1959-08-13, 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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Hi Mom & Emre.  
If the tone I'm writing surprises you, guess how shocked I am! This is my day off for this week, but I got up like a mechanical toy, dressed, and went to work as usual! My patients really got a kick out of it. I was momentarily peeved at myself, but I couldn't find anyone else to blame, so I finally laughed and had a cup of coffee, and came home.  
I called Ray, since he was Aerodrome Officer for the last 24 hours and got off at 8 am. He is coming by for breakfast before he showers, shaves, and redresses to go on to his regular job. This duty as A.O. comes about once a month for all captains who fly. While at it, they are in charge of the entire operation of all aircraft landing or taking off from Wheelus. It's a real headache when there are as many planes as this base seems for! He was up the greater part of last night after he had worked all day yesterday and still gets no day off today!
I don’t know if you will get this before you take off for California.
I got the license and I’m returning the check for you to deposit or to return if you wish, or you can buy me a long-legged Tiger Piter Pan pants gusset with it when you get back from visiting Claude. I’m glad you have decided to go, Daddy, you behave yourself on the trip and make it a really nice time for yourself and Momme. You won’t regret it.

He had a big aircraft accident here yesterday. The pilot got out ok and the plane crashed in what was supposedly an uninhabited desert area, but do you know there were seven Arabs under that wreck—five dead and two injured. So today Ray said for me to stay on base because the Arabs are throwing rocks through car windshields again. So that puts off our trip downtown until they cool off. We wait now until Ray can get off to go with me.

Lucky had a real streak of luck.
The medical chief’s service made it possible for her to go to Germany as a medical attendant for a 3 day trip. She was scared to death and didn’t even know how to put her boots on her flight uniform skirt. She finally got her ready to go and I loaned her my green money to take along. I hope she had a good time because she really hates the air force. Whereas since Emilee got to be with her.

Ray only stayed for coffee. He said if he dashed and got his bomb score cut for the week he could take off about 1 pm and my whole day off wouldn’t be wasted; so I’m glad I called him because there’s not much to do here alone during the week.

I’ll stop for now and clean up my room a bit—then go across the street and do some sewing on some curtains for his bathroom and bar that we’ve been making for his room.

Here’s the picture back. I wanted to keep it, but I was afraid you’d miss it more. Why don’t you mail
me one of those lastswing pictures of me. Or the old one with the White collar and tie. Ray wants one for his room & to take on my flights with him. It doesn't matter which one. They're all awful, but we can't have good ones made here. We send one of him later when I get this roll of prints back. I have a huge one of the cockpit of a plane, but I want it.

More later. Have a good trip.
I sent a check to mom & you.

Latest job assignment: I am to teach the rest class? Red Cross Volunteer nurses. And?

Love,
Belle