1959-03-10, Bette to Parents

Bette J. Barto
Subject Terms
Women and the military, Women and war, United States -- Air Force, United States -- Army -- Air Forces, Photographs, Armed Forces -- Correspondence, Correspondence -- Vietnam War -- 1961-1975, Christmas

Summary
This collection contains 139 correspondence from Maj. Bette J. Barto, USAFE to her parents while serving as a nurse during the late 1950s and 1960s. Also included are three photographs, one special orders document, and one marriage license. In several cases, Bette refers to her parents as "Lizzie" and "Hugh Elmer," or simply "Elmer." Three letters from 1961 or 1962 are undated and placed in a separate folder.

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10 March 1959
Noon

Dear Mom and Daddy,

I got the bread yesterday and it was perfectly fresh—squishy soft, that is, and so so good. I practically had a riot on my ward when the package arrived and I opened it. I was on 3-11 so I sent it home by Sally and had real toast and Aunt Carmel's milk when I got home at 11.

Now all I haven't received is the bathing suit. I'm enclosing an Express Money Order for the bills and cosmetics. I'll be glad to pay for the mailing of the rug and the bread too, Mom. Just tell me how much you don't have to go to the post office to cash this; do like any check just endorse it and deposit it! I'll be thanking you again for all the worry and bother and the BREAD!!!

Don scared me half to death last night. He called at 7 pm and said he was going to fly a while since I was working, so when he called back an hour and a half, I naturally asked what happened and he said he had to abort—Which means
not fly "because the engine was working right. It fell as he came after me. By 11, he was white as a sheet and quiet.

Finally he told me he had barely gotten off the ground and flew over the Mediterranean and the engine had caught on fire."flamed out." he did manage to get it back to the field without exploding or releasing into that black water but it shook him up considerably and I can see why. He is flying again now so I guess that'll be ok but I got pretty stuck thinking about how I'd have felt if they had put in the emergency number 53, the call number they flash throughout the hospital when a pilot goes down in the Mediterranean. They would have had a tough time finding him in the dark - there's a lot of water out there in the day time!

I'm on 3-11 for 4 straight days and then I hope to be on Fri 3-28 & Sun - if she doesn't take it from me, that is. I've been on 10 days straight, so I'm ready for a slow day.

I had a dinner invitation Sunday night at the home of Cal.
and Mrs. Peab, our kids. Commander was shocked when they asked me because I don't think any nurse has been before. They have a lonely little home in the village on Base. Many ranking officers can get there. I had a very nice time and they showed us their slides - their Christmas trip to the Holy Land. It only cost them $300 each and they saw Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Madaba and all the historic spots in Christ's life - it was a very interesting evening - and the food was excellent. They had another Col. and his wife who had been a pt. I mind a school doctor and a dentist and me - it was an old group.

I got a letter from Helen and enjoyed it so much. She is so blind I really appreciated the time it took her to write.

Daddy, I hope you are better now. I wish you wouldn't be so stubborn about going to the hospital. You need those examinations when you get that close to 60. Mom, you stay off food awhile. You need the rest. Gotta stop to get my shoes ready to go nowhere awhile.

Ill write more later.

Tell M. Ann hi! Love 'n kiss you,

Bette.
Oh, I forgot, I ran into a teacher yesterday named Tye-born in Benton, Iowa. Grandmother named Harris. She grew up in Etoeah-ran around with Doyle Allard. We plan to get together again to see who else I know.

Also, Son's Squadron Commander and his wife (now a pt. mine) were stationed at Wiesbueh in 1953. They are crazy about Knoxville so we have lots of talks about the local spots. It all helps to make it not so strange to be here.

I'm going to Son into the city this weekend to buy some native shoes. They make them by hand to fit the buyer. I'll get you and Helen a pair if I think they will be able to fit you.

Borden cash.
Belle