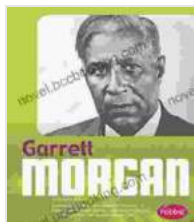


Garrett Morgan: An Unsung Hero of Great African Americans



Garrett Morgan, a renowned African American inventor and businessman, left an indelible mark on American history through his groundbreaking innovations. His contributions to society, often overlooked and

underappreciated, have had a profound impact on our world. This article delves into the life and achievements of Garrett Morgan, exploring his journey as an innovator and his unwavering determination to make a difference.



Garrett Morgan (Great African-Americans)

by Sarah L. Schuette

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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Early Life and Education

Garrett Augustus Morgan Sr. was born on March 4, 1877, in Paris, Kentucky. His parents, Sydney and Elizabeth Morgan, were former slaves who instilled in him the values of hard work, perseverance, and the pursuit of knowledge. Morgan attended public schools and displayed a keen interest in science and technology from a young age. However, his formal education was cut short due to financial constraints.

Move to the North and Early Career

In 1904, Morgan moved to Cleveland, Ohio, in search of better opportunities. He worked at various jobs, including as a handyman and janitor, while pursuing his inventions on the side. His innovative spirit led him to develop a hair-straightening solution, which he patented in 1907. This invention would later become a cornerstone of his business success.

Gas Mask Invention

Morgan's most renowned invention, the gas mask, was born out of necessity. In 1916, a massive explosion occurred in Cleveland's East Side, killing and injuring hundreds of people. Witnessing the tragedy firsthand, Morgan realized the need for a device that could protect people from smoke and suffocating gases. He set out to create a mask that would filter out impurities and allow wearers to breathe safely.

After months of experimentation, Morgan unveiled his invention, the Morgan Safety Hood, in 1916. This revolutionary device consisted of a hood with a built-in breathing tube that filtered air through a wet sponge. The sponge absorbed smoke, gases, and other harmful particles, allowing individuals to breathe in smoke-filled environments.

Commercial Success and Legacy

Morgan's gas mask quickly gained recognition and widespread use. Fire departments across the country adopted it as a vital piece of safety equipment, and it became a standard tool for miners and industrial workers. The commercial success of his invention allowed Morgan to establish his own company, the National Safety Device Company, which specialized in producing gas masks and other safety devices.

Morgan's legacy extended beyond his inventions. He was actively involved in civil rights organizations and fought against discrimination and segregation faced by African Americans. He founded the Cleveland Association of Colored Men and served as its first president. Morgan's dedication to social justice and his commitment to improving the lives of others made him a respected figure in the African American community.

Later Years and Recognition

In his later years, Morgan continued to innovate and develop new products. He invented a three-position traffic signal, which included an amber caution light, and a smoke protector for use in buildings. However, these inventions did not garner the same level of success as his gas mask.

Despite his significant contributions, Morgan's achievements were often overlooked during his lifetime. It was only after his death in 1963 that his legacy began to receive the recognition it deserved. In 1993, he was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame, and in 1995, the United States Postal Service issued a commemorative stamp honoring his work.

Garrett Morgan's life and inventions stand as a testament to the power of perseverance and determination. He overcame adversity and discrimination to make significant contributions to society. His groundbreaking gas mask saved countless lives and his unwavering commitment to social justice left a lasting impact on the African American community.

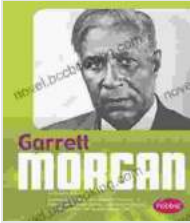
Morgan's legacy serves as an inspiration to aspiring inventors and innovators, demonstrating that with hard work and ingenuity, it is possible to achieve great things and make a positive difference in the world. His story continues to remind us of the importance of recognizing and celebrating the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances.

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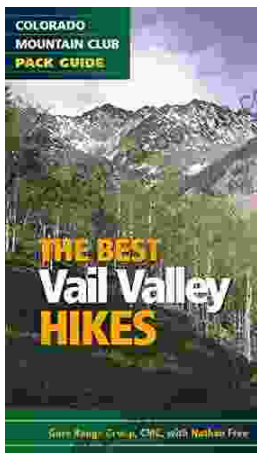
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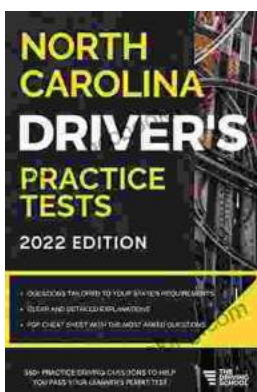


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