Garrett A. Morgan.

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Inventor

- **Born:** March 4, 1877
- **Birthplace:** Paris, Kentucky
- **Died:** August 27, 1963
- **Place of death:** Cleveland, Ohio

Garrett Morgan, an African American inventor , was born in Paris, Kentucky.

He attended school in Cleveland, Ohio, and is now recognized as the inventor of a type of gas mask and a type of traffic light.

Morgan was first acknowledged for his creation of his gas mask, or respiratory hood, on July 25, 1916, when there was a gas explosion in a water works tunnel extending under Lake Erie, trapping more than two dozen men inside as gas and smoke filled the space. It appeared impossible for rescue crews to descend into the tunnel until someone suddenly recalled Morgan's invention. He was called to the scene and, with the aid of two volunteers, all wearing Morgan's gas masks, they descended into the tunnel and were able to save several of the men.

This heroic performance resulted in the city of Cleveland awarding Morgan a gold medal for bravery, and demand increased for his breathing apparatus.

After this event, Morgan went back to work, and in 1922 he created a type of traffic signal for the automobile. He then sold his rights to General Electric for $40,000. The device was put into production, and allowed for the safer, more orderly movement of automobiles in many cities.

Morgan's Inventions Include:

- gas mask
- automatic traffic light

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By Phyllis Barkas Goldman
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Books

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