

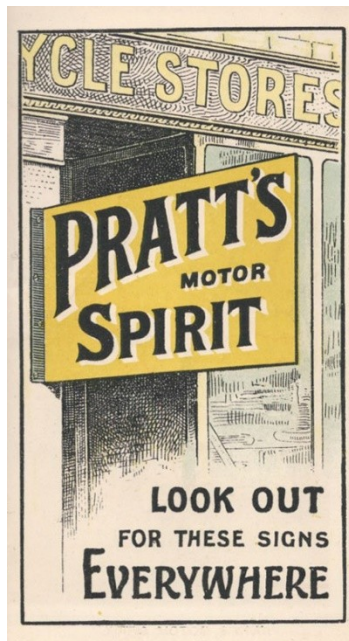
Oil Maps at 100 by **Richard Horwitz** (#314)

The second decade of the 21st century brings us to a turning point in collecting oil company road maps. We've started to celebrate the centenary of the oldest maps in our collections. Not bad for a sheet of cheap paper made to last a year or so.

Though Gulf Oil, based in Pittsburgh, is given credit for first popularizing free gas station maps (no known copies exist of their first effort, a 1913 Allegheny County map), there were other oil companies with earlier issues. European drivers benefited from even earlier road maps. Many evolved from maps for cyclists, railroads and walking paths.

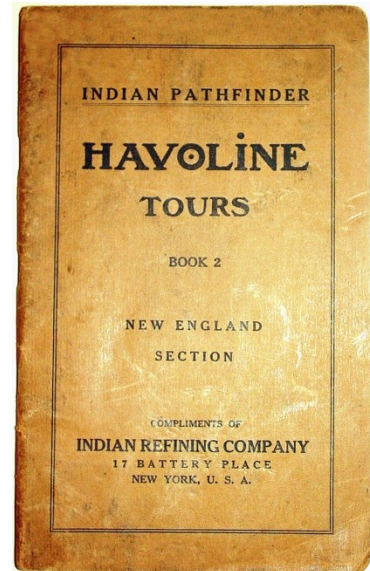
Here's a sampling of road maps your great-grandparents might have used.

The earliest map for motorists we've seen was found by Dutch collector Bas de Voogd. It is a turn-of-the-century map of France by the company Desmarais Freres, which became utomobiline/Azur. Detail shows an 1895 car.

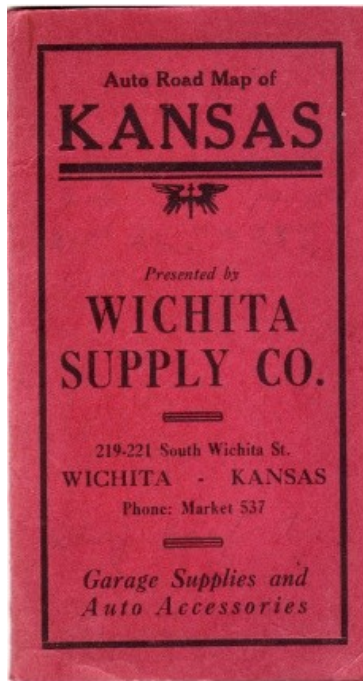


Pratt's, an early relative of Esso, was around in 1904 with a UK atlas. This inside advert shows fuels were available at bicycle shops; later editions showed a garage. Pratt was Charles Pratt, a director of Anglo-American Oil Co.

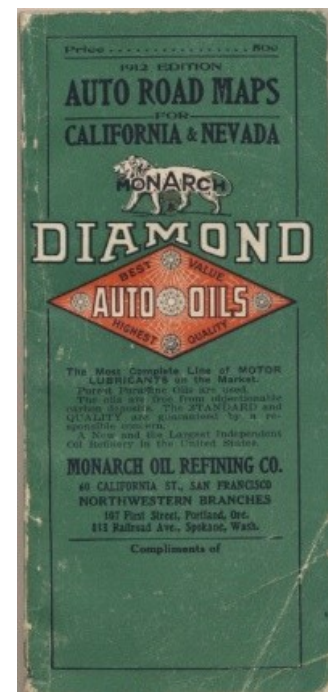
This book of 1912 tour maps came from Indian Refining Co., makers of Havoline oil, later Texaco



Wichita Supply Co., providers of oil and auto accessories, printed a Kansas map in 1912.



