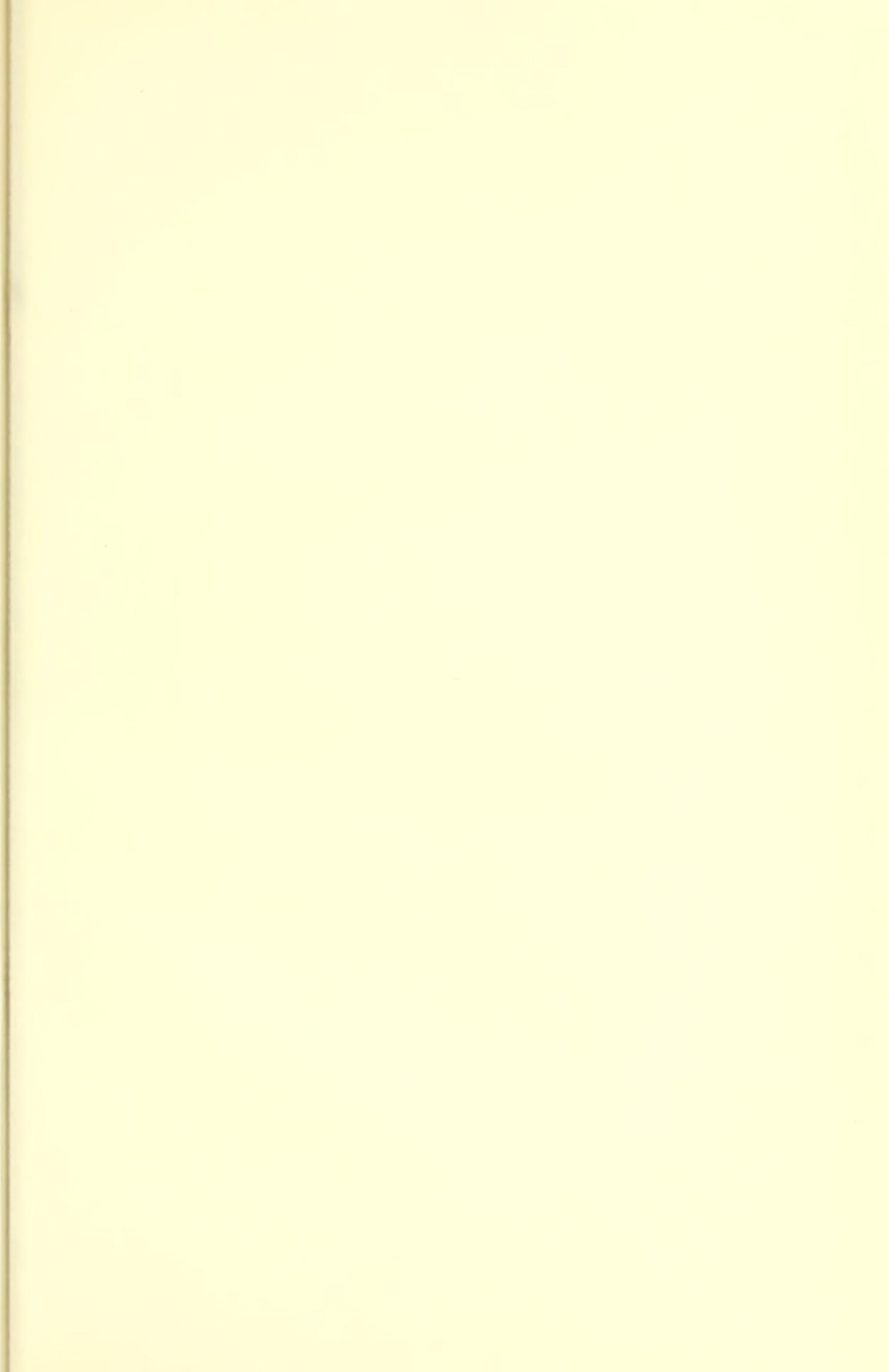


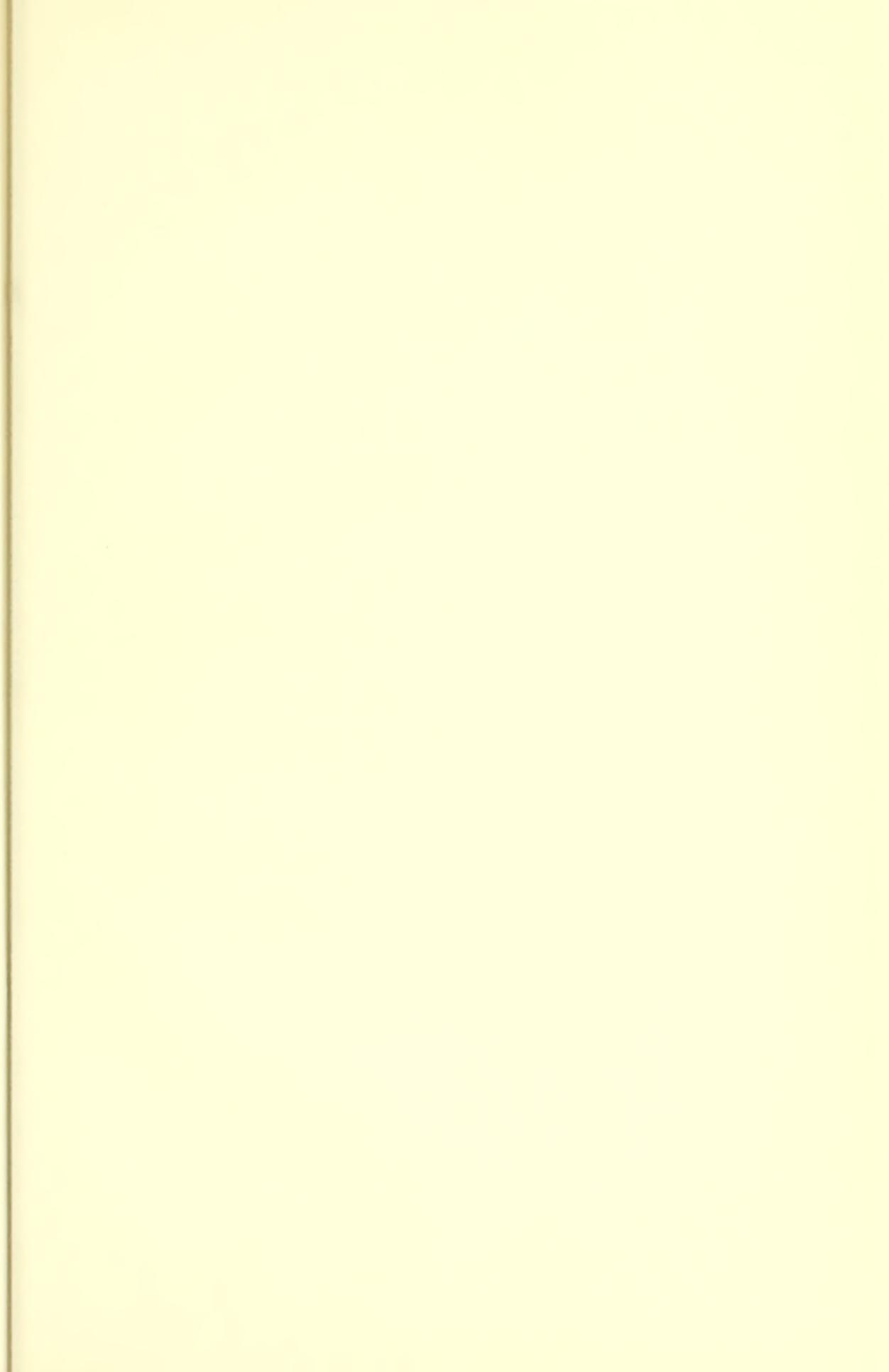


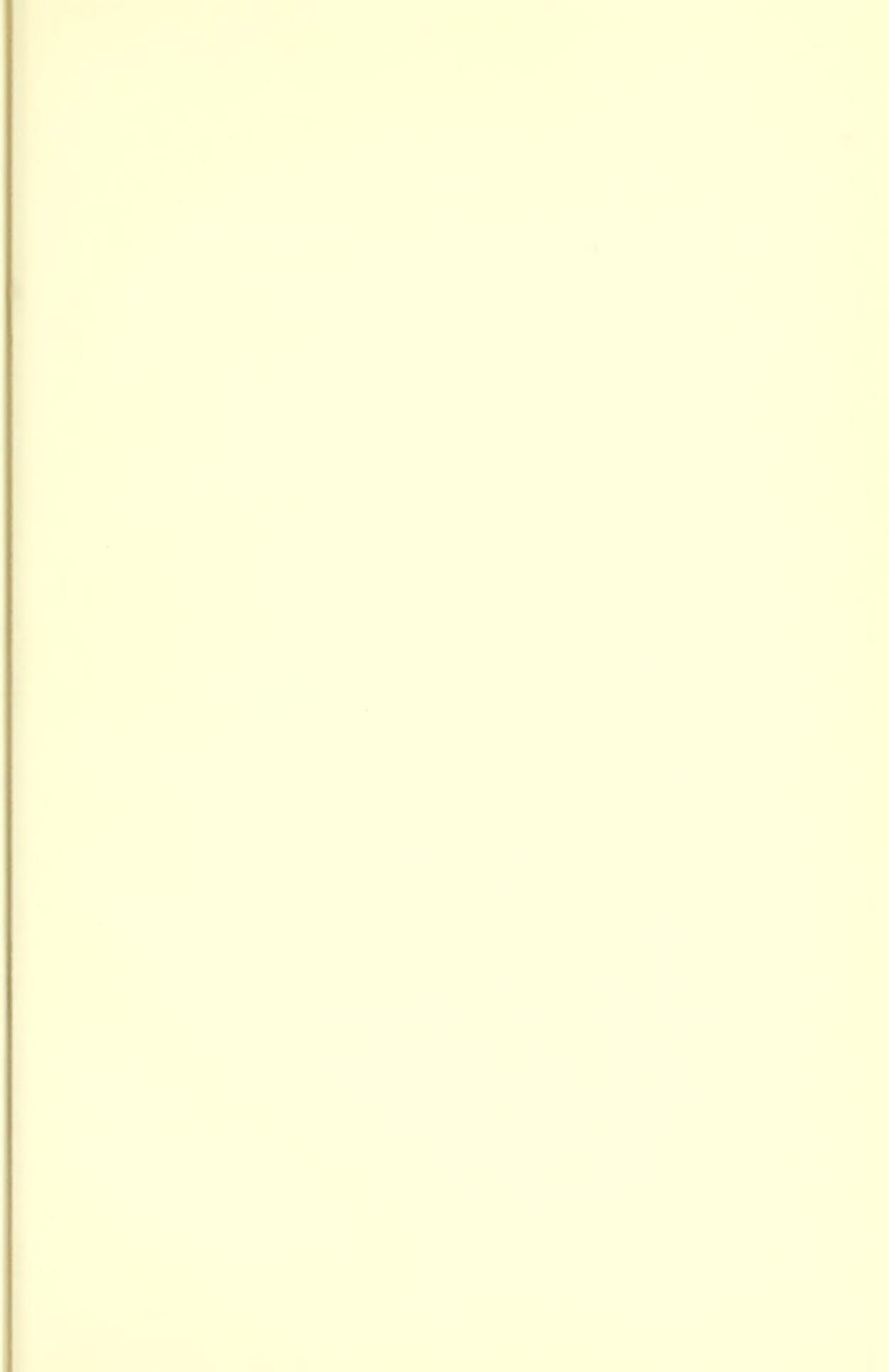


