1960-04-30, 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.

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30th April 1960.
0100

Dear Mom and Elmer,

I'm on night duty and have only 24 patients at the moment, so I'm not very busy. This won't last, though, because it's only the lull before the storm. The Queen of Libya were arrive again tomorrow if the weather permits our plane to bring her from her palace at Benghazi. Liz Stone left here a day ago to bring her back and the old lady politely decided not to come just then. So Liz, a doctor and a full crew for the plane are stuck down in the desert until she decides to come. Brother does our foreign policy smell! Liz doesn't even have a toothbrush because she expected to be gone less than 8 hours! The highness will be on this ward - we're in town and were already got a big room (total 34 beds) tied up for her and her entourage. The Colonel hasn't ordered military specials, but I hope he does or we be stuck with waiting on her hand and foot in addition to my other patients. See but I dread it. We hope the
They won't come this time since he won't fly, and it is 5 days by car from here. If he does, I don't see how we can handle them on this ward because he has the hall cleared & none may be present more or speak from 6 to 7 p.m. while he strolls the hall and meditates. I can see him meditating while I dash by a bedpan.

We are having a very bad chill tonight - sand is thick as snowflakes, but Ray got both our air conditioners installed just in time and my room is cool and dust-free for sleeping in the morning. It was so cold there tonight I shivered as I dressed for work, - wonderful.

I got the package from Hamilton containing a desk and a pair of pencil sharpeners. I think this explains the added amt. on the bill; you said 2 packages but perhaps you meant 2 items in the one pkg. Thanks for talking to them for me, Mom.

I got another letter from your unhappy Only. She sounds sad...
she'd rather be here than there. They just promoted her to Capt. in the reserves. She said, "If only it had happened sooner..." I knew that my being a Capt. and her only a 1/2 I was one of the things that decided her against the act but she couldn't wait, I guess!

Ray is actually having the day off tomorrow after 14 days straight. He is really worn out. I will bet glad for them to get out of this hole even if it will miss him terribly. He has worked so hard over here and no one will thank him when he leaves. It's really done place. He was sick yesterday he was white. They had a 6/50. Waiting for them 3 long years and Ray says the bay is priceless when it comes to paperwork and the left here forty, 3 years later, still a 6/50, and Ray was the only one who ever asked his hard and thanked him for a job well done. As the same way at this hospital too, but Ray says it's not that way anywhere else in the Air Force.

I'm glad Mary Ann is up to telephoning again. I hope she can stay well. (Over)
The letter about the kids' clothes was cute. I've tried to remember to enclose it, Jane. Frank, too! I don't see how she gets everything done and still maintains her sanity, doesn't seem to be that many hours in one of my days!

Joe Will, Liz, all your dollars are suddenly in need of your favor at once. Don't worry about my request. I don't really have to host me for Mrs. Dressburg. I can surely find something for her before I leave here. I don't want you breaking your neck to do all those clothes' napkins. Don't you do the wall-cleaning either. Check around and see if you can get some help with that climbing. You remember what happened last year and don't be foolish again! New please. Mom, mind me!

Well, I'm about out of anything else to say and decided that I have a nice place on my writing finger—just where they open rests and it's giving me fits.
We are having a mandatory dining to for all officers on
Wednesday night. I am on duty still, but I hope I can get one
of the kids who has no uniform to work that one night for me.
I would like to go since it will be mine and Ralph's
first chance to dress in our silver two uniforms together.
Of course we can't sit together at dinner because the theater
is by date of rank and I am only 16 years behind
Ray—that should separate us by several tables. It
will be fun though, if I don't have to leave it come to work.
I'll stop for now and try again in a day or so. I
hope you feel better, Elmer, but I don't know why you
wouldn't go on to the hospital and let someone help you!

Love you both,
Dede