

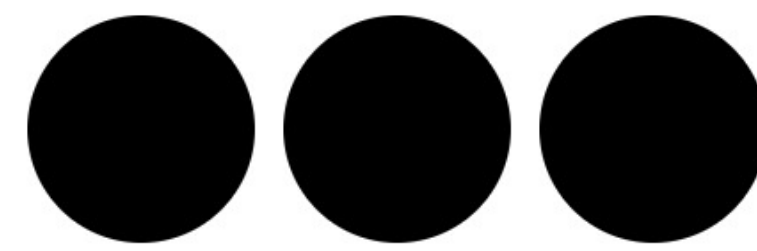
A Study in Memory and Material

Family Archive Inheritance

Design Research, 2026

Question

How can personal memory
become a visual and
material archive?

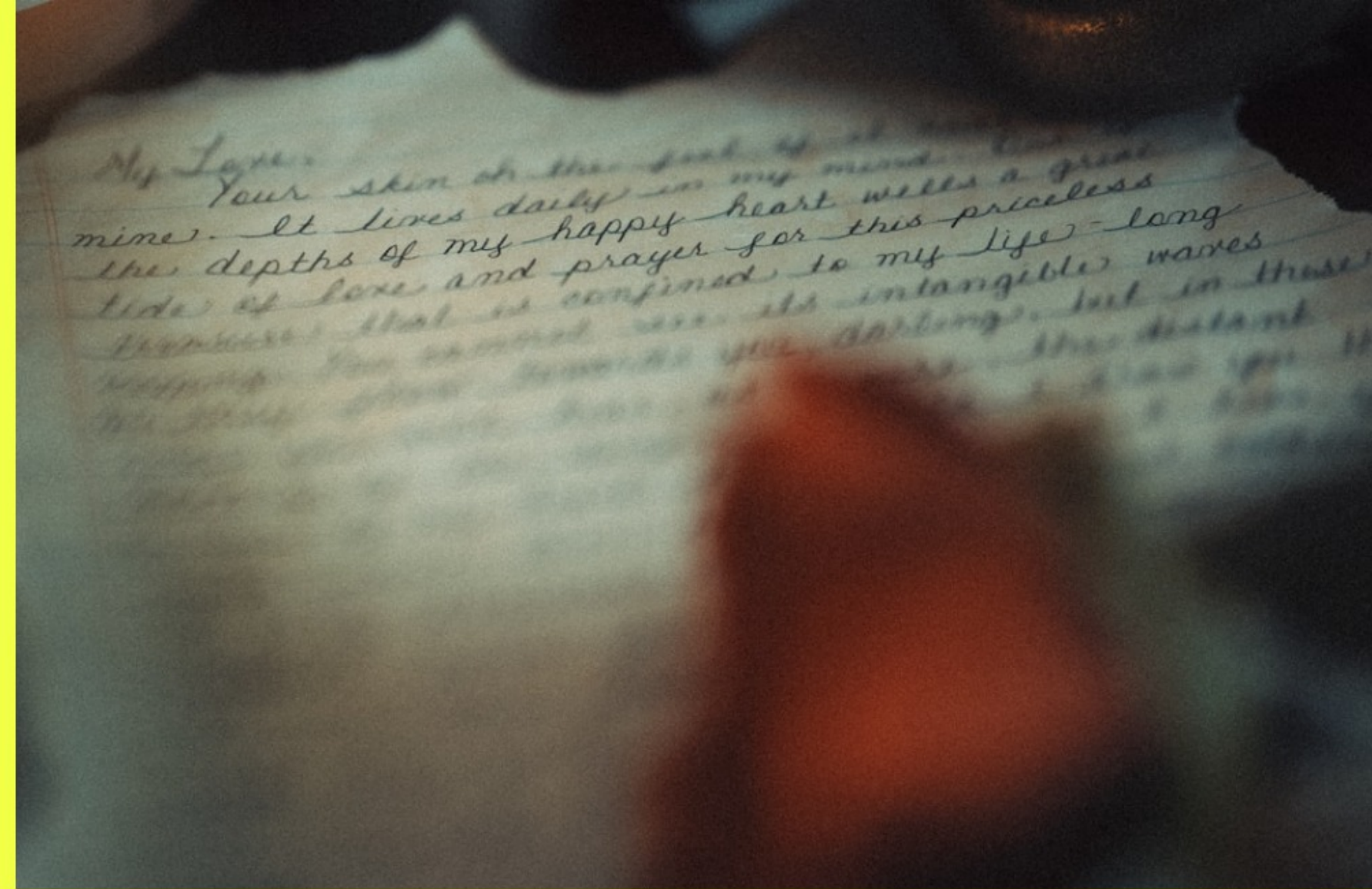


This project begins with a single object left behind, a grandfather's diary, worn at the corners and filled with a hand that no longer writes. The pages hold weather notes, small debts, and the ordinary weight of a life recorded without an audience.

The question is not what the diary says, but how it might be inherited. Memory here is not information to be extracted; it is texture, pressure, and pause. The archive we imagine must hold the feeling of time as carefully as it holds the words themselves.

01

Source Material