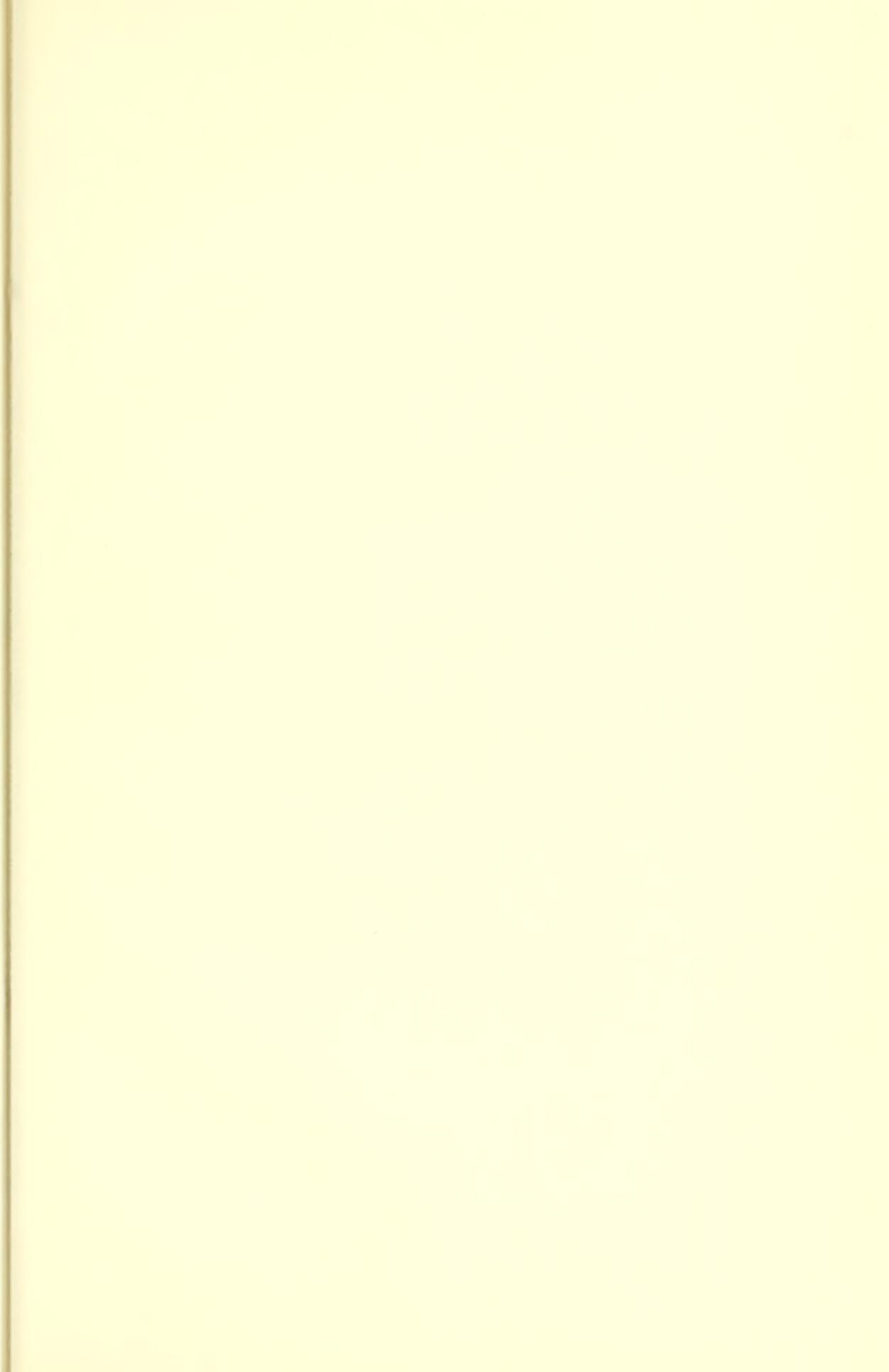


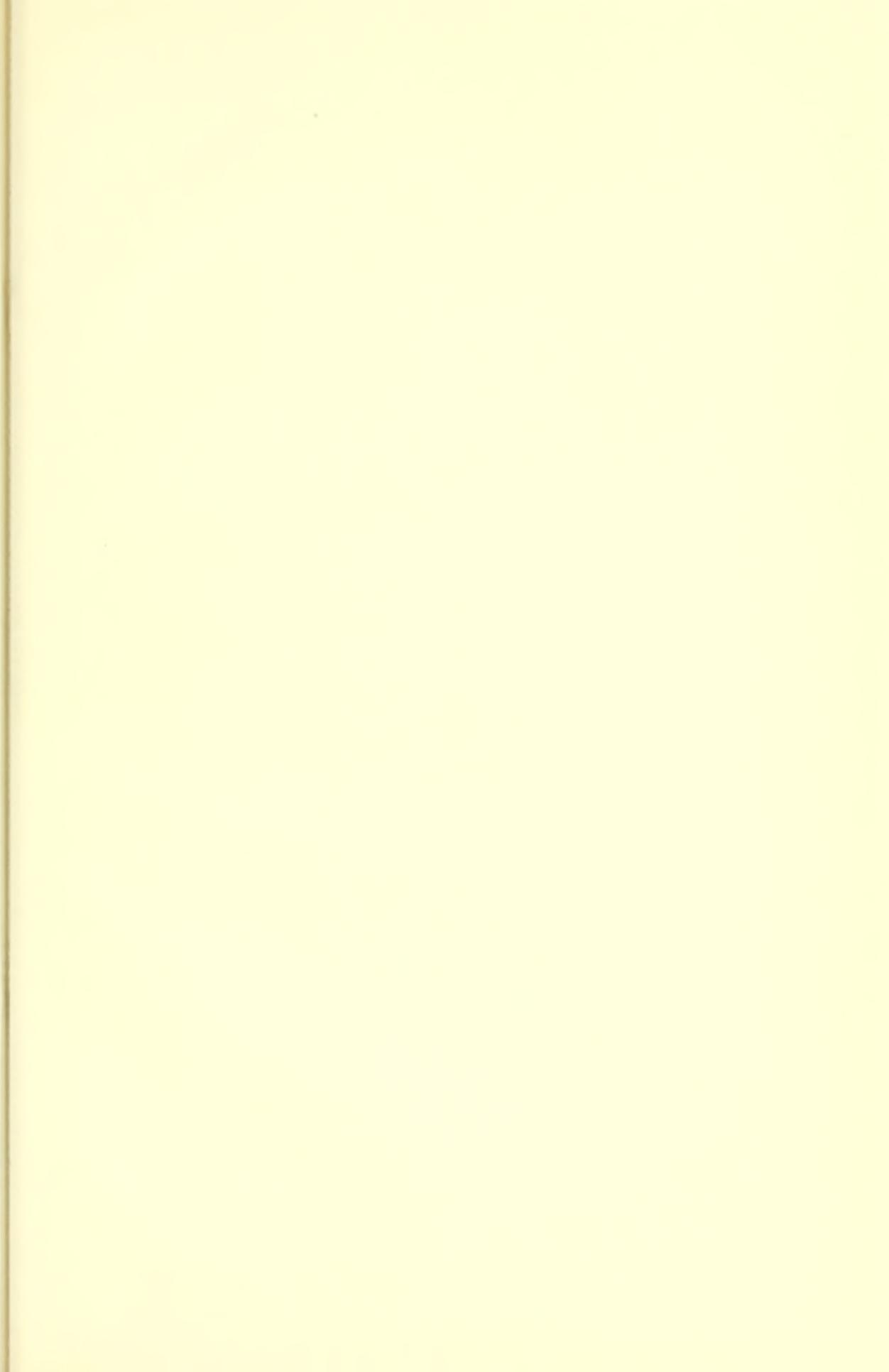


