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; for 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 Mother’s presence is so necessary. Your virtue 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. So that 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 me who will never betray you. Therefore scruple not to make known your little wants and complaints, as you may not 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 masters 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 will be subject to many inconveniences, and impositions were 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 remembered to you. Present our most respectful compliments to Mr and Mrs Anderson, Mrs Smith, and the rest of the young ladies, with whom we are acquainted. God bless you and believe me your affectionate mother.

Ruth Watts

I arrived here my dear Sarah just as your mother had finished her letter and as I could not prevent my love to you I thought it best to write it myself. Believe me, my dear girl. I am sure a little pleasantries from you would be very acceptable and am confident your improvement will be such as will be extremely gratifying to your friends. I know of nothing more or unpleasant that has occurred among your acquaintances since you left us. Whenever you feel disposed to write to any of your friends besides those 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 express one of your happiness and welfare. Ah!uen my dear girl accept the best wishes of your affectionate cousin.

Mary Watts

When desires her love to you, your little brother all surround me and when love to sorrow.