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
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30 May 59
2:30 p.m.

Dear Mom and Elmer,

I'm sitting in 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 they're all in pretty good condition with a notable exception. I have a one-month-old we operated on for pyloric stenosis and he's still not gaining weight. He weighed 6 lbs at birth & he weighs 4 1/2 lbs now - not too good. Would you say? I have to give him 50 cc D5W & D5S at 9:30 by Clysic. It won't be a bit too soon for he is so dry that we could easily loose him yet.

31 May
2:30 p.m.

Back in duty; I space too soon. I got stocked than a one-armed paper hanger; didn't get off until 11:30. Worked until 10 a.m., had breakfast with Polly & Barbara and went up on our roof for an hour in the sun. It was really hot here today. He had a good hike day before yesterday and it was the most
a fine thing I’ve ever felt. It was so thick and so heavy that you could almost feel the heat hitting on you. The bank 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.

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

He went to the slaughtering room and watched them cut up goats in, but them near the head, still their throats with a big knife and then spread to skin them from stern to stern all in the same operation and in such absolutely unimaginable filth you’d find it difficult to eat again anytime soon. The cause quite a bit revulsion by our presence in the market. The little 12 year old Arab boy who took us (he works in our lab) had to go to
the police station with me. I went right on the heels to ask permission for the Americans to take pictures. All the Arabs are not unfriendly—only the ones who are Communistic 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-taking Americans are as big fans as you'd find anywhere. There is the goat herder's son who used to take pictures of them with their goats and they would stand up and pose worse than Hugh Elmer ever did.

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

I haven't gotten the zebra yet. Mom, but I may tonight. I need it. We haven't had much mail delivery since last Thursday. I got your letter about the delay in your trip to Helena. Elmer, you'd better not back down on Mom after she walls another month to go. Mom, you can take ribbons to Dr. Egner in a taxi or better still, to that one down in Bearden where I left Foxy. It is on that
concrete street that turns left off the Kingston Pike just before you get to Howard Johnston's Restaurant on the street that connects to Pike with Tyone 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 $50 in cash to put in some Federal for me. I thought I should try to save a little along where I can get a little interest too. I will try to keep it up.

Well, I'm going out again so I will stay for a while. I'm off now for 3 days to then go on 11-7 for 4 nights. Don't get up yet today, so I'm waiting breakfast on her.

More later

Love you two

Better

How's Godard?

mrs Godard