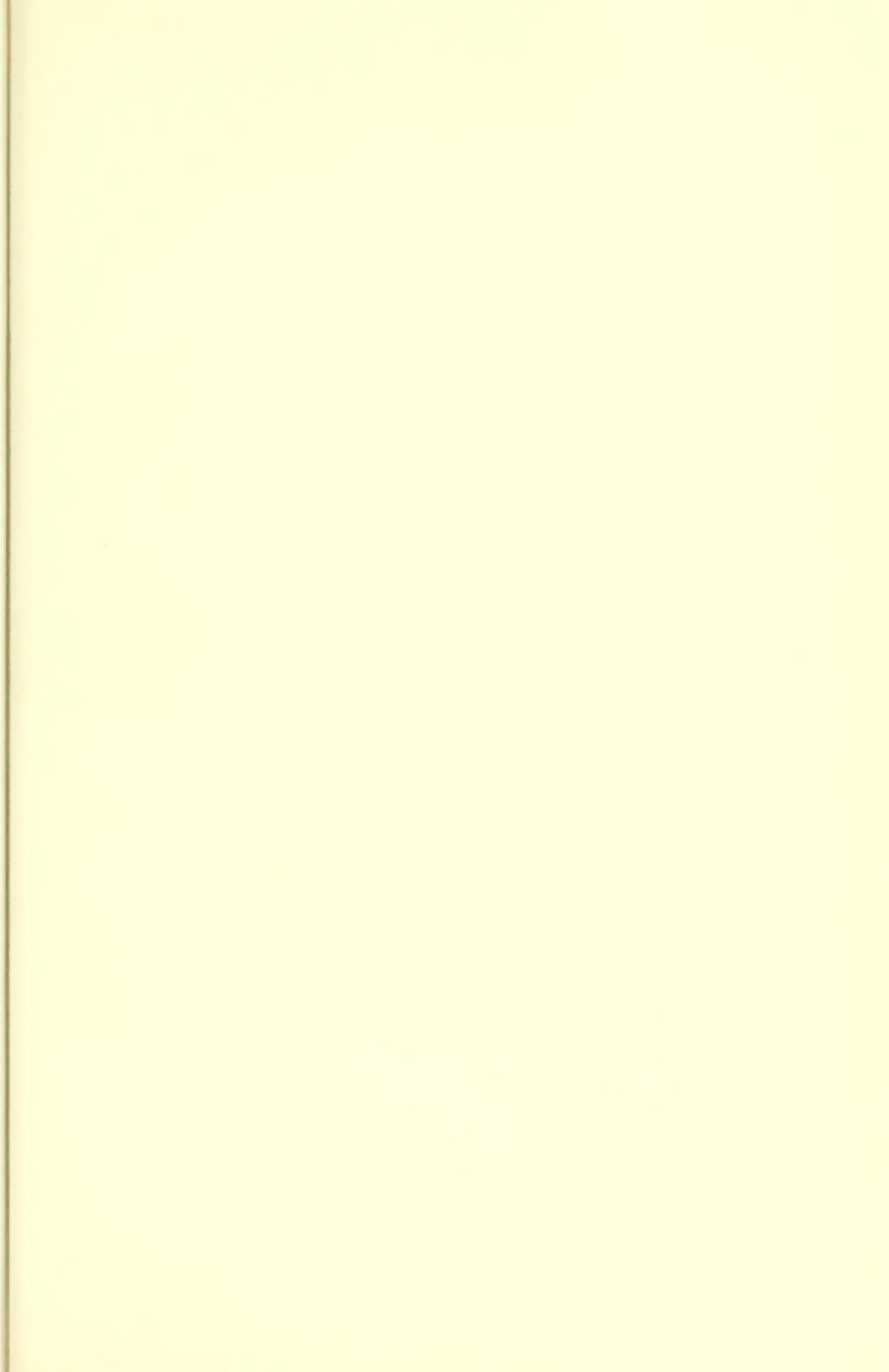




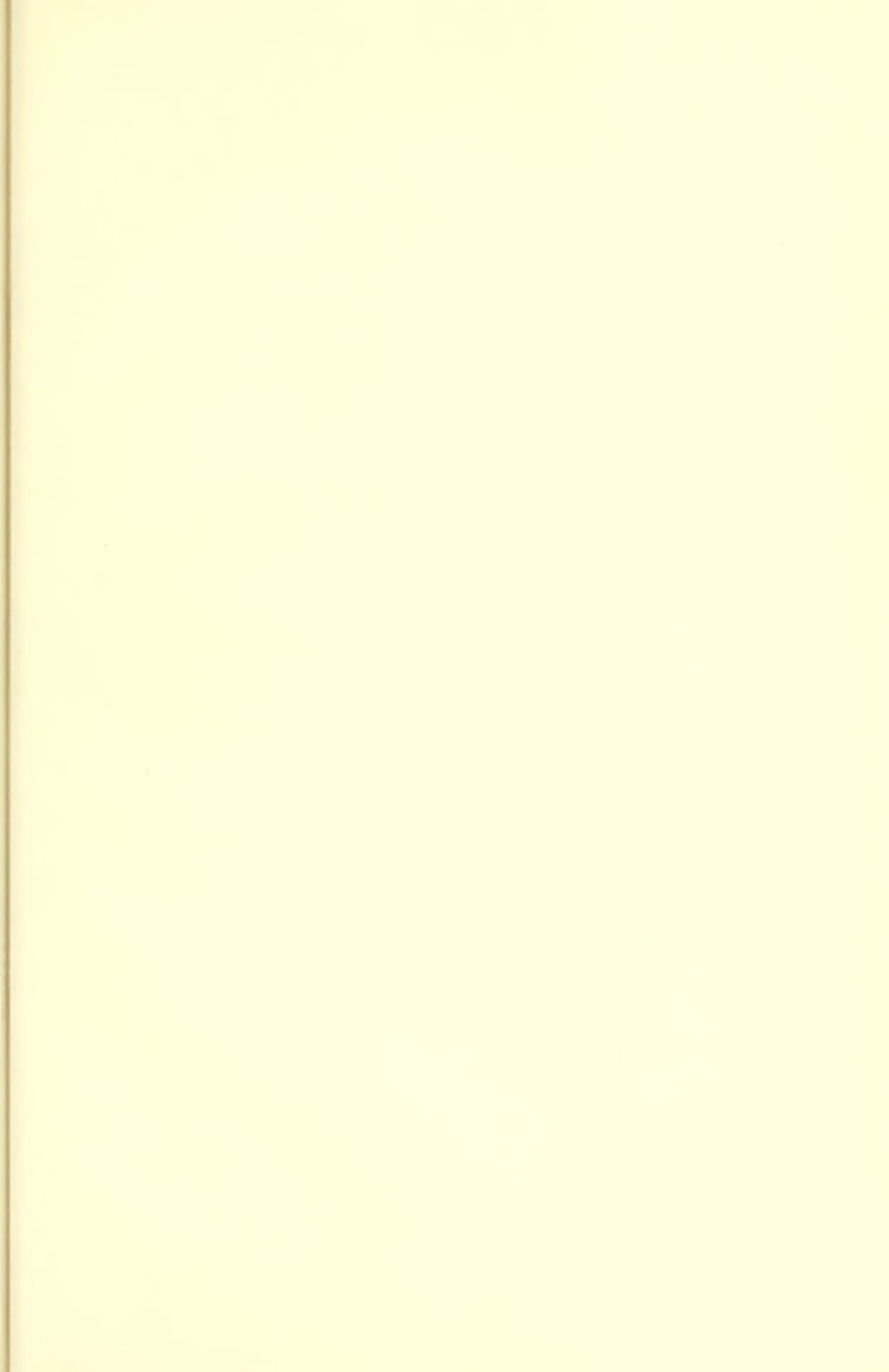


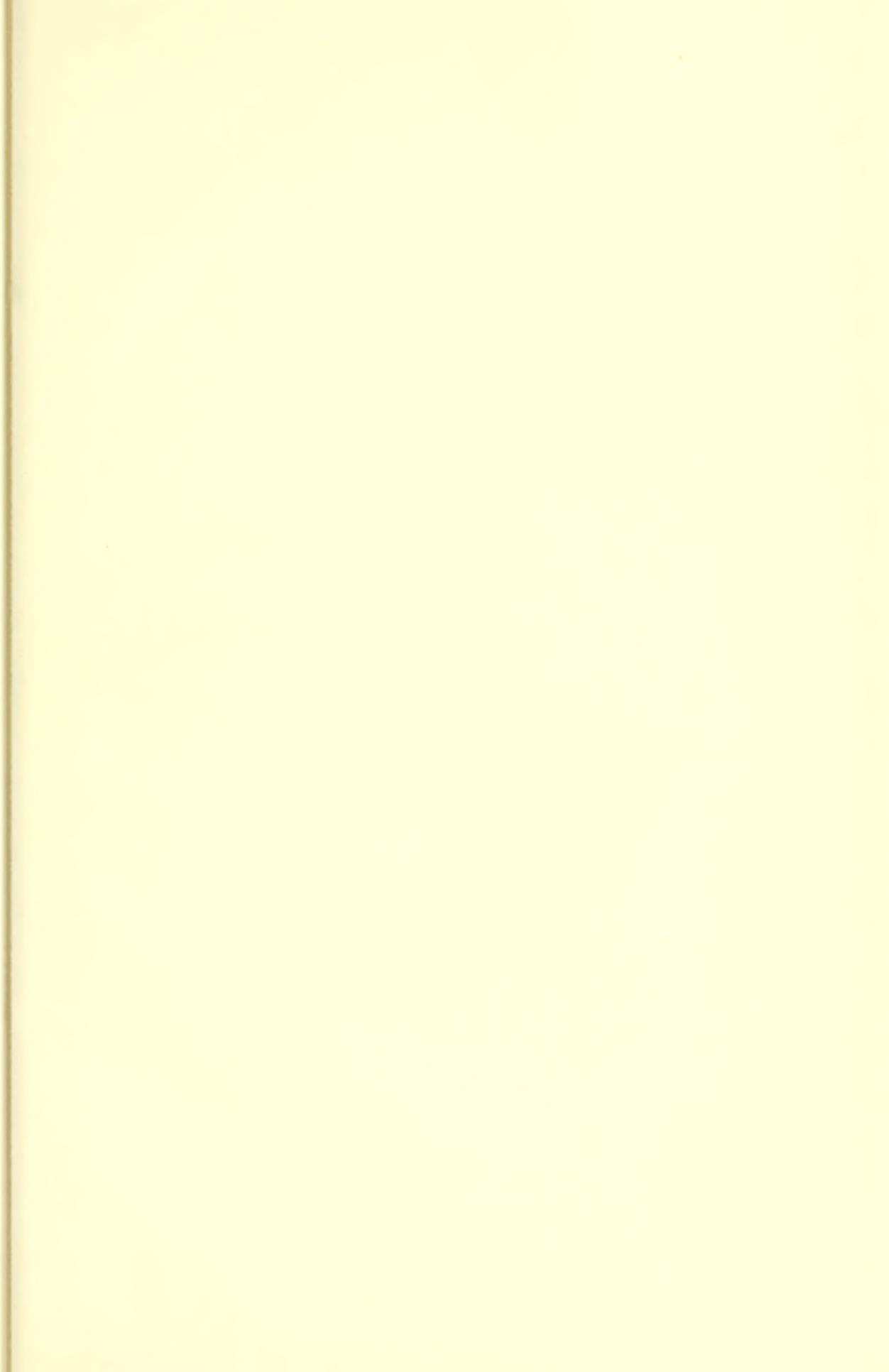


