

3-22-1959

1959-03-22, 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.

Keywords

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22 March 59

6³⁰ pm

Dear Jack,

One more 3-11 shift after this, and I'll have 2 days off. I'm ever so ready. I have an appointment on Tuesday to have my hair cut and a permanent. It's a funny feeling to depend upon an Italian boy who speaks almost no English to do your hair. He does a beautiful job, but there's no conversation in the beauty parlor among the patrons and operators. I'm a little leery about the permanent, but everyone says they do very well.

The curfew on off-base travel was lifted this morning, but there's still quite a lot of unrest in the main part of the city, but it will probably clear up as soon as Ramadan, their sacred holiday, is up. They get pretty rowdy during this time of year as they are about half sick from

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starvation. They fast for 30 days, eating no food and drinking no water until after sundown, and very little is eaten even then. Our maid in the quarters is off sick. I don't understand too much about it, but I suppose it makes sense to them.

It's visiting hours again and it's even quieter than usual. This is the third evening that I have sat upon my back for the greater part of the 8 hours. We have a full house of patients, but they aren't too ill and about 8 are out on pass until 10 pm - I suppose I could find something to scrub, but I'm not too eager.

The weather has been very odd for the past two days. I think it was probably about 30° this morning and the sky was full of sand. We have had several of the sand storms they call "giblets" - though the real giblets are in hot wet weather.

I'm completely covered with sand flea bites. I have



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one area in which there are
 36 in a space about 4"
 square right under my
 belt line on the back. They
 itch so I can hardly keep
 from scratching. Mr. & the kids
 gave me some Carthone oint-
 ment to use when I'm ^{up} but
 I can't grease up in uniform
 so I just suffer when they
 get warm. I'm taking thereyeen
 tablets. The fleas are supposed
 to hate the Vitamin B that
 is excreted on the skin. I
 guess I haven't seen taking
 the capsules long enough - either
 that or these fleas I have are
 fond of it.

Therefore, I should work a
 little bit, so I'll quit and
 wait until I've something to
 say.

Love.

Take it easy Better
 & don't worry
 about this stuff
 over here back
 of you!