10-6-1959

1959-10-06, Bette to Mother, Helen, and Jody

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.

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6 October 39
4 P.M.
Under the dryer.

Dear Mom, Helen & John,

I don't know if I'm still keeping up with Galavanting Liz, but I got a letter yesterday from your house. I suppose she is still there.

I didn't even realize you had had time to get up there by last Thursday, Mom! Your tug didn't leave me very nervous even in the U.S.A.!

I finally made it to the beauty parlor for the first time in over three weeks. I have been so busy that I barely had time to wash my hair myself.

Last week, if I wasn't on 3-11, I was taking golf lessons or helping Ray with school. This week I have troubles of my own. My first class with the Red Cross Nurse's Aid Volunteers began today. We were floored by the enthusiastic response of 24 women. Some air force, some civilian, and some oil company. They were from downtown Tampa. You see, they have previously been allowed just use
of our hospital facilities, but now due to our increasing air evacuation of A.F. personnel and dependents from Greece, Turkey, India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Cire and as far east as Pakistan, we are getting so overcrowded that we are forced to begin to cut out some of our help to the civilians not directly associated with the air force. Washington says if we ever expect to get help from them we must first stop caring for unauthorized patients. The War Dept. also stated that we were going to cause the U.S. women to leave the service. We are still caring for all O.B.-eye, cases, and all children, but will not accept any new O.B.-eye patients after Jan.

My ward is wild as usual. I have 56 patients — only 38 beds — the rest are boarding at convalescents on the closed ward where I'm teaching my class. The football season is in full swing here and Saturday night we get in some boys in various stages of hung-up rough over blue. Another weekend Hope that and there won't be a single whole team on base. Our hospital squadron team apparently is only the best but also one of the roughest on base — so they are not too
well like by their opponents so they came in for some very heavy blacks themselves.

from, I'm still receiving pretty picture post cards from your trip to Calgary. So they'd the post cards apparently, Sally and Conrad got back from lovely leave in Germany - only 72 hours A.W.O.K. They were supposed to be here last Tues. at midnite and came wandering in at 2 p.m. on Friday. They had tried to get a telegram to Maj. McVickar, but she didn't receive it. Maj. said they should be court-martialed or at least receive an article 15 - a written reprimand, but apparently they are going to get off with no punishment except a verbal reprimand. Naturally they didn't do it deliberately but had the battle is that one is supposed to have cash enough to pay one's way back commercially if there is no tie for plane coming. This they made no effort to do. The says there is no excuse for this. Midsummer, but I guess there is with better young lieutenant. Who think the ace crew is a bunch of bunk anyway. They didn't even act concerned.
Ray took his mid-term exam yesterday. He was worried about it because it was so long but apparently no one in the class completed it. Even his grades are not all in, at least he is being supposed to school again and the next class won't be such a shock.

0730

Wednesday

I'm at work now. Have my class room all ready for the girls and thought I'd finish this so I can mail it. Ray and I took one of his old commanding officers to dinner last night and didn't get done until 10:30, so you can imagine how much else I got done besides setting up a uniform. As a matter of fact, Ray does that for me, nearly as rapidly as I can. That way I can wash my clothes and polish my shoes and we get done that much faster. Like I say, he's handy about the house.

She quit for now and do some work on my Ward routine book. I have to finish it this week. Love, Bette.

Hug the young guns for me - they'll forget me by the time.