

## Bowles Park and Blodgett's Landing c1921-1922

In a following news article with its handwritten date "1922," it is noted that Henry Bowles of Springfield Massachusetts gave several acres of land to the Cottage Owners' Association at Blodgett's Landing. Will Cressy had earlier joined with this group to raise funds and construct a "grand casino." Will became its president and was influential in using the C.O.A. to expand and develop this recreational area. He took on the project to develop the donated land into "Bowles Park." Several photos were found in the Cressy Family collection with handwritten notations directly related to this enterprise.

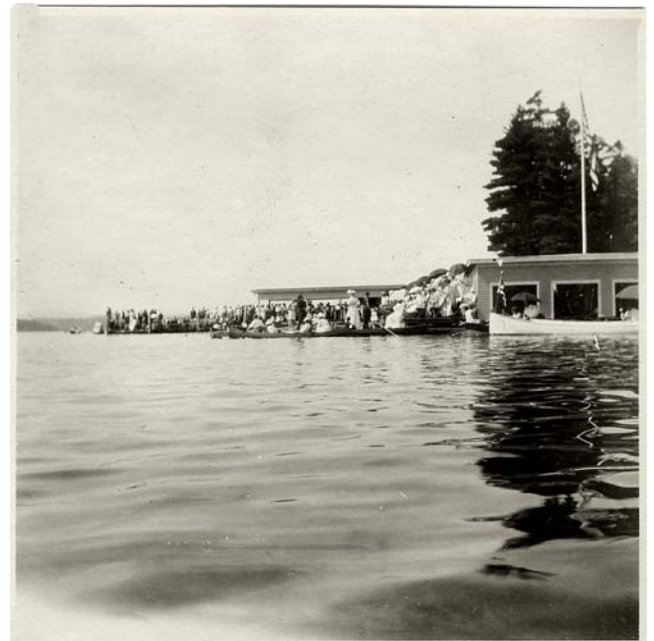






Another photo in the family album is not dated, but it appears to be from the same time period. Note the pavilion or casino in the background.

Reference is made to the famous annual regatta at Blodgett's Landing sponsored by the C.O.A. In another family album there are three undated photos of one of these annual events! It appears these first two photos were taken at the starting line from each end looking toward the boathouse.



Here's more detail of that starting line...



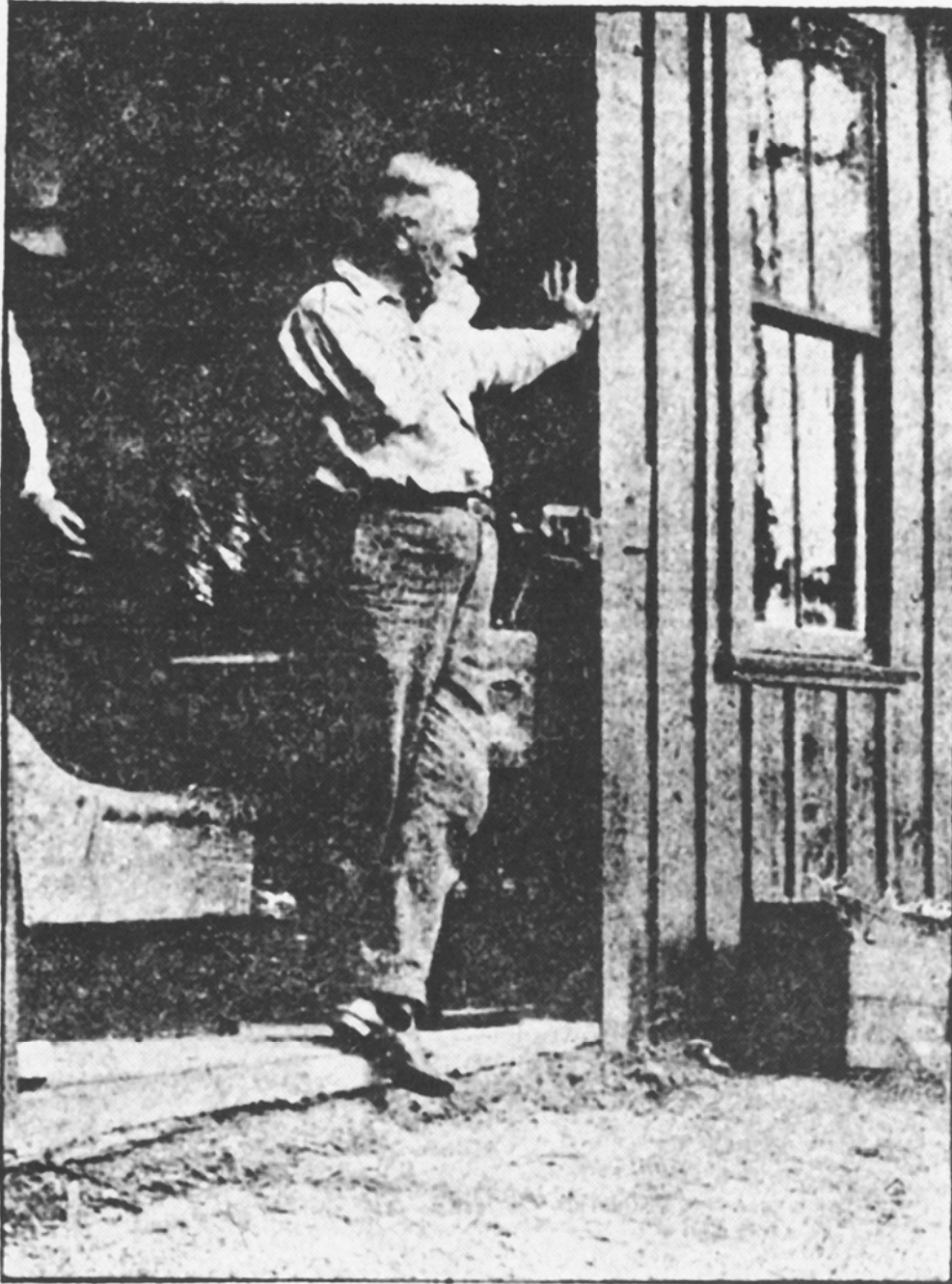
(An original of the following news article is on file at the Bradford NH Historical Society. A copy with a typed transcript for clarity is on file at the Newbury Historical Society.)