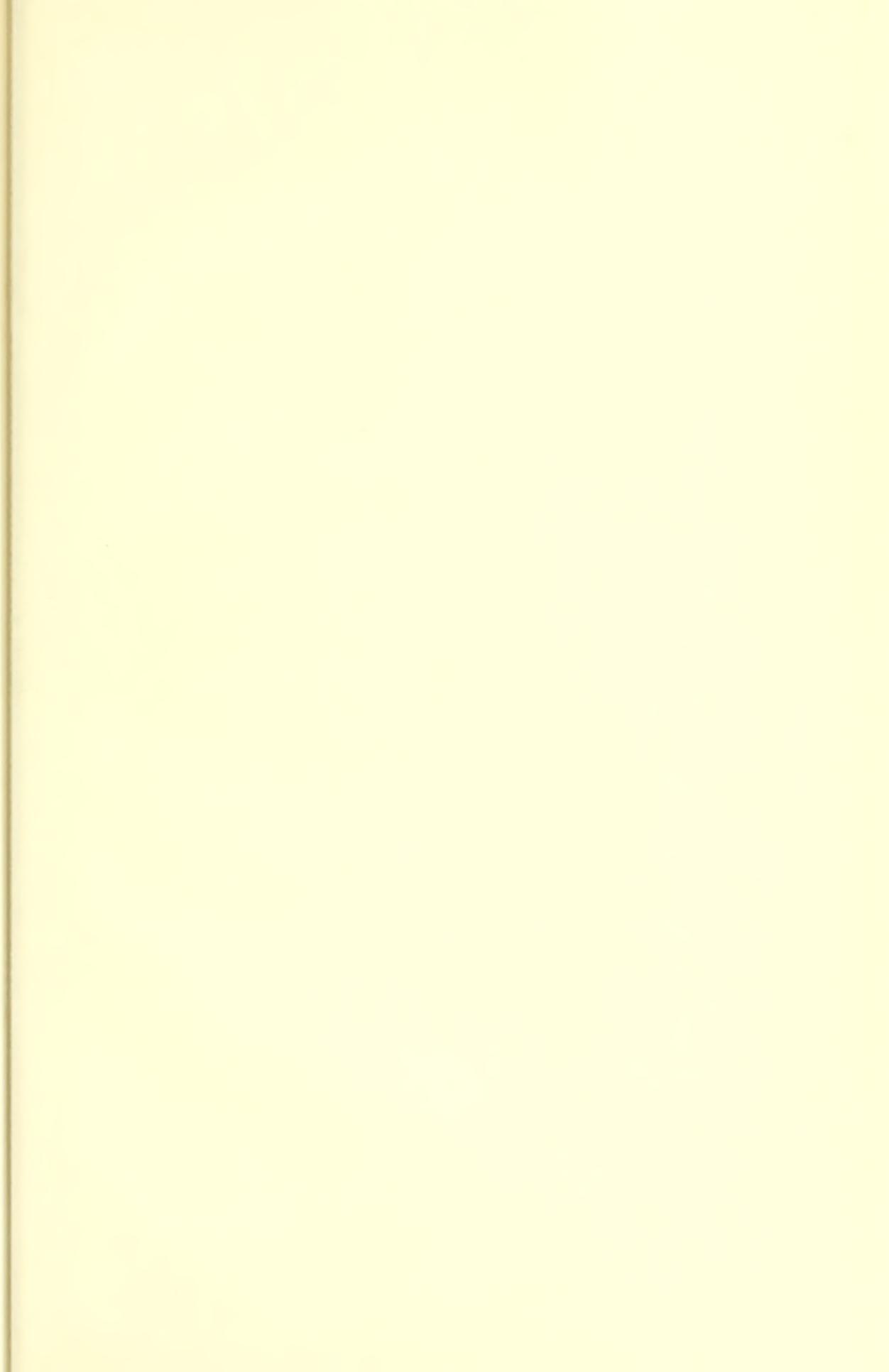


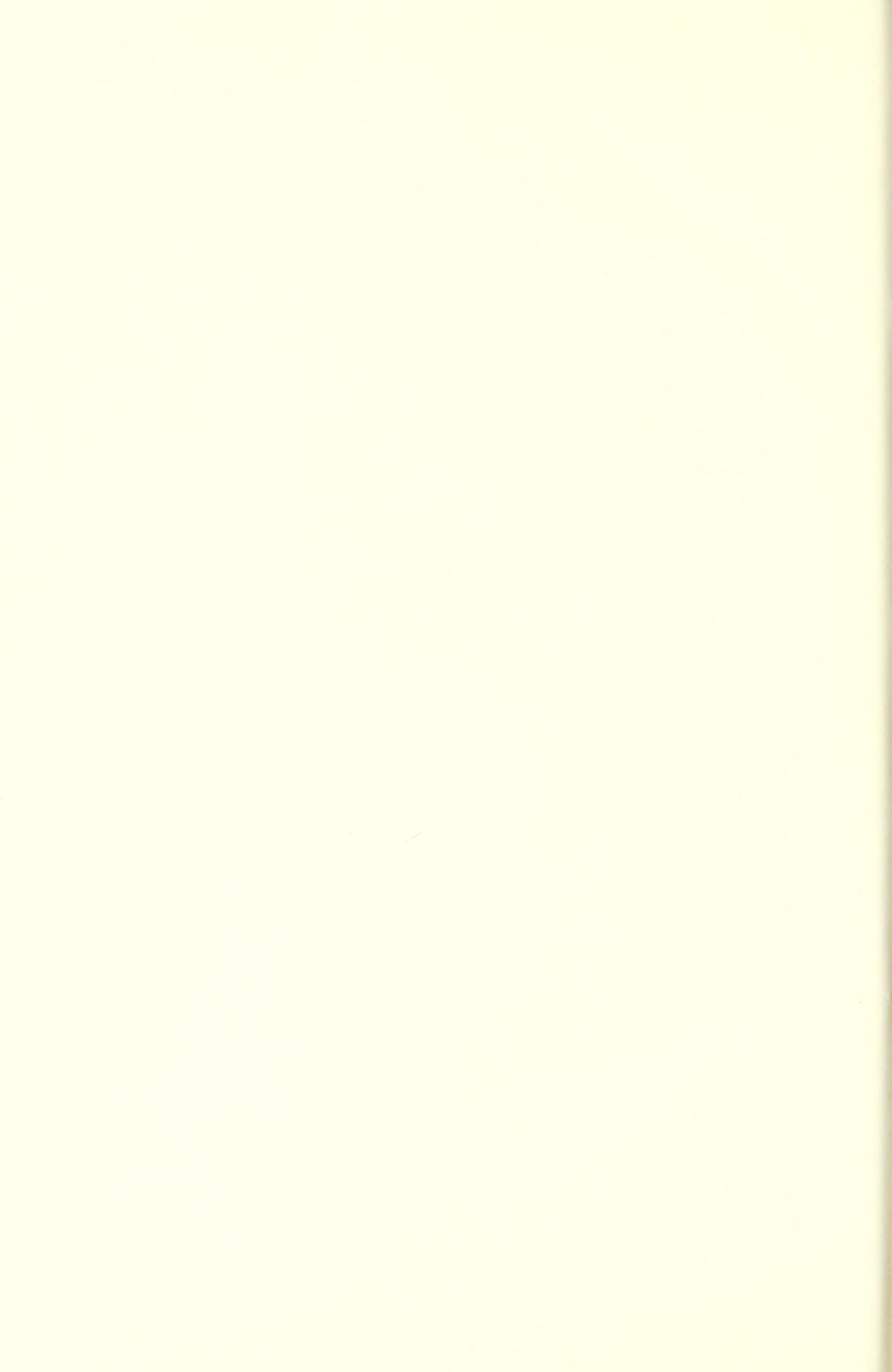


