

11-19-1959

1959-11-19, 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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19 November 59

Dear Mom and Daddy,

I am off for the day but it doesn't mean very much for I have to dress in my white uniform and go to a mandatory commanders call at 1130, so that completely ruins the day for anything else. Ray has to work until 6:30 or 7:00 pm anyway, so I had just as soon not have the day off. Bolly and Emilee are off too, but have to go for their discharge physicals this morning. They got their order to come home on the 11 December, so you can be looking for Polly any time after that date. I imagine they may drive up with Mary and Is whose cars are being loaded on the boat today and should be in Charleston when they all get there. I really had a funny feeling in the pit of my stomach when I saw the orders with all four of their names on there and no Capt. B. Harris going along. I don't want out of the air force so that is the only thing that kept me from feeling too bad. Ray told me yesterday that he had heard a pretty well founded rumor that the date for the hearing of regular applications was going to be set up earlier than June 30, and that might mean we will rotate to the states sooner than August. I don't know if I should even think about it for I really am fed up with Wheelus and would love to be some one packing to come home to a stateside base or at least one in a more desirable country than North Africa. Anyway, the sooner the girls leave, the sooner comes the time for my leave. I can hardly wait, and I guess Ray nor I either one will be fit to kill the last few days before it is time for us to leave, for he is getting almost as excited about it as I am. There will be so many things that have changed for him in the last three years in the states. He has seen only 2-3 new cars in 3 years, and very few trees, or no snow, or any real meat, sausage, ham

and the like. See, it always ends up that we are talking about stateside food, so Look out, Lizzie's ice box!!!

I will include a copy of a letter that someone gave me who was stationed in Alabama last. This nutty note was making the rounds there and everyone here at the hospital is carrying a copy of it. I just borrowed it to make Ray a copy for his outfit and made a ragged one for you too. The other junk is my invitation to the capping ceremony for the Nurses'Aids. I pinned their little Red Cross pins on and it was all very nice, makes me think of my school days at Fort Sanders, and sent a shudder of disgust down my spine !

I am going to be lagging on my Christmas cards, for I didn't get my days off that I had hoped to get them addressed and mailed on, so the boat has left and I will be forced to send them airmail or else mail them to you and let you mail them out. I don't know which would be the most expensive. Oh, well, I guess I will never be rich anyway.

6 pm

Well, I have spent the day, shopping a little more for Helen and the kids-- got Helen'n tray and coasters and the Arab dolls for Jill and Joel. I even got them wrapped in Christmas paper. I don't feel much like Christmas- fact is, I can hardly realize that it is that time of the year in the states. It is almost dark, and the palm tree just outside my window is swaying gently in the breeze. It isn't cold enough today to even have the heat on in the room. I am cooking supper for Ray- he should be here by 6:30 or 6:45- we are having pork chops and mushroom sauce, sauerkraut, peas, green salad- (I still have a little lettuce and celery from the continent) and that with coffee is all. Thank heaven, Ray is not much of a bread eater, so I didn't even fool with baking cornbread. I really didn't have time .

I have the pork chops simmering now so that is all I have to do until he gets here. I never know when that is going to be until he walks in because with his outfit, he never really knows himself until the last minute if he can quit and come home.

We are going to some kind of a party tomorrow night and they always cost him so much money, I thought I²⁰ feed us at home tonite. The officer(s) club has gotten so expensive that it is difficult for us to go out for dinner for less than 2.50-3.00 each. That seven nights a week is more than either of us could afford. Polly usually eats with us but she is working 3-11 tonite. I got her two phonograph records for her birthday which is Saturday. I didn't intend to give them to her, but she caught me coming the door so I went ahead; at least that gets me out of a wrapping job. We have a cake engaged for her, so it will be a cake and coffee break at 11pm Saturday nite.... she works it the rest of the week.

I should quit and get the vegetables on the stove, for Ray will be starved. I talked to him about 3 and he had been so busy he had no time to go for lunch and I know he didn't get up in time for breakfast- he was due on duty at 6:45.

I know these letters are awful, but there is so little to write about. I got your letter about the hose, the new hospital, and your patient being #2 to move in.

Love you/ and miss you more
every day- but wont be so
long now.

Bette