# Well Known New Hampshire Actor Aids in Construction of "Bowles Park," One of Many Beauty Spots at Sunapee Lake

Will M. Cressy Dons Woolen Shirt and Overalls to Develop  
Plot of Six Acres Given by  
Springfield Man

1928



Will M. Cressey at Work

BY RAE S. LARABA

CONCORD, July 24.—The gift of a tract of land consisting of six acres and valued at \$6,000 by Henry Bowles of Springfield, Mass., to the Cottage Owners' Association of Blodgett's Landing, has enabled the association to make vast improvements at the famous spot on Lake Sunapee immensely adding to the attractiveness of the summer resort. Mr. Bowles is a summer resident at the "Landing" and much interested in its development.

Will M. Cressy, well known actor and president of the Cottage Owners' association, after completing his circuit with B. F. Keith, went to work on the property early in the summer and his master hand, incidentally aided with \$2,500 of the association money, has worked wonders. Small trees and shrubbery have been removed from the tract, two tennis courts have been made and a general grading process applied to the property which has been transformed into the present "Bowles Park." One of the show places of which the C. O. A. is justly proud.

The Cottage Owners' association, which incidentally is a board of trade, rotary club, booster's organization and so forth, working 24 hours a day, 12 months in the year, for the permanent improvement of Blodgett's Landing, was started by Will M. Cressy in 1892 with \$60, the proceeds of an evening's entertainment.

"Bill" says himself that the \$60 was around after a benefit that was held for no particular reason and due to the fact that no one could be trusted with that huge sum of money it was decided to form an association from which came the present C. O. A.

Keep Two Watchmen.

From its meagre start the C. O. A. has increased in strength as well as finances and what has been done for Blodgett's Landing is almost a fairy tale. The association now owns a large pavillion, known as the Casino, eight bath houses, volley ball courts, a hand ball court, an athletic and baseball field and a sand beach 550 feet long for bathing.

Service to the members of the association includes two watchmen who are on duty the year around to visit the cottages twice weekly during the winter months and once a week during the summer. This gives protection at all times and fire protection is furnished the colony by the public spiritedness of the C. O. A. by a modern chemical engine which was purchased last year.

The casino owned by the C. O. A. was built through the efforts of Mr. Cressy and several other well known men when Mr. Cressy started out to build this pavillion he had \$500. Knowing that he could not build what he wanted started borrowing money and before two summers has passed he had the pavillion built, furnished, and the association out of debt.

The Casino now has bowling alleys, two pool rooms, a circulating library, shower baths in the basement, and several games for the junior members.

The Junior branch of the C. O. A. was organized this year and is called the Junior Alliance. A membership in this gives the children a chance to enjoy the benefits of the association, which includes the use of all the games and dancing.

It has been the one effort of Mr. Cressy in all the work he has done as president and manager of the association for the past 15 years to make Lake Sunapee a more pleasant and enjoyable place to spend the summer months. Mr. Cressy is all the time at work doing something to make the association more pleasant and attractive. An old timer at Blodgett's Landing has been often heard saying that without the work of Will Cressy there would be nothing at Blodgett's Landing today to attract the many visitors that it does, "in other words "Bill" has made Blodgett's Landing.

Have Annual Regatta.

The annual C. O. A. regatta is the big event of the season. Last year more than 70 people took part in this meet. Several cups are awarded each year for the different events.

In the Casino, most every Sunday morning a church service is held. Visiting clergymen hold services. Rev. Harold H. Niles of Concord, chaplain of the State Legislature, while at Lake Sunapee, last summer, preached at one of these morning services.

Mr. Cressy is working now trying to find a place to make a golf course. With this attraction this colony at Blodgett's Landing would be hard to equal in New Hampshire. He installed an archery outfit this year and much competition has already been shown among the women. A baseball game is played Wednesday afternoons and an athletic meet is held every two weeks in which the points are kept till the annual C. O. A. fair, which is held the last of August. At this time prizes are given.

Mr. Cressy states, "We always have a show ready." This statement proved true last season when he had hired a troupe to play at the Casino and they didn't come. He got a cast together and put on a show that was the best entertainment had at the lake last year. The Casino has a stage fully equipped, with an auditorium seating 500 people. Last year over over 60 well known theatrical performers passed their summer at this resort.

Among other amusements arranged by the C. O. A., are dances held every Wednesday and Saturday evenings, moving pictures Tuesdays and Thursdays, and socials for the children.

The present officers of the organization are William M. Cressy, of Concord, president; Edgar Smith, of Elmhurst, L. I., secretary; and Mrs. Edgar Smith, treasurer.