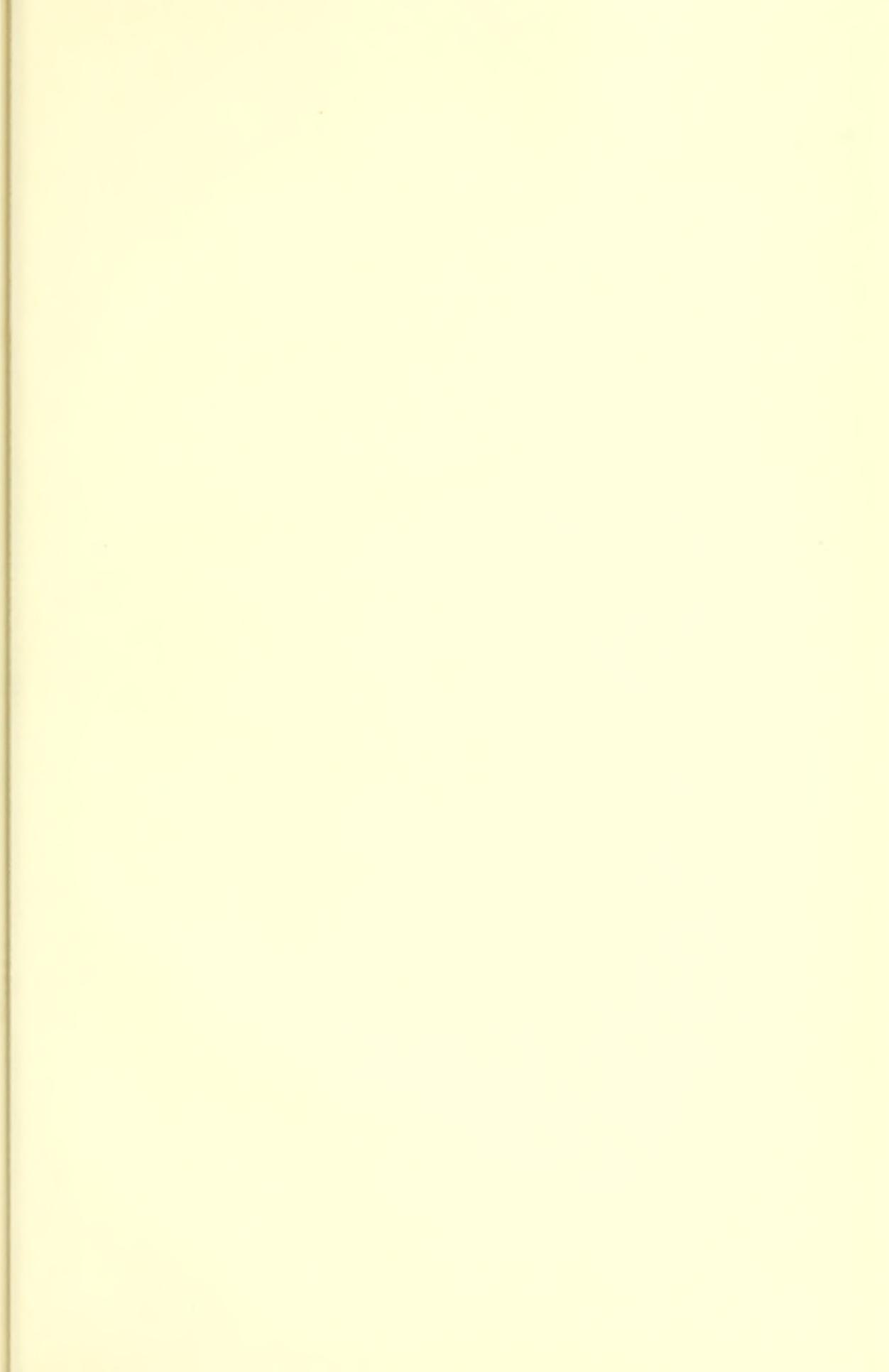


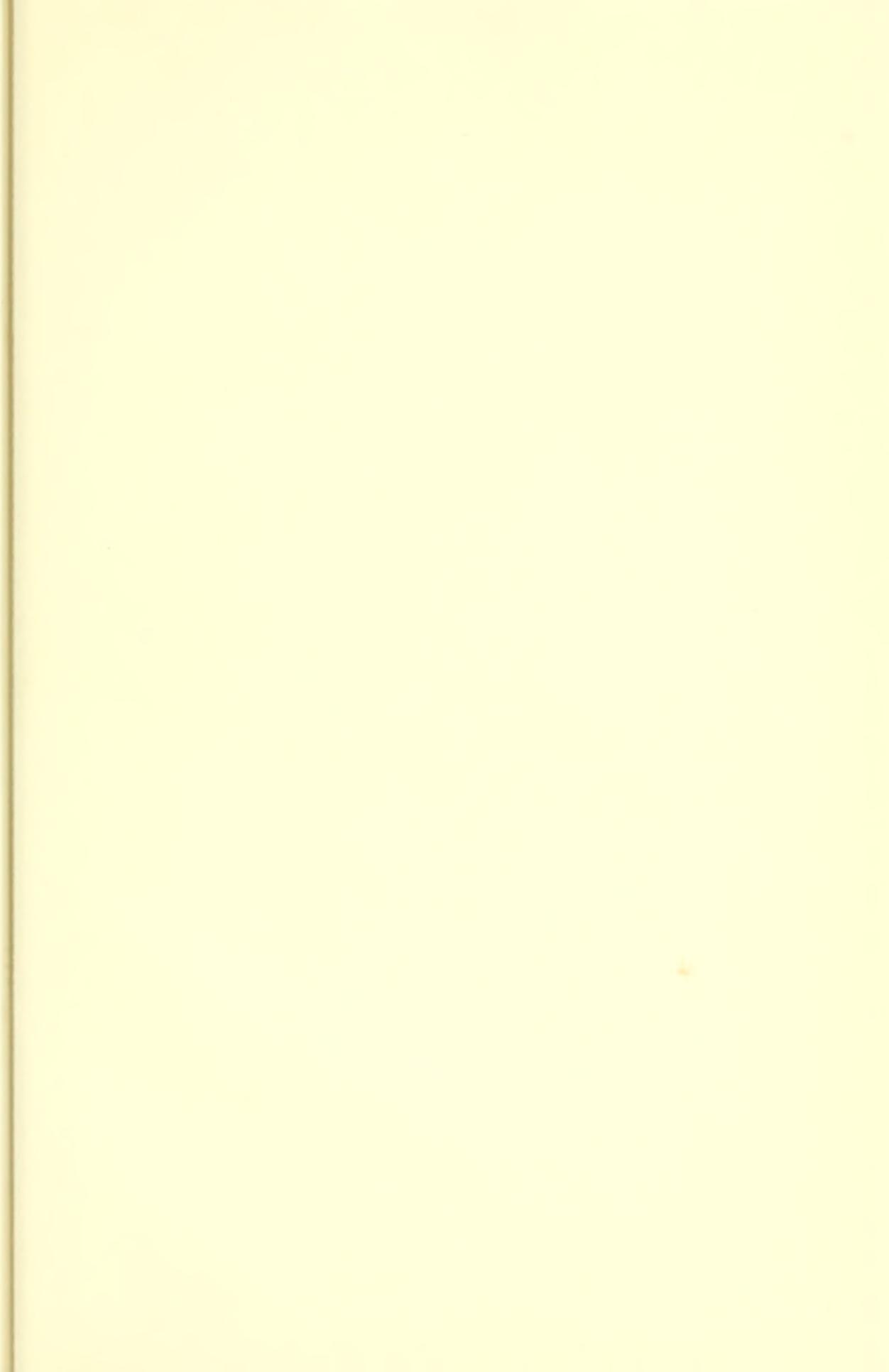




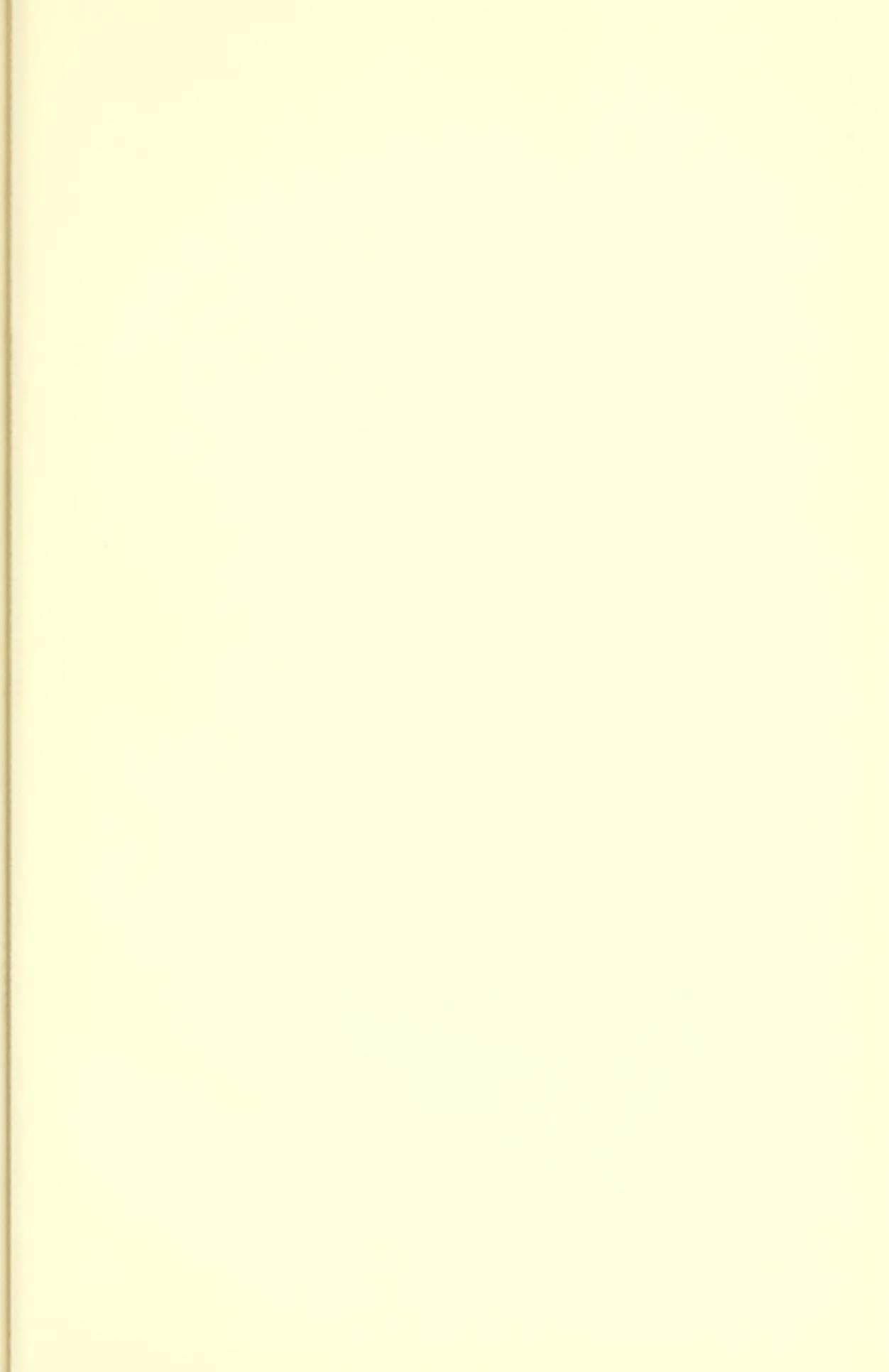


