Related work:

Mahadevan, S. and Connell, J. (1991) Automatic programming of behavior-based robots using reinforcement learning:

Robot using reinforcement learning to find and push boxes. Two algortihms; Q-learning with hamming distance and Statistical clustering. Uses subsumtion architecture. Uses only sonar sensor (NEAR and FAR states) and IR-sensor (BUMP state). Three behaviours: Find box, push box and unwedge.

Rodney Brooks - A Robust Layered Control Syste For A Mobile Robot

Intro to subsumption architecture where robot behavior is built up by different layers. Each layer can subsume and take control/have precedence over other layer. (Priority behaviors: avoiding obstacles more important than exploring). Robot has ring of sonars and two cameras. Programmed to find interesting locations (objects) in a room and head for them without hitting moving or static objects in the way. Interesting computation of positive, attractive, force and repelling force to keep track of headings.

Maybe less realted, but still relevant:

LEARNING TO AVOID COLLISIONS: A REINFORCEMENT LEARNING PARADIGM FOR MOBILE ROBOT NAVIGATION

Mobile robot with semi-circle ultra-sonic sensors as only sensor. Programmed with a self-organizing Kohonen neural net where each output neuron is a representation of a state. Gives only negative rewards as only objective is to avoid obstacles (reactive) but author states one can also implement goal directed behavior in the same manner. Rules for updating rewards is probably most relevant in this paper.