

5-30-1959

## 1959-05-30, 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

1959-05-30, 1959-05-31

## Identifier

2017-219-w-r-\_Barto\_ColdWar\_1959-05-30

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30 May 59  
8<sup>30</sup>  
pm

Dear Mom and Closer,

I'm sitting on the ward with very little to do, and I hope it remains quite dead because I don't feel very ambitious tonight. I have 36 patients, but there's all in pretty good condition with 2 notable exceptions. I have a one month old we operated for pyloric stenosis and he's still not gaining weight. He weighed 6# at birth & he weighs 4½# now - not too good, would you say? I have to give him 50 cc D5W + D5S at 9:30 by Cypis. It won't be a bit too soon for he is so dry that we could easily lose him yet.

31 May  
2<sup>30</sup>  
pm

Back on duty; I spoke too soon. I got busier than a one-armed paper changer - didn't get off until 11:30. I slept until 10 am, had breakfast with Polly + Barbara and went up on our roof for an hour in the sun. It is really hot here now. He had a giblet here day before yesterday and it was the most



awful thing I've<sup>2</sup> ever felt. It was  
so much + so hot that you could  
almost feel the heat sitting on you.  
The sand was thicker than a snow  
storm and covered everything  
in our rooms with a thick  
coating. I was really quite happy  
to come to work in the air conditioned  
hospital that day.

We spent that hot day at the local  
Arab market Suk-El-Juma. It was  
quite an experience for me. You  
should have seen us (Barb, Pally,  
Eosilee + me) climbing over sheep  
and around camels and goats.  
I have never in all my life seen  
such filth + squalor. Right in the  
middle of all these animals you  
could see a small filthy, ragged,  
little Arab boy eating from a big  
loaf of bread - the bread might be  
laying on the ground between his feet  
and covered with flies, but eat away  
he would!

We went to the slaughtering pen  
too and watched them run goats in,  
hit them over the head, slit their  
throats with a big knife and then  
proceed to skin them from stern to  
stern all in the same operation  
and in such absolutely unimagina-  
ble filth you'd find it difficult  
to eat again anytime soon. The cause  
quite a bit of revulsion by our  
presence in the market. The little  
19 year old Arab boy who took us  
(he works in our lab.) had to go to



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the police station with all of us right on his heels to ask permission for the Americans to take pictures. All the Arabs are not unfriendly - only the ones who are Communists by nature. Some are afraid of cameras - something in their religion about an image of yourself stealing your soul or some such reason. Others, however, who have become accustomed to the camera - but Americans are as big brags as you'd find anywhere. Several of the goat herders begged us to take pictures of them with their goats and they would stand up & pose, worse than Hugh Elmer ever did!

The reason for the pencil is that I'm now one day later - Tues. June 2 and I'm on the roof in the sunshine. I'm covered with oil so I knew the pen wouldn't write on greasy paper.

I haven't gotten the grades yet, Mom, but I may <sup>in</sup> today's mail. We haven't had much mail delivery since last Thursday. I got your letter about the delay in your trip to Helen's. Clever, you'd better not back down on Mom after she waits another month to go. Mom, you can take Tubbins to Dr. Hays in a taxi or, better still, to that one down in Bearden where I left Foley. It is on that



concrete street that turns left off the  
Kingston pike just before you get  
to Howard Johnston's Restaurant. It's  
the street that connects K. Pike with  
Lyons view road. I can't recall its  
name just now. Anyway it's a clean  
Kennel & they were good to Folly.

I'm sending you \$30 in cash to  
put in some Federal for me. I  
thought I should try to save a  
little along where I can't get at  
it & where it can get a little interest  
too. I will try to keep it up -

Well, I'm getting sun guine so I  
will stop for a while. I'm off now  
for 3 days & then go on 11-7 for 4  
nights. Folly is on 3-11. And hasn't  
gotten up yet today. so I'm waiting  
breakfast on her.

How is  
Mr. Goddard?

more later,

Love you two,

Bette