

Wayside Inn 1868-1938

Col. Benjamin C. Butler was inspired to build an Inn of architectural beauty in keeping with the landscape and body of water likened to Lucerne Switzerland. The Inn an imposing hotel of High Victorian Gothic style architecture in 1868 -69 on a twenty-acre plateau overlooking Lake Luzerne. It had numerous gables, porches, piazzas and balconies and the conveniences of a first-class hotel. The main building accommodated two hundred guests and was five stories and had ten cottages having four to ten bedrooms. All had their meals at the Inn. Entertainment was tennis, casino for cards, dancing and other activities. Many of the cottages were financed by members of the family. The Pierponts, Clapps and Newberry's. Four beautiful buildings now privately owned still remain and are in nice condition. They are Diadema, Queen Anne, Centennial and Dolbear.

The very wealthy from New York City, Albany, Troy and many other cities would come in the early season and remain until fall to enjoy the scenic beauty of the Lake Region. Well known personalities were the Vanderbilts, Pierponts, J. P Morgan, Pullmans, Jimmy Walker, Al Smith and Diamond Jim Brady and Lillian Russell.

Col. Butler came to Luzerne in 1845 as lawyer and editor. When the Civil War started in joined the Army and started recruiting men for the 93rd. Regiment it is said he enlisted more than half of the regiment. He was supervisor of the Town of Luzerne and Twice a member of the NY State Assembly. He was a great promoter of Luzerne and the surrounding area, wrote guide books, and worked to get the Railroad thru Hadley. He was also, instrumental in raising funds from his guest for St Mary's' Episcopal Church.