



Leonard Refineries Maps

by **Dave Rowlison** (RMCA #557)

Leonard Refineries of Alma, MI was founded in 1936 with the purchase of the newly completed Acme plant. Founder J.W. Leonard, Jr. and his father J.W. Leonard, Sr. were both in oil exploration. The Dubb's thermal cracking unit was added in 1937 to increase the octane of the gasoline produced from Michigan crude. Straight run gasoline from Michigan crude was only 40 to 50 octane while 75 to 80 octane was what the competition was selling. In 1938 Leonard began to market branded product. A brochure from that era says they marketed in the lower peninsula of Michigan and Northern Indiana with their fleet of modern 3000 gallons transport trucks. In 1939 Leonard acquired McClanahan Refineries of St. Louis, MI. In 1955 Leonard bought Roosevelt Refining of Mt. Pleasant, MI and Mid-West Refineries of Alma. In 1959 Leonard agreed to the terms of a buyout by Sohio. The deal was stopped by the Federal Trade Commission because it would have put too much market share into the hands of the majors. The Aurora (Speedway 79) and Ohio Oil (Marathon) deal had just been completed earlier in the year. Interesting that Sohio and Ohio Oil were considered majors in 1959! In 1966 Total bought controlling interest in Leonard and after 1970 the stations were rebranded Total.

Leonard road maps can be divided into two basic categories; Michigan maps, and all others. All non-Michigan maps are Rand McNally 9" X 4" folded, as are the Michigan maps from 1939 to 1956. The Michigan maps used various generic Rand McNally cover designs from 1939 through 1955. In 1956, the Michigan map is still done by Rand McNally, but for the first time has a custom designed cover for Leonard. Michigan maps from 1957 have not been observed,

but 1958 maps, and all later Leonard Michigan maps use the Official map from the State Highway Department. Some of these (1958-64 and 1968) have covers designed specifically for Leonard, but others (1965-67, 1969-70) use the same cover photograph as the Official State Highway Map, with Leonard logo added. The 1958-62 Michigan maps are copyrighted by the Michigan State Highway Dept. and lithographed by Rand McNally, measuring 8" X 4" folded. As with the Official maps through 1961, Leonard maps for these years do not have a back cover design. But the 1962 Leonard map does have a back cover advertising boat fuel & fuel oil. The 1963 Michigan map is copyrighted by the Michigan State Highway Dept. and lithographed by Gugler Lithographic Co. Milwaukee, WI.

Starting in 1964 all Leonard Michigan maps are copyrighted by the Michigan State Highway Dept./State Highway Commission and are lithographed by the Michigan Lithographing Co., Grand Rapids, MI. As with the Official state highway maps, the folded dimensions of these later maps are reduced to 7 ½" X 3 ¾". The 1964 has the same cover as the 1963 except the colors are reversed on the title at the top, and it is the smaller official folded size. The map cover designed for Leonard in 1968 shows a motorist getting the full service treatment.

The final map in 1970 has the Michigan official dual season covers but when you open it up it has a nice size Leonard ad. It headlines "Leonard Total Performance," getting you ready for the name change. But it also pictures a can of Leonard Premium 500 Motor Oil with the caption "New Total Premium 500 Motor Oil." I wonder if that was an OOPS!!

As for non-Michigan maps, none have been observed prior to 1956. For 1956 through 1958, the covers have an outline of just the lower peninsula of Michigan and there is a cartoon map face on the right, but for 1959 through 1963 the whole state is outlined on the cover and the map face is on the left. Note that although the basic design is the same, there is a slight variation between the

covers in 1956 and those for 1957-58, with these later maps having the redesigned Leonard logo. The 1964 cover design is similar to 1959-63, but somewhat simplified, with the map face gone, a new Leonard logo, and Leonard's "The Gasoline that's going places in Michigan" slogan removed – plus a redesigned Leonard logo. Various photographic designs complete the non-Michigan map covers through Leonard's final year in 1970.

It is interesting to note that in 1964 the Leonard logo was changed, but the Michigan map still has the old logo while the non-Michigan maps have the new logo, most likely because of the different printers. On the covers of many Leonard maps can be found "Form numbers" which always stayed the same for the state or region regardless of the cover or year. Leonard put out maps of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Central & Western US, and Eastern US.

I wonder why the 1949 through 1955 maps advertise D X Motor Oil? It does tie in with their X-tane gasoline but D X was a direct competitor during that time, marketing gasoline and motor oil in Michigan. Leonard had their own line of motor oil as well. Was it maybe another merger or buyout deal that didn't happen?

One final thought is that most of these maps didn't come from eBay but from flea markets, antique stores, and the help of other map collectors. I remember Charlie Wells calling me with info about a bulk plant find that showed up at the Columbus Show. Also Walt Wimer sending me a scan of a missing map at the time. Of course he had one. Thanks guys!!

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Are any other Leonard map covers out there? Please contact Dave at Djrow@modempool.com



Image from rear cover of 1963 map

Leonard Refineries Road Maps, 1939-70





Cover designs for Michigan maps (1956 cover, not pictured, is the same as shown below for 1956)



Update from Legend 44 Fall 2009

Thanks to our helpful readers, we have some updates for Dave Rowlison's article on Leonard Refineries Maps from Legend Number 43. Gary Spaid reports that there is indeed a 1957 Michigan map, which has the same cover design as the non-Michigan maps, with Michigan State Highway Department cartography inside. And Dave Goforth has a 1959 Michigan map, which presumably re-used the 1958 cartography since the State Highway Department did not issue a map in 1959. Also, the keen observer will have noticed that while the 1956 Michigan map was described in the text, it was not shown on the cover design page. So, here are three additional covers to set the record straight:



That leaves only 1960 to complete the run of Michigan maps from Leonard Refineries from 1955 to 1970. Such a map probably exists, so please let us know if you have one from that year, either of the two missing non-Michigan map years (1965 and 1968), or any other Leonard map not previously reported.

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