SOCIAL & CIVIC UPBUILDING

Almost bursting at the seams, in 1901 the Peabody House expanded and moved to 87-89 Poplar Street with Miss. Caroline F. Brown as its head resident. In 1905 the Social Union of the North and West Ends was created, an early example of two or more settlement houses working together to appeal to the city on social issues allowing the community to use the settlement house as a forum for active resolution of community concerns. In 1908 the Peabody House became a part of the newly created Boston Social Union.

In 1907, Caroline Brown died. Miss Edna Dickerson took her place as head resident only to resign a year later opening the way for Peabody’s Houses’ most influential head resident Miss. Eva Whiting White. White, a professor of Social Economy at Simmons College, member of the Boston Board of Public Welfare, President of the Women’s Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, would be the head resident at the Elizabeth Peabody House until 1944. Under Eva Whiting White’s leadership the House began its own gardens at Charles and Poplar Street in 1908 literally fulfilling its fundamental role as a kindergarten and expanded into 6 Auburn Street, a tenement house used for practical instruction in household activities such as cooking.

In 1909 The Peabody house opened a modified milk station which became the second largest station in Boston. However, in the same year it became clear that the Peabody Association was outgrowing its locations rapidly. The need to evolve with the changing community is summarized best by Whiting White in the Annual report of 1909, “In Settlement work the call is not to live up to a well-done task but to cover twice as much ground because of a well-done task.” In 1912, taking up the call to expand, the Elizabeth Peabody House moved to its third and final location in the West End, 357 Charles Street, a seven story building. Due to this expansion the Peabody Association was able to offer new classes in theater such as Shakespeare and Singing, the groundwork for its famous dramatics program which produced such stars as Leonard Nimoy and Ruth Roman.