

## THE DOLLAR SOCIAL AT SOUTHWEST HARBOR

1892

If you'll kindly listen, friends, I'll do the best I can  
To report all the experiences of our "dollar social" plan,  
By which we mean to start a fund, that in time shall swell  
Into a sum sufficient to build a library and reading-room as well:  
If you don't believe we need it, just look at the Lurvey shop  
Where our books, for want of better place, have been obliged to stop,  
But though little and lob-sided, it has served us in the past,  
And shall be held in grateful memory, as long as it shall last.  
Now, if your sympathy is gained, and our need you have discerned,  
We'll just go on and tell how all our dollars have been earned;  
But this you'll bear in mind, that our poetic feet and measure  
We beg leave to change whenever it suits our pleasure.

Miss Stockwell, a Claremont guest, gave of her own good will,  
For the future library building, a crisp two dollar bill.  
Ida J. Freeman deftly seized her chance  
In J. T. R's store to neatly shorten pants,  
And very soon, as I have learned,  
At a quarter a pair, her dollar was earned.  
Hettie Handy made a faithful vow  
To tie up and turn out her grandfather's cow,  
And in one week she gained a dollar bill  
Though to milk the cow, was beyond her skill.

Amelia Holmes with a willing heart,  
Earned her dollar and did her part;  
Very neatly she cleaned the store;  
Who among you could do more?

Elizabeth Lawton sold the hens that for years had faithfully laid  
And the last dollar they earned, she very cheerfully paid  
Into the library fund, before she left the place  
To spend the winter in Boston, with her daughters, Lizzie and Grace.

Abbie Lurvey, with needle and thread, patiently and skillfully built  
A woolen spread for a friend, called a log cabin quilt.  
She divided the work with her mother, the price too with her shared,  
The dollar given the library was in a good cause she declared.

Nellie Higgins thought and thought, till her heart was in a flutter;  
At last she said unto herself, I'll dress Asa Herrick's butter!  
A brilliant thought indeed it was, no sooner said than done,  
And now she comes with smiling face, with the dollar fairly won.

Alice Higgins earned her dollar making Asa's bread,  
For the staff of life was needed, on which his butter might be spread.  
Now he and his brother William will need many a friendly turn  
Until they can find a wife who will cook their food and churn.

Bertha Robbins from the Centre, has joined our working band  
And to the library scheme has lent her heart and hand:  
Old dresses and old cloaks she has made as good as new,  
And from the proceeds of her labor has added a dollar too.

Julia Gilley took advantage of her husband's need,  
Saying, "for a dollar your shirts I'll do," and did he cheerfully agreed.  
She starched them, and polished them, and did them up quite fine,  
And said, I'll give this dollar to the library, because it's fairly mine.

Jennie Dolliver earned a dollar, not by singing in the choir,  
But by singing "Hello!" over the telephone wire,  
And waiting too on customers, in a swift and pleasant way,  
Which is much appreciated and we trust she'll longer stay.

School teaching too has had its share in our library scheme,  
And at the head of this good list, Caroline Lawlor's name is seen.

Maud Higgins also, at the Cove, did use the magic wand  
And wielded it as you have heard with firm and gentle hand.

Another Maud again appears, and Mason is her name,  
Who travels up this road, in search of rank and fame.

Mary Parker was surprised to find that a dollar contained so many dimes;  
She made doughnuts, cookies and also dressed butter several times.  
She sewed too for her brothers, then harnessed the horse and drove  
After shavings for kindlings, away up to Norwood's Cove.

Emily Farnsworth, as you know, busily works at the millinery trade.  
In trimming hats and bonnets, some money she must have made.  
But this library dollar, she declared by hook or crook,  
She was bound to slyly capture out of Farnsworth's pocket-book.

In her garden Vira Mayo gathered with great speed  
And sold to her neighbors some excellent sweet pea seed;  
Milk and apples too she sold and many pennies made,  
Then to finish up her dollar, she industriously crocheted.

Philena Clark with obliging zeal served clams and lobsters in the shell,  
In large and generous lots, and all to please young lawyer Bedell,  
Who with a merry party lodged in her house for a time;  
That they enjoyed these feasts, I leave you to judge by this rhyme.