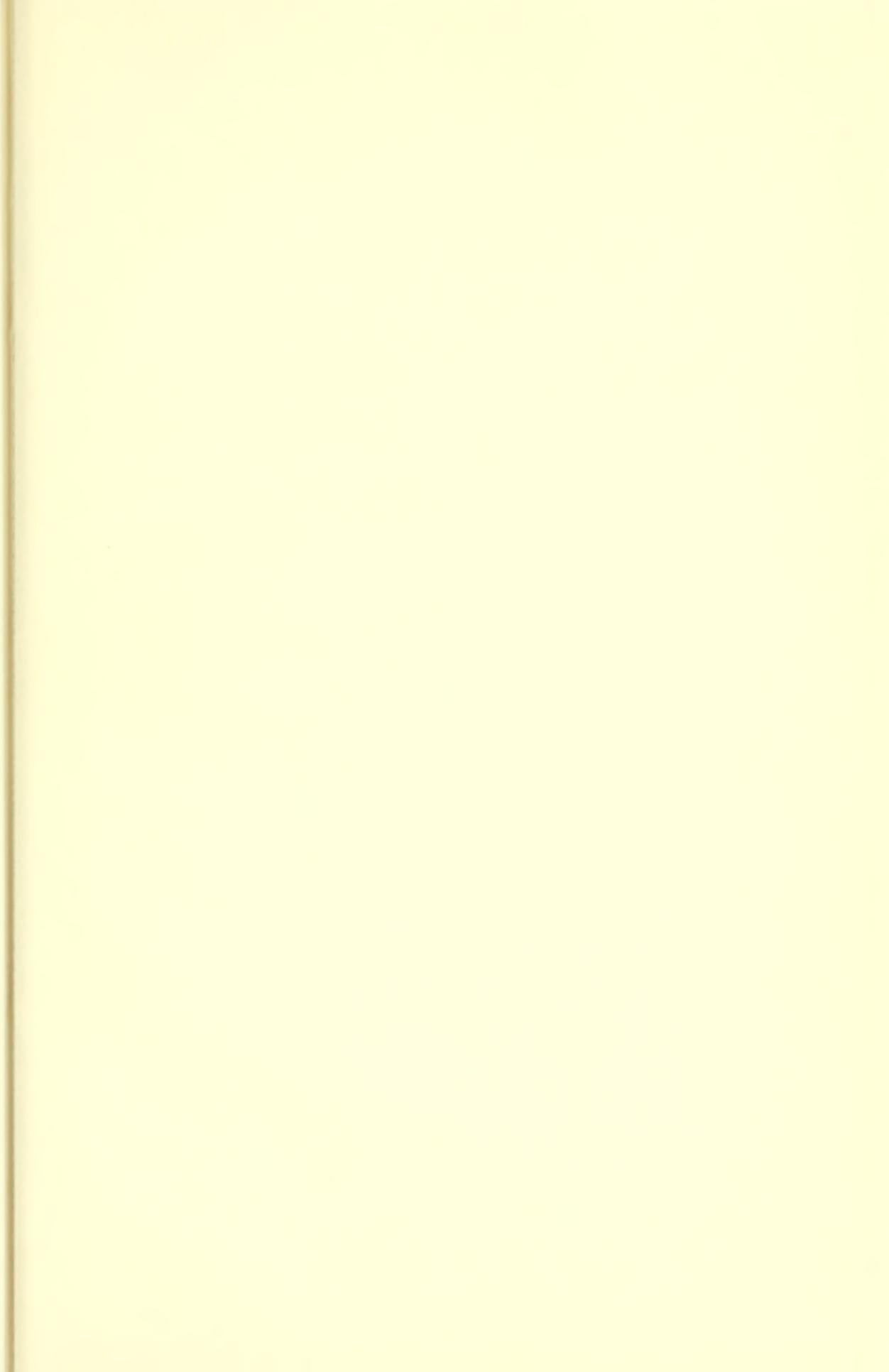


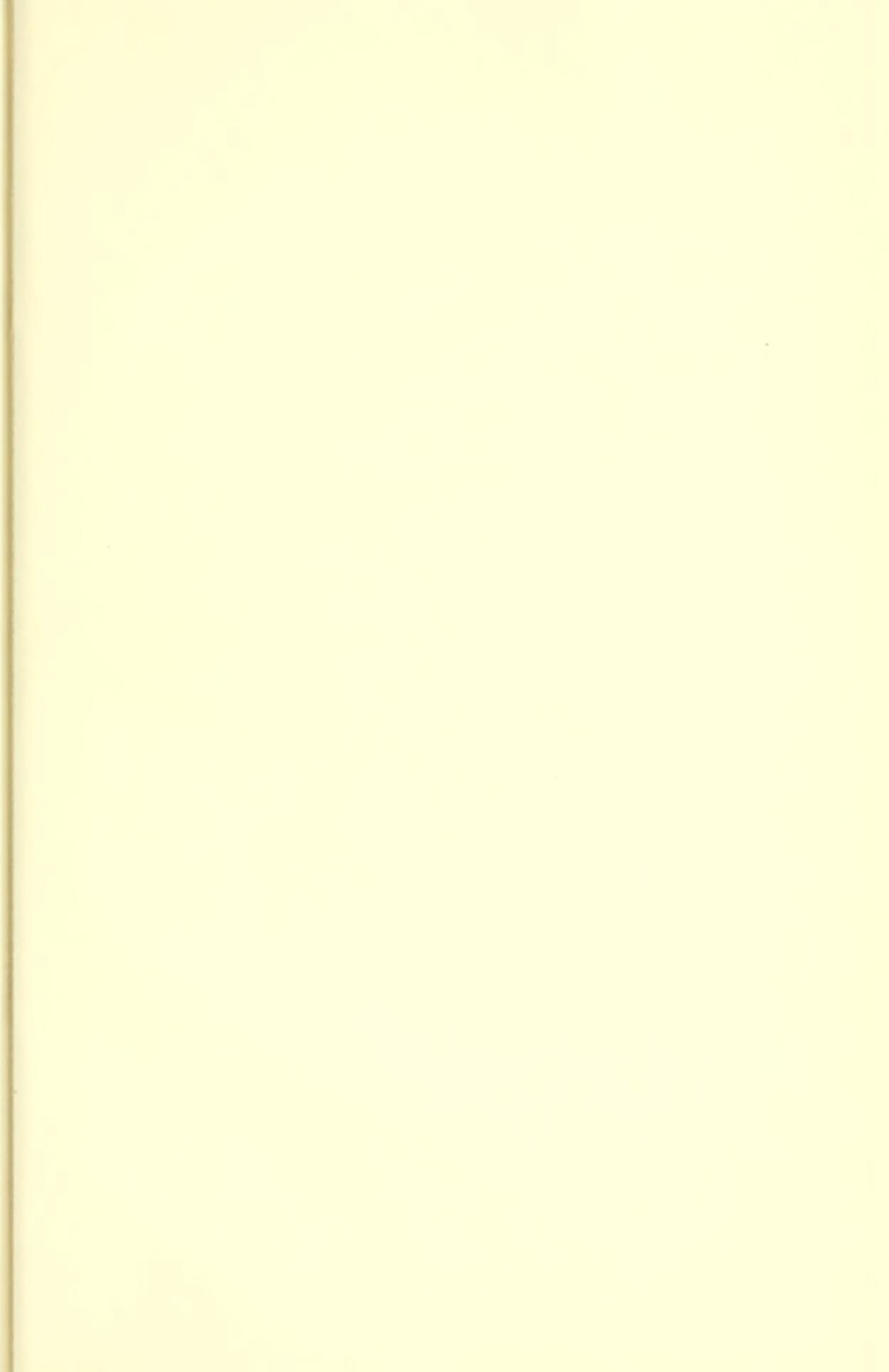