The source is a single diary kept by my grandfather across three decades, written in a steady cursive hand. Its paper has yellowed unevenly, softened at the edges where fingers returned to the same passages. The cloth binding loosens; ink fades from black to a warm brown. Each mark is a trace of a body once present at the page.



Methods



Approaches

Close Reading

Reading the diary slowly, line by line, attending to omissions, pauses, and the rhythm of daily entries rather than extracting facts alone.

Handwriting Analysis

Studying pressure, slant, and shifts in the hand across years, treating script as an index of mood, health, and the passage of lived time.

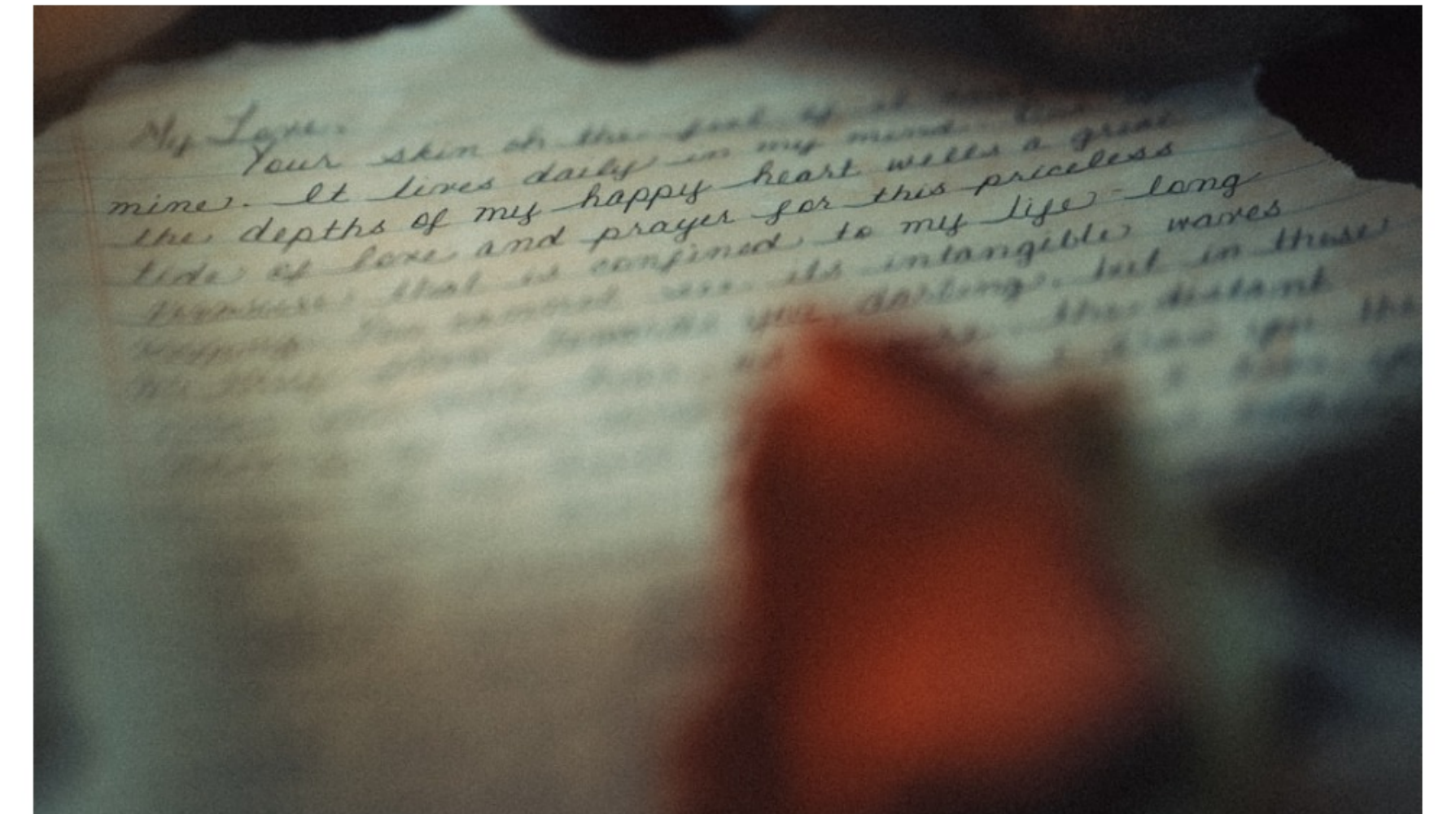
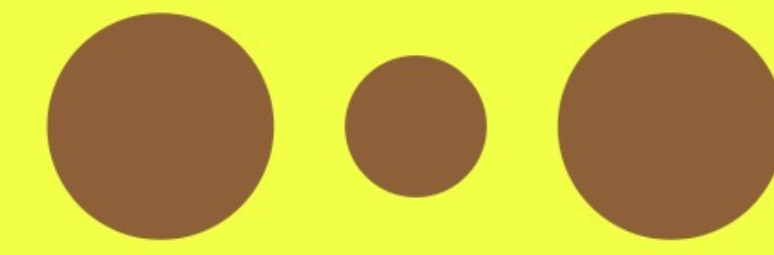
Material Culture

