

## Chapter Nine

### THE SHOOTING OF THE FIRST BEAR

It was a time when game was abundant in the woods and plenty of fish in the stream. Bears were sometimes seen but they did very little damage. The first bear to be killed in Hartford was shot by Maj. David Wright.

Mrs. Peter Rider was on her way home after visiting Maj. Wright and his family. It was late afternoon. Mrs. Rider was walking through the woods when suddenly a young bear was directly in front of her. Mrs. Rider started screaming and shaking her apron at the bear. The bear was frightened and climbed up a tree.

Maj. Wright heard Mrs. Rider screaming. He grabbed his rifle and followed the path that Mrs. Rider took. He soon found Mrs. Rider standing in the path screaming and shaking her apron at the bear. Maj. Wright shot the bear in the tree.

### LYMAN TOLL BRIDGE

Elias Lyman III was Hartford's first and most successful businessman. He was a constant purchaser of real estate and at one time he owned most of what is now known as Hartford Village.

Crossing the Connecticut River was a challenge to the early Hartford settlers. A ferry offered limited service when the river was not rough and the ice could be crossed in many places during the winter months.

In 1804, Elias Lyman built an open or [king post bridge](#) across the Connecticut River. This was also the first bridge across the river connecting the town of Hartford and West Lebanon. This was to be called the Lyman Bridge.

He was also a merchant and manufacturer. Elias was born in Northampton, Massachusetts on February 23, 1768. He grew up in Northampton. When he became the age of 21, his father gave him a suit of clothes, fifty cents in silver and one half interest in a flat boat, which his father gave him partnership with his older brother, Justin. He married Anna White of Hatfield, Massachusetts. They moved to Weathersfield, Vermont, where Elias operated a store. His store burned and in 1790-91, he established a business in Hartford at the White River. At the age of 62, he died of the fever on November 22, 1830.

In 1836, the old Kings Post bridge was replaced with a three span covered bridge. The bridge had served the public for 20 years. However, when the bridge was replaced, it was discovered that the foundation was a crib of pine logs which were sound as when they were first laid over 90 years before. This bridge had fallen into a dilapidated condition and was sold to Asa T. Barron in 1867, for \$2,500. Mr. Barron repaired the bridge and continued charging a toll. In 1879, the town of Lebanon, NH purchased the bridge from Barron and made it free to the public. This bridge was later replaced by an iron bridge.