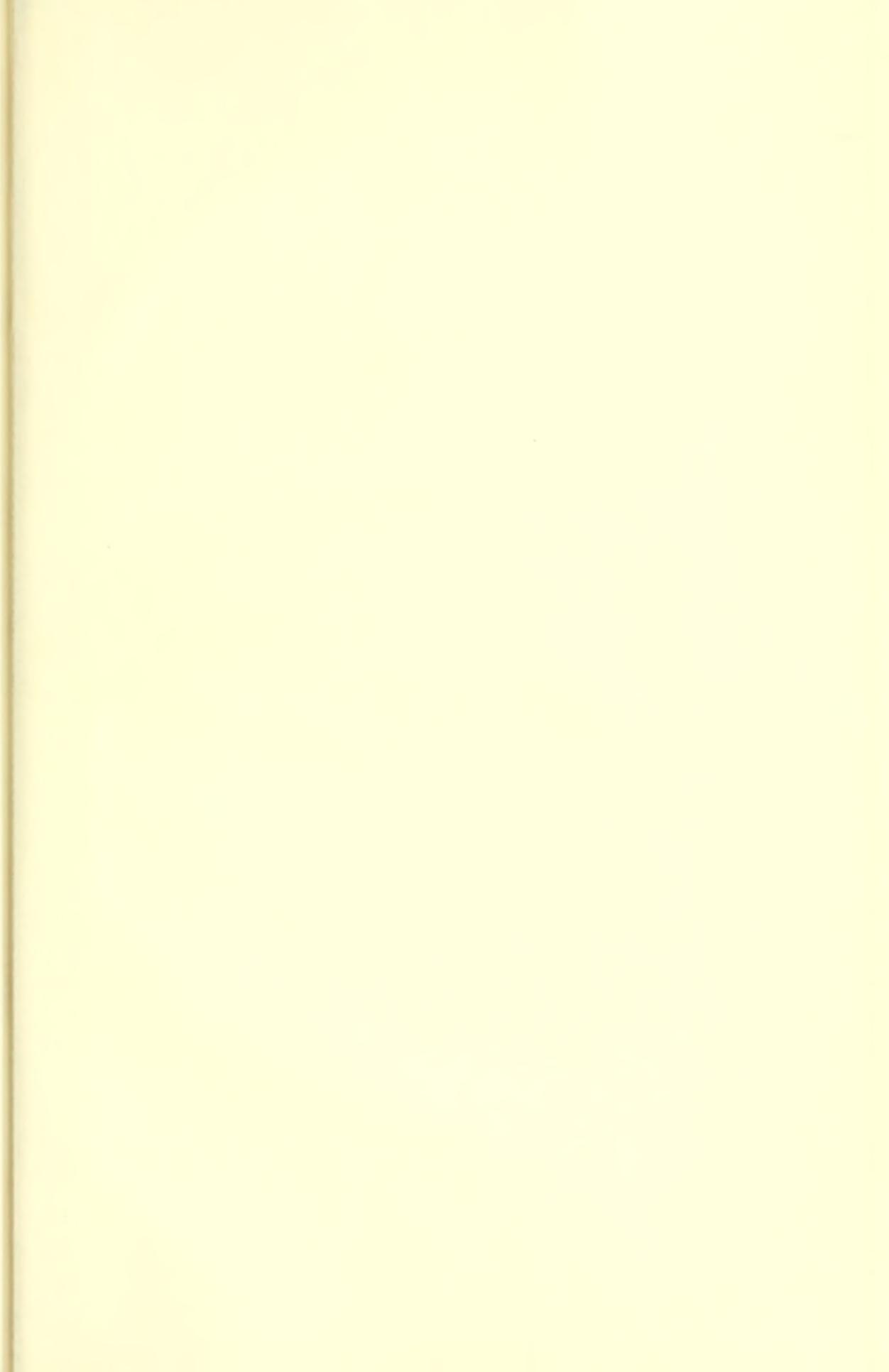






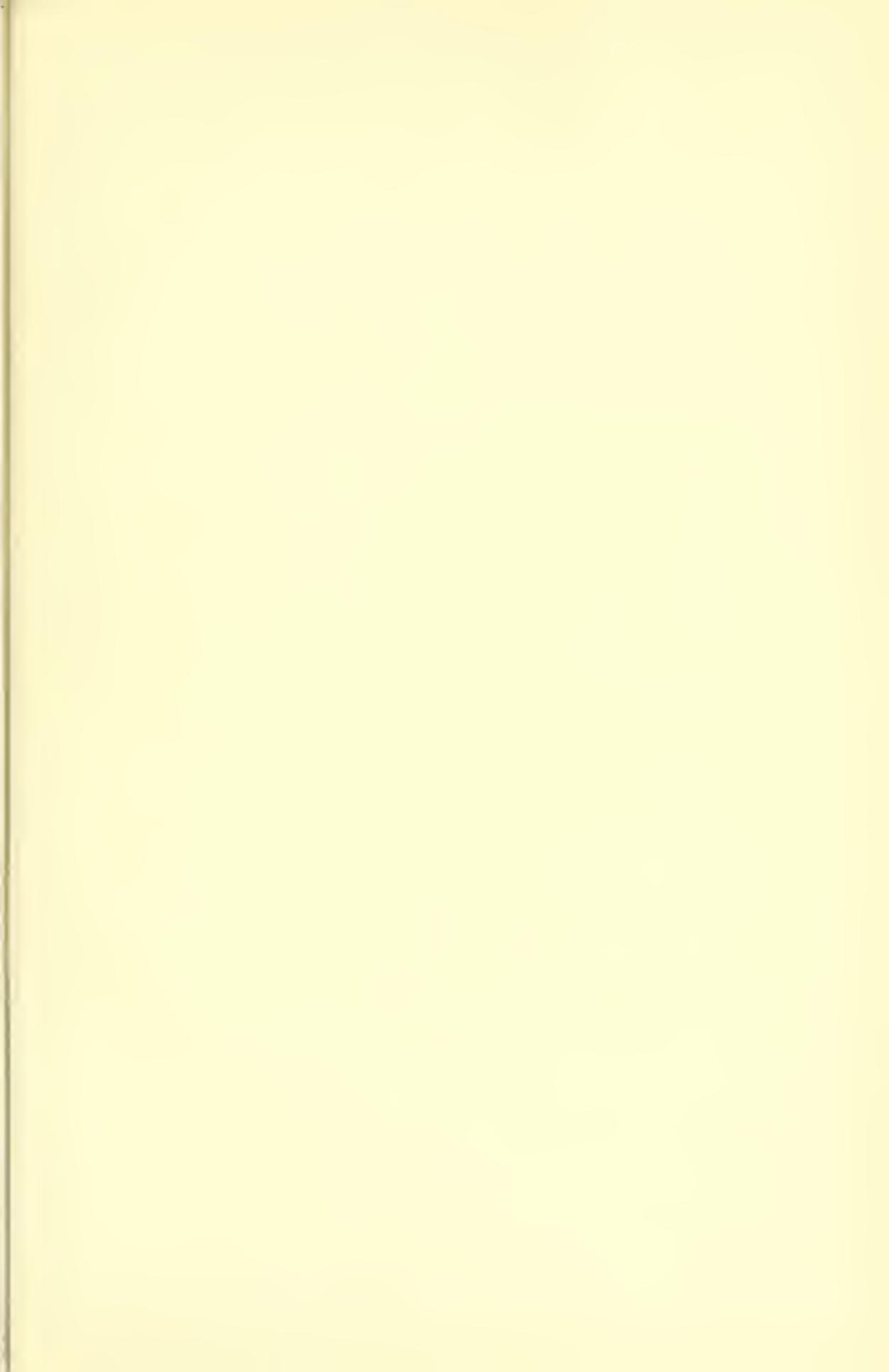


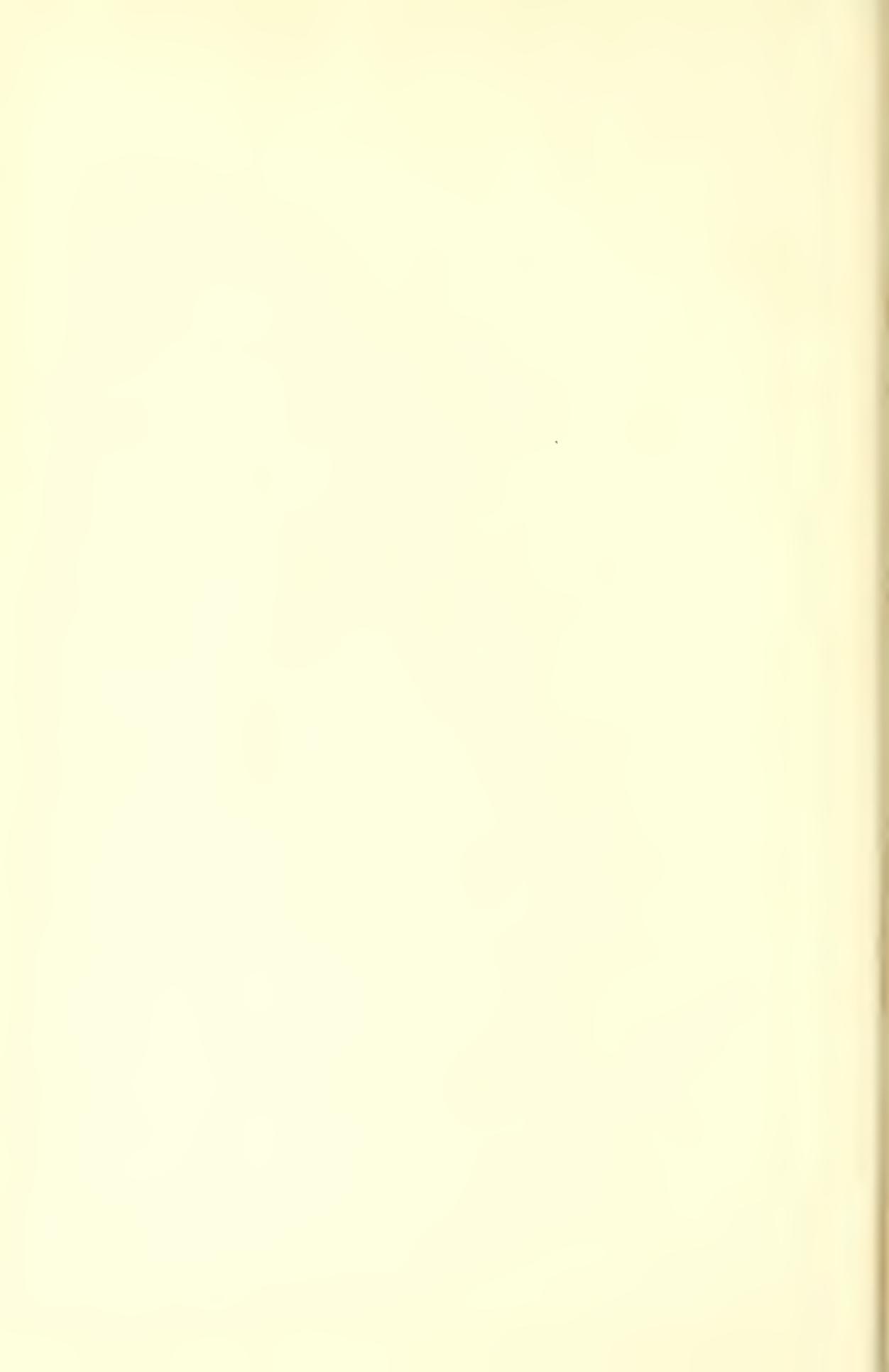