Examining paper, ink, and binding as evidence, asking what the object's wear and repair reveal about how it was used, kept, and quietly valued.

Archive & Interviews

Cross-referencing dates with family records and gathering oral memory through interviews, letting relatives annotate and situate the entries.

References



The visual language is drawn from the artifact itself, paper grain, the weight of a nib, loosening thread, the amber of aging, and the quiet logic of an archive. Annotation and margin become structure, not ornament.

Prototypes tested how the diary might be read anew. Page layouts balanced wide margins against scanned fragments, letting the original hand sit beside set type. Image and text were paced so neither overwhelmed the other. Typography was chosen to recede, and material mock-ups tested weight, texture, and the act of turning.

Iterations: layout,
image-text relation,
scanned fragments,
type and material.



Whitespace

60%

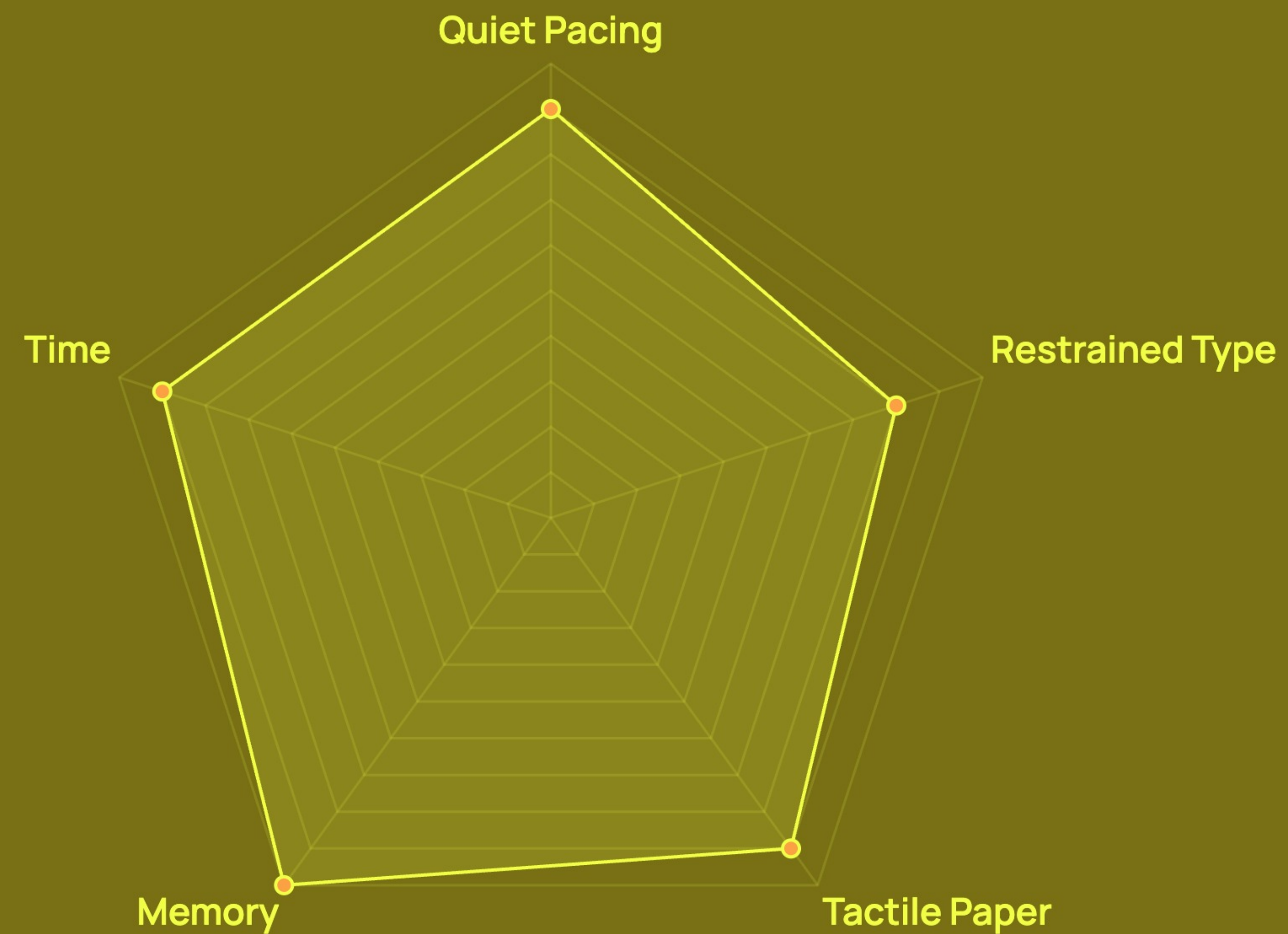
Typefaces

1

Palette

3

Priorities of Restraint