Monarch Oil Refining Co. printed this booklet in 1912, but it is the second edition. An earlier edition is mentioned inside, but no year is given for that



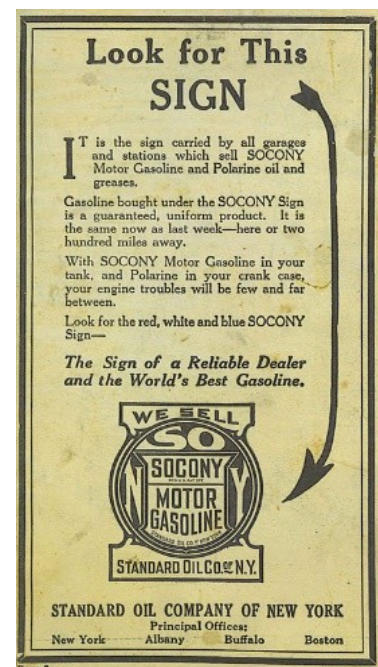
There are no 1913 Gulf maps to be found, but 1914 issues do exist. Gulf gave away 300,000 copies of maps covering Pennsylvania, New England, New York and New Jersey.

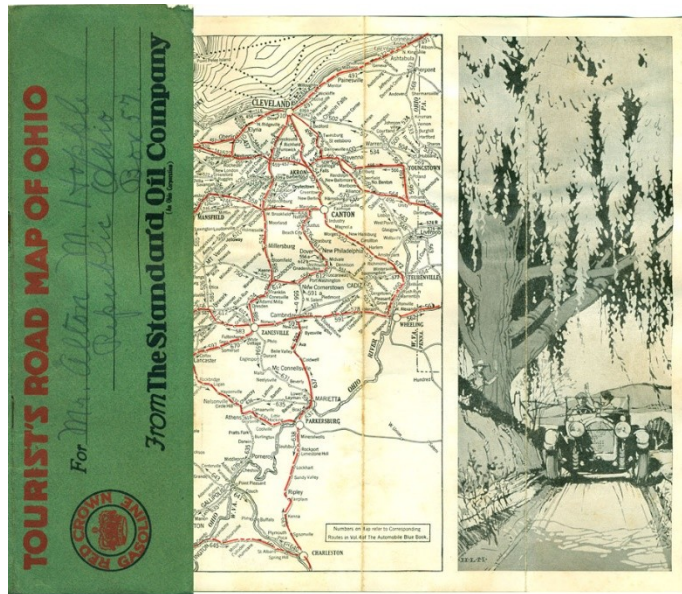
Atlantic Refining, recently split from the Standard Oil Trust, issued this map in 1915. Cartography was by Automobile Blue Book Publishing.



This 1916 map is from San Francisco's Associated Oil Co. It was founded in 1901 and began West Coast marketing in 1915. It later introduced the Flying A logo.

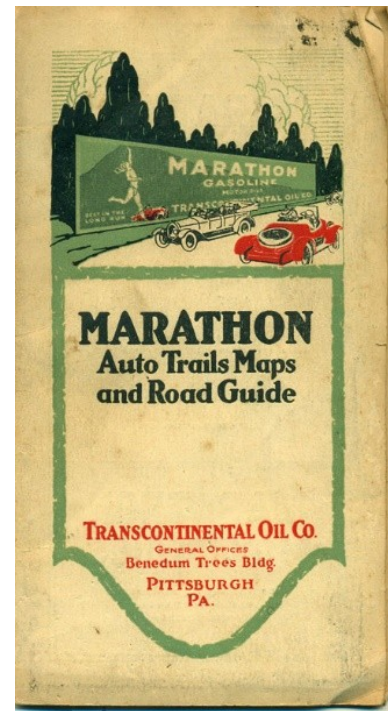
Standard Oil of New York used this 1917 map by Automobile Blue Book to get its message out to Socony customers in the Northeast.





Standard Oil of Ohio, later Sohio, mailed and distributed this 1917 map to Ohio motorists. It was by Automobile Blue Book.

Marathon, then a brand of Trans-continental Oil, distributed this map of western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio in 1919. Cartography was by Rand McNally in its early years of providing maps for oil companies.



(Thanks to Ian Byrne, Mark Greaves, Dave Leach, Gary Spaid, Dennis Toth and Jim Wakefield.)