1959-08-16, Bette to Parents

Bette J. Barto
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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Dear Mom and Daddy,

Excuse the paper and the writing. I am at Ray's B.o.a. watching 1/1 v. and waiting for time to go to dinner. Ray is typing out a 12-14 page report of an aircraft questionnaire that each pilot must answer about once every 3 months in order to keep current in the aircraft. This is all the paper I can find.

I am on night duty for 2 nights - last night and tonight. I slept until 2:30 and Ray came by and cooked my breakfast while I got my uniform ready for tonight. He's handy about the house.

The fellow who lives next door to him is sitting here with us. He is also a jet pilot and is engaged to
a Capt. in the Nurse Corps. She is stationed in Springfield, Mass. and is trying to get a transfer to here. This is crazy. This fellow needs a transfusion but and talks to the States several times each day. It is against the law to let someone else talk because the ham operator so I can't get him to cost a ham station in Knoxville and let him cost you on the phone - this used to be authorized but there were so many people doing it the emergency channels were being crowded off the airways so they stopped it altogether.

18 Aug, Tuesday 2:30 pm

As you can see, I got a slight interruption. The all-stake golf program came on and Ray considers it downright sinful not to watch that so I quit writing to watch, although I hardly knew me and by the golf club from the bike.

This morning I was up so I got up early and took
Rays little car full of girls Ethene, Sally, Mary, set me downtown to the dressmaker's. She has 3 of my old dresses waiting on them and one gorgeous new piece of material that will all the cost me about 10-15 dollars - including the twine. I'm trying it to make into a $60 dress out of Vogue magazine. We will see how it comes out.

I got 2 letters from you today dated 15 & 16 Aug so I guess you two are on your way to California by now. I was sorry to hear of Dr. Sautelle's death, though I hardly knew him except through the son. Too, I was really shocked about Russell's Sony - you had mentioned how hard some he is before and what a polite and friendly young man he is. Was he given his diagnosis? I was certain that had given you must of the total statistics on Ray before now. He's just
name is Raphae Haro Barro (BARTO); he is 38 yrs by age, 5'10" , 145-150# (Nees gathering up). He has been in the air force for 16 yrs. and flying for 20. He is a Mason. Elmer and his favorite hobby is hunting - also fishing - he owns a bunch of beautiful guns and is teaching me to shoot a target pistol (pistols, not bullets). He has three little boys for which he pays $3.00/ mo. support, so he is a solid citizen other than that I can't tell you much more about Roy except that I respect him both as an officer and a man and will get along well on almost every subject.

Thursday, 7/30
2 o' clock

Again, a jumbled up letter didn't get to write last night - had a meeting to attend. Went to all Kep house, waiting for him to get ready to go to dinner. We got off late today and
5.
So I got ready first. He came by and left the car for me to drive over. I'm watching a very old Ralph Edwards show called "This Is Your Life." The program is called "Do you know the girl's name?" Some young movie star who married a young movie star. She's really pretty and seems sincere.

Ray is all ready now and sitting here watching TV. We are going to the small club today and then on to the seaside movie to see a Korean War story. He had a close squeak today at 12 noon.

By the hospital we have a flashing light and bell call system, and when there is an alert for a possible crash over land we get a 139 signal flashed throughout the hospital. To keep me from worrying when we get the signal, Ray will call me at 8:30 and often doesn't try more
than he is ever busy
and I see you later
but that lets me know he
is ok. Today I got no
call and I was worried
until I heard him bang
on the door @ 5pm. Sure
enough it was his aircraft
that was in trouble. He
couldn't get the landing
wheel up when he took off
and you can't fly with
them in landing position
but you can't land again
immediately because of the
danger of explosion of the
aircraft with the full
fuel load on board. So
the plane in big circles
right over my head for
an hour had to use
up enough fuel to be
even landed. There was
something else along with this
wrong with the plane but
I didn't understand
that. Anyway he saved
himself and the plane
and I'm alright and so
I love to fly, as I will
I've been so many years, his life today and sailing ship, he doesn't know at want anything else.

Well, it's time to eat if we are to make the movie on time.

I got the word about Russell's son today, and I'm glad he is going to be an even 6 one leg.

Good luck on the trip, I'll mail this to California.

I got the Missing license.

Love & Miss you.

Gene