3-20-1959

1959-03-20, Bette to Parents

Bette J. Barto

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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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20 March 59
7:30 pm

Dear Mom and Daddy,

I'm on duty and, for a wonder, we aren't busy. This, of course, is inviting trouble - Writing at 8 p.m. It probably adds up to a dozen letters by 11 p.m.

Visiting hours are from 6 to 8 and that occupies most of the patients for that period. I have only 3 or 4 comparatively ill ones - 2 who were injured in an auto accident - the rest are sprains, strains, fractures or lacerations. Then, of course, there are the wives with their army of real or imagined gyn complaints.

Son just called that he's back safely from Italy. I was glad because the weather outside didn't look good. So far down here are briefer but they come up so rapidly and are ferocious...
THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS

While things go on,
In case that I don't tell you before I do, I'd better tell you that we are having trouble in downtown.
It's gotten out of hand in the form of riots against the Russian Embassy and for Nassar's latest show against the communists. They have been stoning the gates down there for two days. They won't let us off base; so there's no danger here.

The married people who live downtown are in a bind. If they go home, they can't get back to duty and if they don't go, they may be separated from their wives and children for days without knowing what may be happening. Meet them at all possible times to protect their families.
The Lebanon police, Arab guards, and English Armed Forces are all out downtown. This may keep the mail from running as far as regular mail and food that comes
The mail will be OK though.

Don't worry about us and Germany. It's a war if you please. I don't believe the Russians are in a hurry to tangle with us. We're quite an army there. They are. Of course if we go to war with Germany it will be over there. Where you are is as well as here so it makes little difference.

My bathing suit arrived yesterday and I haven't had time to try them on. Call Grace if you have time and tell her I'll send the money on the suit right away.

I like them both although he sent me a red gingham just like the blue gingham I bought year before last. However I like the suit so if it fits I'll keep it. I don't want some cotton dresses before long since it's 75° in the daytime already, but I'll write Grace a note.

Batta so work a bit now; I'll write more later. Miss you two. Love,rtle