Richards, Mary Caroline.

Mary Caroline Richards letter to Wanda Shult
1948 October 12

Abstract: American poet and potter Mary Caroline Richards wrote belatedly to answer a letter from her former Black Mountain College student Wanda Shult.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 099, F904
Creator: Richards, Mary Caroline.
Title: Mary Caroline Richards letter to Wanda Shult
Inclusive Dates: 1948 October 12
Extent: 1 item (3 p.)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 099, F904, Mary Caroline Richards letter to Wanda Shult, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 62, F904: Shelved in SPEC MSS 099 manuscript boxes

Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/

Source: Purchase, June 2011.

Processing: Processed and encoded by Anita Wellner, July 2011.

Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction: Use of materials from this collection beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law. Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. Please contact Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library, http://www.lib.udel.edu/cgi-bin/askspec.cgi
Biographical Notes

Mary Caroline Richards

American poet, educator and potter Mary Caroline ("M.C.") Richards taught literature and drama at Black Mountain College in North Carolina from 1945 to 1951.

During her time at Black Mountain College, she wrote her first volume of poetry, Poems, which was published at the school's Black Mountain Press in 1948. Later Richards wrote poetry and essays with a connection to creative arts and spirituality, including Centering: In Pottery, Poetry, and the Person (1964) and Opening Our Moral Eye: Essays, Talks, and Poems Embracing Creativity and Community (1996).

In the early 1960s she began teaching artistic classes that brought pottery and other forms of creativity together. Richards was awarded the Holy Names Medal from Fort Wright College in 1974, and was made a fellow of the Collegium of American Craftspersons of the American Crafts Council in 1976.


Wanda Shult

Wanda Shult studied writing with Richards during the 1947-1948 academic year at Black Mountain College.

Sources:


Mary Caroline Richards wrote belatedly to answer a letter from her former Black Mountain College student Wanda Shult.

In her long, personal letter Richards began by dispelling rumors that she and her husband, Albert William Levi, Jr., had resigned from Black Mountain College. She explained that even though the atmosphere is "antagonistic" and Levi had been asked to resign, he had refused. Instead she and Levi had asked and received a one year leave of absence during which they planned to travel to Europe and cultivate their creativity. She commented that there were "many evil things going on" at Black Mountain College, and that "whether we return will depend upon a number of things."

In the remainder of the letter Richards described her family's activities in New York City, where they occupied a Village apartment until their passports could be processed. Levi had been painting, their daughter Estelle was going to school in the neighborhood. On October 29, they would sail to France by way of a Polish ship.

Richards observed that writing this letter was a sign of "headway against the doldrums and evil spirits" which she had experienced and which had caused her silence. She spoke of the "other evil things" that had occurred recently, including her brother's death and a miscarriage she had suffered a few weeks prior.

Finally, Richards mentioned a trip to Ocracoke Island where the family had fostered a very tiny kitten which they had named "Little Wanda Shult," and ended the letter with well wishes and encouragement to write again.
Selected Search Terms

**Personal Names**

Richards, Mary Caroline--Correspondence.

Shult, Wanda--Correspondence.

**Corporate Names**

Black Mountain College (Black Mountain, N.C.)

**Topical Terms**

Poets, American--20th century--Correspondence.

Woman educators, American--20th century--Correspondence.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Correspondence.

**Occupation**

Poets.

**Personal Contributors**

Shult, Wanda, correspondent.

**Related Materials in this Repository**

This item forms part of MSS 099 Miscellaneous Literary and Historical Manuscripts.
Detailed Description of the Collection

Typed letter signed, 1948 October 12 [Box 62 F904]

1 item (3 p.)