

Local History Resource Center
Peabody Institute Library
82 Main Street, Peabody, MA 01960

Peabody Postcard Collection, 1880-2017

Collection Summary

Reference Code: MPeal

Repository: Local History Resource Center, Peabody Institute Library, Peabody Massachusetts.

Call Number: PCC

Collector: Peabody Institute Library

Title: Postcard Collection, 1880-2017

Dates: 1880-2017 (bulk: 1905-1920)

Size: 0.63 linear feet (1 Box)

Language(s): Collection materials are in English.

Abstract: The postcard collection compiled here, dating from 1880 to 2017, includes images from the city of Peabody's past. These images range from snapshots of the town square throughout history, to images of famed resident George Peabody, the namesake of the town. Additionally, on some postcards there is correspondence, but on many there is no writing at all. Some of the postcards concern locations and events from outside the town of Peabody, including locations relating to the Peabody Trust, and correspondence and images from areas not located immediately within Peabody, but still relating to the Peabody Institute Library, such as the branch in Maryland and the Peabody Museum at Yale University.

Organizational History

The Peabody Institute Library was begun with the June 16, 1852 donation from George Peabody.

George Peabody was born in South Danvers in 1795 and had sailed for London in 1837 to expand his import/export business. By 1843, Peabody became an investment banker. As he rose in prominence, and especially in the year 1851, he began to consider making a gift to his home town of South Danvers.

On January 5, 1852, the Danvers Mechanic Institute (DMI) named George Peabody an honorary member. This subscription based institute, located in South Danvers, was both a library and a lyceum. Though the committee appointed to inform Peabody of this honor waited until June 17,

1852—after the town had been informed of the donation from George Peabody—it is possible his awareness of this institution influenced Peabody in deciding the type of institution he wished to create.

Later that spring, the Danvers Centennial Committee issued an invitation to George Peabody, asking him to join the citizens in the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Danvers' separation from Salem. His response, sent on May 26, 1852, announced his intention to donate \$20,000 for the creation of the Peabody Institute. Though similar to the Danvers Mechanic Institute in that it would be both a library and a lyceum, the Peabody Institute would be open to everyone, free of charge. By the time of his death in 1869, George Peabody would have donated over \$217,000 just to the Peabody Institute.

The architect chosen for the Peabody Institute was Richard Bond (1797-1861), a well known New England architect. Franklin Merrill of Danvers and Russell & White of Salem were the contractors hired to build the library. The Peabody Institute opened on October 18, 1854.

Fitch Poole had been chosen as the first Librarian on January 3, 1854. His participation in founding the Danvers Mechanic Institute in 1841 and his work with it until it closed in 1855 made him a natural choice. He was instrumental in selecting many of the original books for the library, as well as organizing it. He resigned just before the library's opening on September 27, 1854. Eugene B. Hinckley was then elected Librarian and he served until May, 1856. Upon his resignation, Fitch Poole once more became Librarian, continuing his work with the Peabody Institute until his death in 1873.

Poole collected and organized many of the early documents of the library. He put together some of the scrapbooks containing news accounts regarding George Peabody, as well as created the Reception of George Peabody, of the Children of South Danvers, October 15, 1866.

In 1866, after consulting with George Peabody, Eliza Sutton, a prominent woman in the town, donated \$20,000 to the Peabody Institute. This gift, coinciding with George Peabody's October 15, 1866 visit to South Danvers, was made to create the Eben Dale Sutton Library. It was the first reference room of the library and was named in memory of Eliza Sutton's son who died at the age of 14. During the construction of the tower, a front portico was added on to the library. Alterations were also made to the Lyceum. The architect for this work was Gridley James Fox Bryant and the contractor chosen to complete the addition and renovations was Simeon Flint.

From 1841 until the early 1850's, the Danvers Mechanic Institute hosted yearly courses of lectures. These Lyceum speakers were part of a nationwide movement which sought to educate adults in a wide variety of subjects. They included topics of the days, such as mesmerism, as well as philosophy, literature, history and culture.

