Guide to the A. T. Mahan letters, 1894 and undated

Collection overview:

- **Title:** A. T. Mahan letters
- **Date range (inclusive dates):** 1894 and undated
- **Creator:** Mahan, A. T. (Alfred Thayer), 1840-1914
- **Extent:** 0.01 linear feet (1 folder)
- **Abstract:** This collection consists of four letters written by A. T. Mahan (1840-1914), American naval officer and historian, to James R. Thursfield (1840-1923), British naval historian and journalist, and his wife.
- **Language of materials:** English
- **Repository:** Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island
- **Collection number:** RLC.Ms.523

Access and use:

- **Access to the collection:** Access is open to members and researchers at the Redwood Library and Athenaeum.
- **Use of the materials:** Permission to publish materials must be obtained in writing from the Special Collections Librarian of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum.
- **Preferred citation:** A. T. Mahan letters, RLC.Ms.523, Redwood Library and Athenaeum.

Administrative information:

- **About the collection**
  - **Acquisition:** Gift of Capt. W. D. Puleston.
  - **Processing information:** This collection was initially processed by Aimee Saunders in 2010.

- **About the finding aid**
  - **Author and Encoding:** Elizabeth Delmage, 2013 September
  - **Descriptive rules:** Finding aid based on Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)

Additional information:

- **Related material:** A. T. Mahan papers, MSS31062, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
Biographical note:

Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914), American naval officer and historian, was born on September 27, 1840, in West Point, New York, to Dennis Hart (1802-1871), a United States Military Academy professor, and Mary Helen (Okill) Mahan. Mahan graduated second from his class at the United States Naval Academy in 1859 and went on to serve nearly forty years of active duty in the United States Navy. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant while fighting in the American Civil War (1861-1865), was named Captain in 1885, and retired from active service in November 1896. Thayer was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral on June 29, 1906, by an act of Congress which promoted all retired captains who had served during the Civil War.

In October 1885, Mahan was invited by Stephen Luce (1827-1917), president of the newly established Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, to serve as a lecturer on naval history and tactics. Mahan was later appointed president of the Naval War College in June 1886 to January 1889 and again from July 1892 to May 1893. The lectures Mahan gave at the college became the basis for the Influence of sea power upon history, 1660-1783, published in 1890, the first of twenty books and twenty-three essays written by Mahan on this broad subject. Mahan’s works on naval history and strategies greatly influenced the buildup of naval forces among the major world powers in the years prior to World War I. Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan died on December 1, 1914, in Quogue, New York.

Scope and content note:

This collection consists of four letters written by A. T. Mahan to his new acquaintances, Mr. and Mrs. James R. Thursfield of London, England, in 1894. James R. Thursfield (1840-1923) was a British naval historian and journalist.

Arrangement:

This collection is arranged in chronological order.

Inventory:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuscripts Box 1</td>
<td>Letter to James R. Thursfield</td>
<td>1894 May 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter to Mrs. James R. Thursfield</td>
<td>1894 Jun 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>1894 Jun 11</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>undated</td>
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Access terms:

Names:
Thursfield, James R. (James Richard), 1840-1923

Subjects:
Naval historians

Genre terms:
Letters (correspondence)