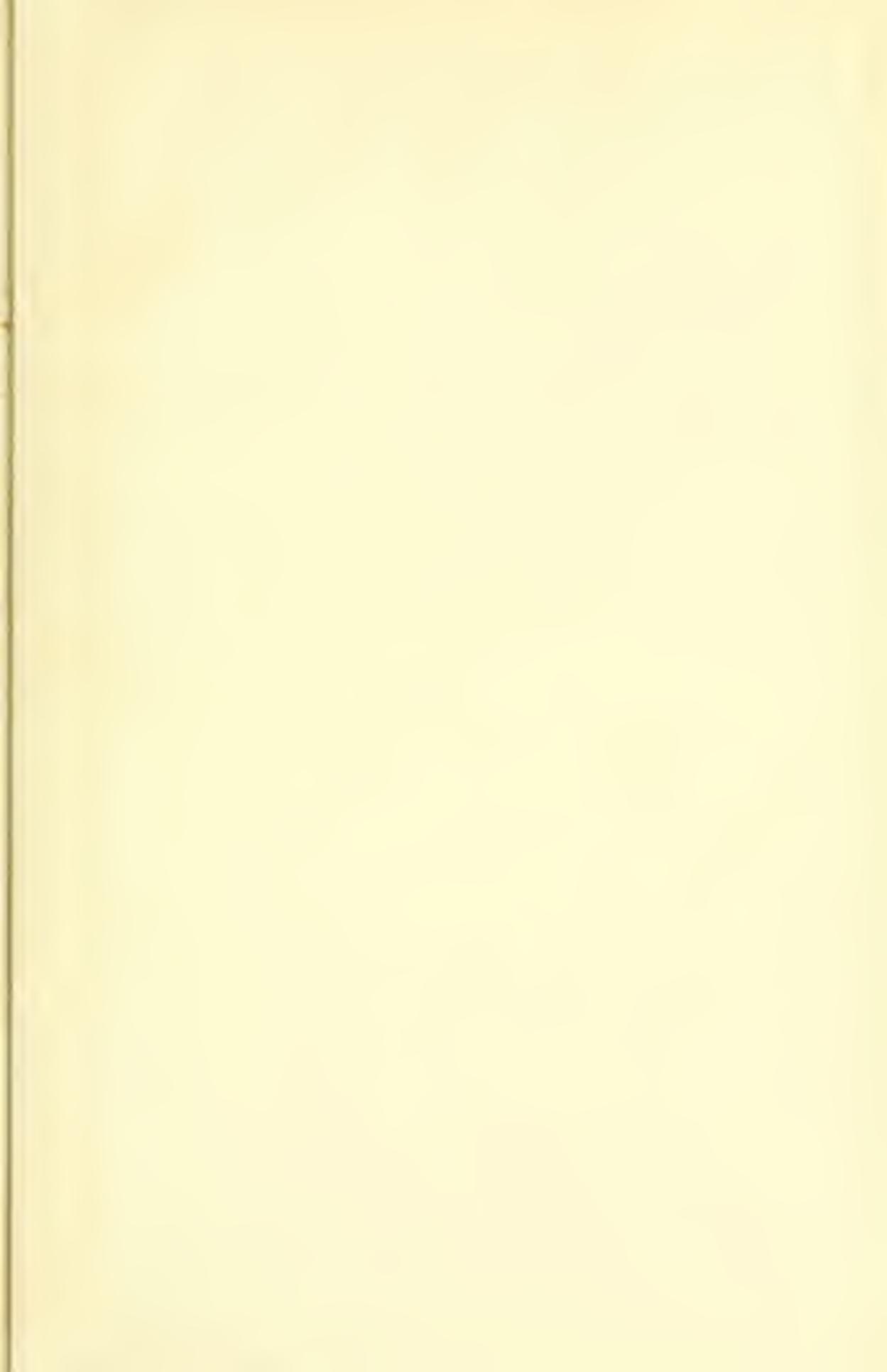


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