May Lawton fitted a summer dude with a suit for the masquerade,  
A gay pink tier and sunbonnet to match, for which he a dollar paid.  
Or she could have taken the money earned at her telegraph station,  
In either case 'twas very easy to fulfill her obligation.

Jennie Mason earned her dollar, hooking herself a mat,  
Her husband being a protectionist, declared he'd give her that  
To encourage her home industry, for a premium placed on domestic work  
Would keep a woman from gadding about, when household duties she wanted to shirk.

Lida Cousins, ever busy, with patient care and skill  
Nursed a famous lady who at the Dirigo fell ill.  
'Twas Dr. Amourette Beecher, Henry Ward's cousin they say;  
So this library dollar was easily earned in one day.

Katherine Freeman, full of zeal, was the first to pledge her aid;  
In devising ways and means, much genius she displayed.  
Delicious home-made candy she sold in her father's store;  
When you had eaten one piece you were sure to want some more.

Mrs. Alice Gilley some broods of chickens raised,  
Both plump and tender-looking and by her neighbors praised;  
When they were nicely grown, she sold a portion of her flock,  
And from the amount received added a dollar to our stock.

Lizzie Holmes approved our plan and thought of various labors,  
At last decided that she would preserve fruit for her neighbors,  
A very sweet way, I'm sure you'll say, and great is the art of preserving,  
And so the dollars came rolling in for this cause which is so deserving.

Emily Freeman earned fifty cants by making bread and pumpkin pies  
For her neighbor, Dr. Lemont, whose wife had taken him by surprise;  
His house was in disorder and his cupboards were quite bare  
And she'll finish out her dollar by cleaning over there.

Hannah Gilley, an excellent cook, hit on a cunning plan:  
A peck of cookies she did make: and from house to house she ran;  
The neighbors all were very glad to taste her fresh supply,  
And finding then so very good, wished the baker's trade she'd ply.

Mrs. Cook, you all might think, would also cook some food,  
But there you're wrong, she sold some butter chat was sweet and good,  
Food or butter, it does not matter whichever it may be  
But the dollar that she gave us is a sure reality.

Julia Lemont sold medicines in the drug store near by,  
During summer to the visitors, who did her patience try;  
They would buy five cents' worth and give a check for twenty dollars;  
Then the town must be scoured for change for these troublesome callers.

Ida Clark was earning money as her husband's clerk,  
But to gain the library dollar she wanted special work;  
In writing mackerel tags she got fifty cents in pay,  
Then crocheted a shoulder cape, so finished up that way,

In picking cranberries, so they say, Nina Hodgdon earned some money,  
How her dollar was sent in will strike you all as rather funny.  
Her husband had it in his charge when he heard of the library plan  
And sent what belonged to his wife; new wasn't that just like a man?

Lillie Robbins, fond of sleep, with her husband fairly agreed  
At five cents to kindle fires and the horse into the bargain feed,  
Then for half the night she lay awake in order to rise before day;  
Thus her dollar was earned in a sleepless, self-denying way.

Grace Pease earned her dollar by saving it, she said;  
"A penny saved is a penny earned," you know the proverb read,  
By doing extra work herself she saved in various ways;  
Industry and prudence are twin virtues worthy of praise.

Of molasses candy, crisp and yellow, Blanche Robbins made a heap,  
Then cheerfully from house to house she sold it out quite cheap;  
So rapidly it disappeared and so good it proved to be,  
That instead of one dollar we wish she had promised three.

Ruth Tower went a fishing and three-score of mackerel caught;  
Proud she might be of her luck, for they were a handsome lot,  
So her library dollar, without much loss of sleep,  
Was drawn with hook and line from out the briny deep.

Building morning fires seems to be a favorite plan,  
And I'm sure 'tis hailed with pleasure by almost every man,  
Rose Robbins in this way one hundred cents has earned,  
Helped out by a little knitting, as we have also learned.