Upon its opening in 1854, the Peabody Institute mirrored the DMI by beginning its own yearly courses in adult education. As with the DMI, these Lyceum topics included philosophy, literature, travel and history. Among the speakers invited to the Lyceum were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rufus Choate, Charles Sumner, Frederick Douglass, Josiah Quincy and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The Peabody Institute would not expand again until the late 1970s. For the bicentennial of the United States the Library received a grant to clean and restore the Sutton Room. Also, the Library Trustee's realizing that the Library had out grown the original building looked to add an addition, which was constructed in 1977-1978. During the construction the lyceum was removed and the children's room was moved from the first floor to the second of the original building. A mezzanine was added to the original building. The children's room would remain on the second floor from 1978 until the early 1990s when it was moved to the basement level and the offices were moved to the second floor. The director's office would move to the area near the miniature of Queen Victoria. In 2013 a creativity lab was added in the former meeting space in the lower level of the Library.

Arrangement

- Series 1: Peabody General, various dates
 - Subseries 1.1: Peabody Square, no date
 - Subseries 1.2: South Church, no date
 - Subseries 1.3: Scenic Postcards, 1905-1960
- Series 2: George Peabody, 1905 – date unknown
- Series 3: City Hall, no date
- Series 4: Municipal, 1905-2011
 - Subseries 4.1: Peabody Fire Department, 1909-1915
 - Subseries 4.2: J.B. Thomas Hospital, no date
 - Subseries 4.3: B&M R.R. Station, 1909
 - Subseries 4.4: Peabody Institute Library, 1905-2011
- Series 5: Shops & Services in Peabody, c. 1880-1976
- Series 6: Peabody Historical Society Exhibitions, 2016
- Series 7: Dana, Mass., 1915
- Series 8: St. John's Parish, no date
- Series 9: Peabody Trust, 1912-2012
- Series 10: Peabody High School, 1909-2011
- Series 11: Beyond Peabody, no date
- Series 12: South Peabody Baseball Team, 1910

Scope and Content

This collection contains in it postcards that have been collected by the Peabody Institute Library over the years. The postcards are a mix of images from Peabody's past, dating from 1880 to 2017. Many postcards were produced by the Peabody Historical Society while others come from local businesses. Some of the postcards have correspondence on the back side, but most do not have anything written on them. For example, two of the postcards in series 7, concerning Dana, Massachusetts, contain correspondence written to Mr. Harold B. Goodhue and Mr. A.J. Goodhue, of Beverly, Massachusetts. The letters appear to be complimentary of the town of Dana and suggest that their authors, Sister Narcissa and "N.B.E", are enjoying a vacation.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation: [identify the item], Postcard Collection, Peabody Institute Library.

Provenance: Many materials found in collection or donated/purchased by the library over time. The Peabody Institute Library is the sole known custodian of these materials.

Acquisition Information: It is unknown when exactly some of the materials in the collection were donated, much of the collection was compiled from several donations and library purchases over the years from eBay and other auction websites.

Processing Information: Connor G. Campbell, Intern, 2020.

Access Rights: Collection is open for research.

Physical Access Restrictions: None.

Tech. Access Restrictions: None.

Special Formats: None.

Copyright: Ownership of the originals belongs to the Peabody Institute Library, Peabody, MA. Materials unpublished and in the public domain. All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the archivist.

Conservation Notes: Postcards were placed into inert sleeves and acid free sleeves.

Related Collections: None.

Separated Material: None.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

A.B. Clark Tannery
Convent of Notre Dame
J.B. Thomas Hospital
Kiley School
Newburyport Public Library
Peabody (Mass.)
Peabody City Hall
Peabody Historical Society
Peabody Institute Library
Peabody Square
Peabody Trust, London (United Kingdom)
St. John's Parish
South Congregational Church, Peabody (Mass.)
South Danvers (Mass.)

Genre(s)

Buxton Hill
Peabody (Mass.)—History
Peabody Historical Society—Clyde & Mary Hudnall Military Room
Peabody Square, Peabody (Mass.)
South Danvers (Mass.)—History

Personal Name(s)

Hudnall, Clyde D. (1918-2019)
Hudnall, Mary U. (Leahy) (1919-2015)
Peabody, George 1795-1869

Subject(s)

Postcards

Collection Inventory

Subseries 1.1: Peabody Square, no date

Box Number/Folder Title

Box 1

Peabody Square Postcard, no date

Peabody Square Postcard, no date

Peabody Square Postcard, no date

Peabody Square Postcard, no date

Peabody Square Postcard, 1906

Peabody Square Postcard, 1917

Peabody Square in 1902

Peabody Square Postcard, no date

Peabody Square Postcard, no date

Subseries 1.2: South Church, no date

Box 1

South Church Postcard, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

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Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Peabody Square & South Church, no date

