



Route 15: The Road to Hartford (Images of America)

Larry Larned

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Hartford is an old New England river city separated from its eastern neighbors by the Connecticut River. With the opening of the Merritt Parkway in 1940 and construction of the Wilbur Cross Parkway inviting traffic from Boston and New York, the Connecticut legislature realized a new river bridge at Hartford would be a must for local and through traffic. This became a reality in 1942, when the Charter Oak Bridge was opened to traffic. By 1948, the system of roads and highways numbered Route 15 was completed, with Hartford as its focal point. The character of the three Connecticut parkways, the Berlin Turnpike, the Hartford Bypass, and the Charter Oak Bridge is described in Route 15: The Road to Hartford.

Highway historian and retired highway engineer Larry Larned, author of *Traveling the Merritt Parkway*, has appeared in television and radio interviews speaking about Route 15 and the nation's early roads. *Route 15: The Road to Hartford* presents images from his forty years of collecting and documenting Connecticut roadside culture, architecture, and engineering. His detailed account of the road to Hartford includes personal recollections of traveling Route 15 as a youngster and studying the details along the way-the tollbooths, the bow-tied gas station attendants, the families on picnics at rest stops.

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