We all admire great courage, when it overcomes great fear,  
And so to Ella Lawton would give a word of cheer;  
For Jim said unto her: "If my horse you'll feed with care,  
I'll give you just a dollar with which to pay your share,"  
So with quaking heart, and limbs trembling with affright,  
She bravely did this duty faithfully at noon and night.

Annie Lawton plied her needle for the dressmaker over the way,  
Who pressed with work was willing her services to repay;  
There were yards of ruffling hemmed, basques boned and seams o'ercast,  
Till with a sign of satisfaction her dollar was earned at last.

Arvilla Clark earned twenty-five cents by three quarts of cranberries sold,  
Fifty more she added to it by making over a dress, we're told,  
Then the remainder, when at five cents the kitchen fires she made,  
While Henry snored away in bed and her price most willingly paid.

Cordelia Gilley comes to the front with quite a novel dodge;  
She has filled the post of janitor in Ocean Echo Lodge,  
And I've heard say she does her work as good as any man,  
Now, if you want to beat that record, just try it if you can.

Linda Tracy, our Republican friend, took a bribe, I'm sorry to state,  
For her husband promised her a dollar if she would help him illuminate,  
So she sacrificed bar principles the library scheme to aid,  
Yet we'll overlook it if she'll keep out of that parade.

Nellie Gilley made a good trade, I think you'll all allow,  
When she agreed with her father to learn to milk a cow.  
Twenty-five cents a quart was the price he promised to pay;  
At that rate couldn't any smart girl earn a dollar a day?

Carrie Phillips, the doctor's wife, might have sold some powders and pills,  
But she preferred another way for paying her own bills;  
She is a music teacher and by the exercise of her art  
Has passed us in a dollar and so fulfilled her part.

A smart young woman near seventy, whose name is Carolina Clark,  
Not to be outdone by others, rose early with the morning lark,  
Through the long days of summer at her washing and ironing board,  
And has also added a dollar to our cherished library hoard.

When Charles and Alice a visiting went, Kate Mason for their poultry cared  
And they, to pay her for the trouble, a good fat rooster spared,  
Which she sold to her husband for his Thanksgiving dinner,  
Sp he was not only the bread but also the chicken winner.

Lucy Robinson sorting mail promised to give a dollar;  
Mrs. Lucy Somes redeemed the pledge, for so we now must call her;  
To post-office work she had given much of her time and care.  
Till Arthur took her to his home, his bed and board to share.

Another dollar for our fund, Eliza Robbins has brought,  
And the manner of its earning cost her some time and thought;  
She raised a crop of wool, which into long soft rolls was made,  
These she sold for a good price and thus her share was paid.

Venie Hodgkins who has left us, for her work has many calls,  
Earned her dollar at Sorrento, hanging paper on the walls;  
And though we greatly miss her, this fact we surely know,  
She'll always lend a helping hand, wherever she may go.

Grace Lawton in Boston, far away, plies her needle every day,  
For making stylish dresses is her trade and occupation  
And she only takes a rest in seasons of vacation;  
When at home last summer, she too added her fair name  
To the list of subscribers, when the paper to her came.  
Gladly paying the library dollar nor ever did she pause,  
As she was very willing to help in this grand good cause.

When asked to pledge a dollar Mrs. Vede Holmes exclaimed,  
"That a more worthy object scarcely could have been named;  
In furnishing transient boarders with meals and lodging too.  
She with pleasure helps along the end we have in view.

Lucinda Dodge you'll find lives at the Seal Cove turn;  
She soon made up her mind that this dollar she could earn  
By selling to her neighbors hulled corn from her kettle,  
And in this appetizing way her library pledge she'd settle.

Aljava Norwood sold no food, nor dug up rose bush roots,  
All the same she earned her dollar blacking Robie's boots;  
She used the brush with vigor and polished them quite fine  
And so dirty were they, too, that it cost a ten cent shine.

"Music hath power to charm and soothe the savage breast,"  
And in giving music lessons, Bertha Robinson does her best,  
At organ or piano she can turn an honest penny;  
Thus her promised dollar has been added to the many.

Jennie Lurvey took a contract to make a stout heart quail,  
But she persevered and vowed she would not fail,  
As the result of all this labor she a dollar has obtained,  
Paid by her father, Levi, who a pair of pants has gained.