The design was decided by subtraction. Pacing was kept slow, giving each page room to be dwelt upon. Typography was restrained to a single quiet serif so the grandfather's own hand would remain the voice.

Paper was chosen for its tooth and warmth, inviting touch, so that memory and time are felt, not merely read.

Quiet pacing.
Restrained type.
Tactile paper.
Memory and time.





**Private memory,
made readable,
visual, and material,
so a life can be
inherited as a book.**

Final Direction of the Project

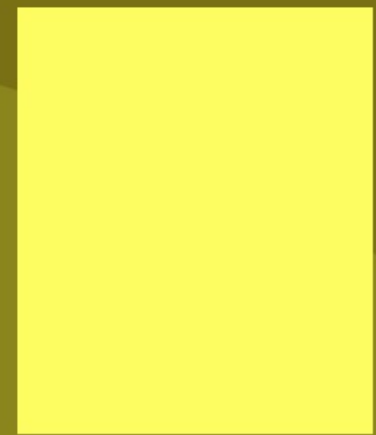


Next Steps

Questions that remain open

How much intimacy to reveal
Which entries to withhold
Consent within the family
Privacy of named relatives
Legibility of the original hand
Editing without erasing voice
Translation of dialect notes
Access for future readers

Preservation of fragile paper
Digital versus material form
Longevity of the scans
Who becomes the custodian
Scale beyond one family
Ethics of public display
Funding the archive's care
When the project is finished



Thank you An
Inheritance of
Memory

Family Archive Inheritance