

Bedford April 4th 1807

My Dear Sarah

I feel so thorough a conviction, of the impropriety of my conduct in so long omitting writing to you, that I will not pretend to offer a single excuse, but readily confess my fault, and promise amendment, as the best atonement I can make. But you must not think my silence has proceeded from want of affection; far otherwise I am now convinced, how dear you are to me, and feel a thousand fears, and anxieties, which I never experienced, till at so great a distance from you. Nothing but the improvement of your mind, could have reconciled me, to so long a separation, particularly at your time of life, when a Mothers presence is so necessary. Your virtues my dear Child, I have great confidence in, but young people frequently want discretion in little things; and believe me when I tell you, situated as you are, you have need for all you are mistress of. It is a sentiment natural to young minds to believe every body good, and of course our friends as we are not conscious of having done any thing to make them otherwise.

is a sentiment that proceeds from a good heart
and virtuous inclinations, but it is by no means
a safe one. Daily experience proves how few there
are who deserve the name of friends. Our best way
therefore, is to be guarded in our words, and actions, before
all, as those who have nobody to trust, have nobody
to betray them. To this you will say, am I to have
no friend, to whom I can make known my distresses
and compelled to endure them in silence. Yes, in me,
you have a friend whom you may trust, and one
who will never betray you. Therefore scruple
not to make known your little wants and
complaints, as you may rest assured I will
never slight them, whatever they may be.

I observe among the different branches
you are learning, geography is not included, but
you did not tell me why, although you know
how anxious I am that you should learn it, and
not superficially, but be mistress of it, as well
as Arithmetic. Without the former, History is but
imperfectly understood, and without the latter, you
will be subject to many inconveniences, and impositions,
particularly when you get to be an old maid, as
was your resolution when we parted. I hope you will
adhere to it for six years at least.

Your friends are generally well and desire to be remem-
bered to you. Present our most respectful compliments
to Mr and Mrs Anderson, Miss Smith, and the rest
of the young Ladies, with whom we are acquainted
God bless you and believe me your

Affectionate Mother

Betsy Watts

I arrived here my dear Sarah just as your Mama
had finished her letter and as I could not prevail on
her ^{to} present my love to you I thought it best to write it
myself, Believe me my dear Girl I am not a little pleased
to find from your letters that your situation is in every
aspect so agreeable and am confident your improvement
will be such as will be extremely gratifying to your friends
I know of nothing rare or uncommon that has occurred
among your acquaintances since you left us - Whenever
you feel disposed to write to any of your friends besides these
you have already written to I shall be pleased to be among the
number for it will always give me pleasure to hear from you
particularly if you can give me any of your happiness and
welfare - Adieu my dear Girl accept the best wishes
of your

Affectionate Cousin

She desires her love to you, your little
brothers all surround me & send their love to sister Sally

Mary Watts