Next on our list Rose Lurvey's name is seen,  
She washes clothes and houses, spick, span, clean,  
Yet not earned in this way was the dollar sent,  
But 'twas gathered in from her organ rent.

Maggie Trundy, willing to help, earned money in various ways,  
Selling eggs, butter, and milk, and some of the poultry she was trying to raise;  
A part of them as you shall hear, met with a terrible fate.  
Mr. Raccoon climbed a ten-foot fence and two-score of them he ate.

A peck of cranberries were picked by Mrs. Fannie Crockett,  
But the price of them was paid right out of Jim's pocket,  
He too thinks home industry should receive a recompense;  
We commend him for this principle and think he shows good sense.

To earn a dollar Nellia Hanna tried first one way, then another,  
Till at last she gained the money housekeeping for her mother,  
As she'll have a home among us here in future to abide,  
In a new library building we know she'll take great price.

And still another on our list is Mrs. Abbie Ellen Gott,  
Who with skill and diligence at laundry work has wrought;  
She is very fond of reading and thinks we must succeed  
In getting this new building of which we stand in need.

Mary McKay would also help on our dollar social plan,  
And thinks a public library calls for the aid of woman and man;  
She pledges us her dollar for this good and sufficient reason,  
It was earned by taking boarders during the summer season.

Mamie Norwood mittens knit for Own Stewart, warm and nice,  
Then to milk a cow for Albert she charged a good round price,  
But she grumbled over this work of an unaccustomed sort,  
Till her mother offered her twenty-five cents just to cut it short.

There's Mrs. Ida Richardson who wished to help the rest,  
Concluded in her business she could earn her dollar best;  
So she plied her needle from morning until night,  
For dressmaking keeps her busy fitting orders loose or tight.

Elvira Ireland while among us worked with zeal and faith sincere  
For the right, and never faltered when she saw her duty clear;  
To earn the library dollar she saved on her washing bill.  
Doing that unusual labor with a free and cheerful will.

Geneva Young to earn her dollar  
Scratched so hard she made John holler,  
Scratched away with might and main,  
Scratched her dollar to obtain.

A general request was made for rhyming reports to be sent in  
to headquarters, but two only responded.

Mrs. Florence Clark tells "How I earned my Dollar"

Those who follow after vanity sometimes become mere wracks;  
You will find 'tis only self seen through rose-colored specs,  
Passementerie might lead to vanity when it becomes the style.  
And while I did my dollar save my temper it did rile;  
And when I thought upon it, it did not seem just right —  
Vanity in a literary cause, when, taken in that light,  
And so upon receiving word, from one in another state  
Who wanted a hundred wild rose plants before it grew too late,  
I just laid aside my vanity and in spite of wind and rain,  
Went out upon the hill and worked with might and main;  
I scratched my hands and tore my dress but still did not complain,  
For it I could my dollar earn I did not care a grain.

The following poem is by Mrs. E. M. Gilley

Emma Gilley, as every one knows, works at her trade of making fine clothes,  
She puzzles and ponders and racks her poor brain,  
To cut from small patterns the dresses en traine;  
The men in general this style disapprove,  
Except Commissioner Tracy who works on the road;  
"By dollar," said he, "that style can't be beat.  
As it sweeps all the pebble stones out of the street,  
And money is saved, you can see very plain,  
To the town of Tremont by this wonderful train."  
When asked to contribute to this library fund,  
One dollar in money by her own hands earned,  
To promise quickly she was not much afraid,  
Till told she must earn it outside of her trade.  
To cutting clams' heads, she then turned her attention,  
And the numbers she cut I could scarcely mention,  
Till her dollar was gained, and I'm sure you'll agree,  
That clams are a blessing from under the sea;

They furnish employment to boy and man,  
When taken to Al Farnsworth's shop to can.  
And of wars or famines we need have no fear,  
We surely can't starve while the clam flats are near.  
When made in a chowder they vanish like powder;  
When fried in a batter they make your mouth water,  
And between me and you there's nothing can equal  
A good clam stew.

THIS TRANSCRIPTION PRESERVES THE ORIGINAL PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING