

*The Shakers hoped that the many children they raised would want to stay in the Community when they grew up. It was a great sadness to them that most of those children chose to leave the Shakers when they came of age. Marian Carroll was one such girl. Her Shaker "mother" or caretaker was Ella Briggs. Sister Ella continued to write to, and care about Marion after she left Enfield. This is one of the letters that she wrote, and that Marian treasured for her entire life.*

Oct 1911

Dear Marion

Your letter was duly received and I was glad to hear from you for altho I have hoped against hope that you would be one of us, I could not realize how I could part with you. I did not think you could miss being some home-sick and I know, if there have been some things you did not like, you have far more to love and hold pleasant memories of. I shall always be glad you did not leave us before you came to me for I know your life must be different for the instructions, sometimes severe, but always with a love and interest which seven years have recorded.

I cannot write as I would talk but you know just how I feel toward you all the honesty & integrity which you have cultivated, also the pains you have taken to grow unselfish will all tell. But O how I wish you might have been by my side to aid both yourself and the years to come are before me, but I will trust God and work on.

Now I want you to tell me, if you care for any of your dark skirts or cotton dresses. I would have sent your things earlier but hesitate as to what you can use. I do not know which number they had best be directed to either.

Please thank Clara for her letter, it is a consolation to feel that one has helped a soul to stand for the right and develop the best in them, but like taking a piece of my own life, where one has been so dear.

Now write me, about the clothes and the place to direct them as soon as you get this and know I shall always call you mine altho my first thot, or rather care, must, by force of circumstances (not of my choosing) be for what is around me.

My love & interest goes with this note. from  
Sister Ella