Subseries 1.3: Scenic Postcards, 1905-1960

Box 1

West Street Church & Schoolhouse, 1905

Residence of Lewis Brown Postcard, 1906

Convent of Notre Dame, 1920

Pine Grove Cabins, no date

Kiley School, 1960

Apple Tree Lane, Osborn Farm, 1908

Buxtons Hill Postcard, 1905

Main St. Postcard, 1948

Ship Rock Postcard, no date

Series 2: George Peabody, 1905-

Box 1

Birthplace of George Peabody Postcard, no date

Portrait of George Peabody Postcard, no date

Portrait of George Peabody Postcard, no date

Portrait of George Peabody Postcard, no date

Birthplace of George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Birthplace Plaque Postcard, no date

George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Postcard, no date

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

George Peabody Burial Postcard, 1905

Series 3: City Hall, no date

Box 1

Peabody Town Hall in winter, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

Peabody City Hall Postcard, no date

City Hall Postcard, no date

City Hall Postcard, no date

Subseries 4.1: Peabody Fire Dept., 1907-1915

Box 1

Fire Station Postcard, no date

Peabody Fire Dept. Postcard, 1907-1915

Subseries 4.2: J.B. Thomas Hospital, no date

Box 1

J.B. Thomas Hospital Postcard, no date

J.B. Thomas Hospital Postcard, no date

Subseries 4.3: B&M R.R. Station, 1909

Box 1

B&M R.R Station – Peabody, 1909

Subseries 4.4: Peabody Institute Library, 1905-2011

Box 1

Snowy Owl Postcard, no date

Snowy Owl Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Library, 1908-1928

Peabody Institute, 1905

Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute, 1905

Peabody Institute, 1943

Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Postcard, 1907

Peabody Institute Library, 1905

Queen Victoria Peabody Institute Postcard, no date

Peabody Institute Library Postcard, 2011

Peabody Institute Library Postcard, 2011

Peabody Institute Library Postcard, 2011

Series 5: Shops & Services in Peabody, c. 1880-1976

Box 1

A.B. Clark Tannery, 1909

Ted's Service Station, Foster St., 1976

Allen Block & Main Street, 1919

Humphrey Provision Co. Postcard, no date

W. Winslow Trade Card, c. 1880s

William P. Elwell Electrical Shop, no date

Series 6: Peabody Historical Society exhibitions, 2016

Box 1

Clyde & Mary Hudnall Military Room Postcard, 2016

Clyde & Mary Hudnall Military Room Postcard, 2016

Series 7: Dana, Massachusetts, 1915

Box 1

Postcard Main Street – Dana, Mass., 1915

Postcard Store and Post Office – Dana, Mass., 1915

Series 8: St. John's Parish, no date

Box 1

St. John's Parish Postcard, no date

St. John's Parish Postcard, no date

St. John's Parish Postcard, no date

St. John's Parish Postcard, no date

St. John's Parish Postcard, no date

St. John's Parish Postcard, no date

St. John's Church, no date

St. John's Church, no date

Series 9: Peabody Trust, 1912-2012

Box 1

Peabody 150 Years Rosendale Estate Postcard, no date

Tachbrook – Peabody Housing Postcard, no date

St. John's Hill Postcard, 2012

Estate Party at Whitecross Street, 1920s

Estate Party at Herbrand Street, 1924

Chelsea Manor Street, 1931

Vauxhall Bridge Road, 1912

Cleverly, Shepherds Bush Postcard, 2012

Peabody 150 Years 1953 Coronation Party Postcard, no date

Peabody 150 Years Walworth, no date

Peabody 150 Years Camberwell, no date

Peabody 150 Years Abbey Orchard St., no date

Peabody 150 Years Islington Postcard, no date

Peabody 150 Years Spitsfield Estate, no date

Series 10: Peabody High School, 1909-2011

Box 1

Peabody High Exhibition Postcard, 2011

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High Postcard, no date

Peabody High School Team Postcard, 1909

Series 11: Beyond Peabody, no date

Box 1

Newburyport Public Library Postcard 150 Years, no date

Peabody Museum Yale University Postcard, no date

Peabody Branch, Enoch Pratt Library Postcard, no date

Peabody Branch, Enoch Pratt Library Postcard, no date

Series 12: South Peabody Baseball Team, 1910

Box 1

South Peabody Baseball Team, 1910