

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody: New England Crusader

Elizabeth Peabody was the first child born to Nathaniel Peabody and Eliza Palmer at Billerica, Massachusetts.

The year was 1804.

Her father at the time was training as a medical doctor while the mother was conducting a home-based school, a practice much in keeping with Palmer-family traditions.

As of the early Nineteenth Century in New England, it had become established practice to provide educational opportunities for both genders - female as well as males - at what today would be considered the "Primary- and Elementary-" levels though opportunities beyond that were still closed to women. Prevailing thought was that business and the professions were occupations reserved to men while women were capable of attending to cultural preservation as instructors at the kind of parlor-schools operated by Elizabeth's mother.

In 1820, at the age of sixteen. Elizabeth herself opened the first of a series of such schools at Lancaster, Massachusetts. The Peabody-family had by this time settled at Salem following a series of moves and births which resulted in five more children coupled with Nathaniel's decision to try supporting his flock as a Dentist.

Scene 1: Boston, Massachusetts 1823
Ralph Emerson
Elizabeth Peabody

Peabody: WELCOME, Mr. Emerson.
IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE
TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
HAVE YOU
BROUGHT YOUR BILL
FOR SERVICES RENDERED ?

Emerson: GREETINGS, Miss Peabody !
IT IS INDEED
A GREAT PLEASURE
TO SEE YOU
ONE LAST TIME.
AS TO "THE BILL",
THERE IS NONE
FOR IN RETROSPECT