Garrett Morgan and the Traffic Signal

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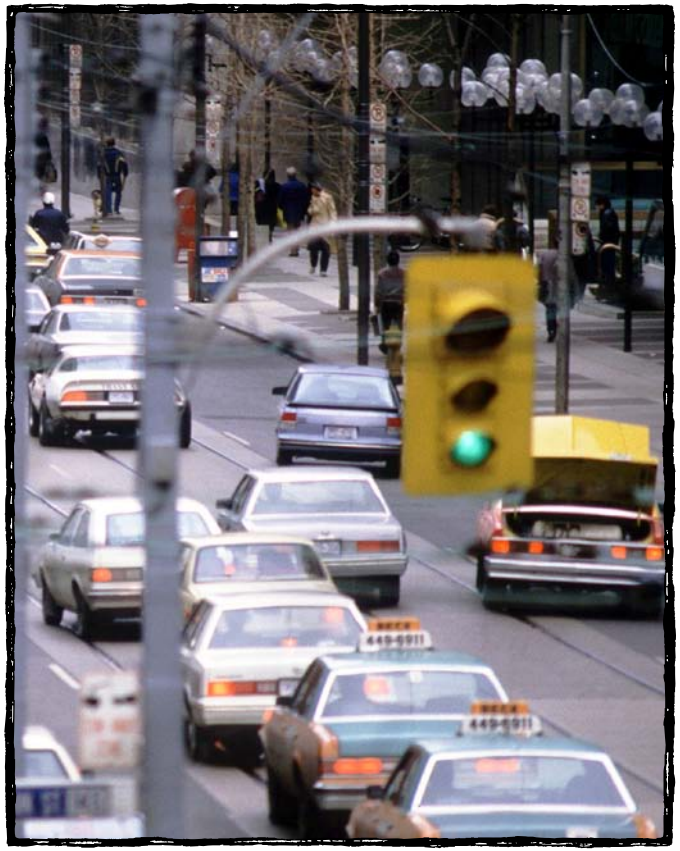

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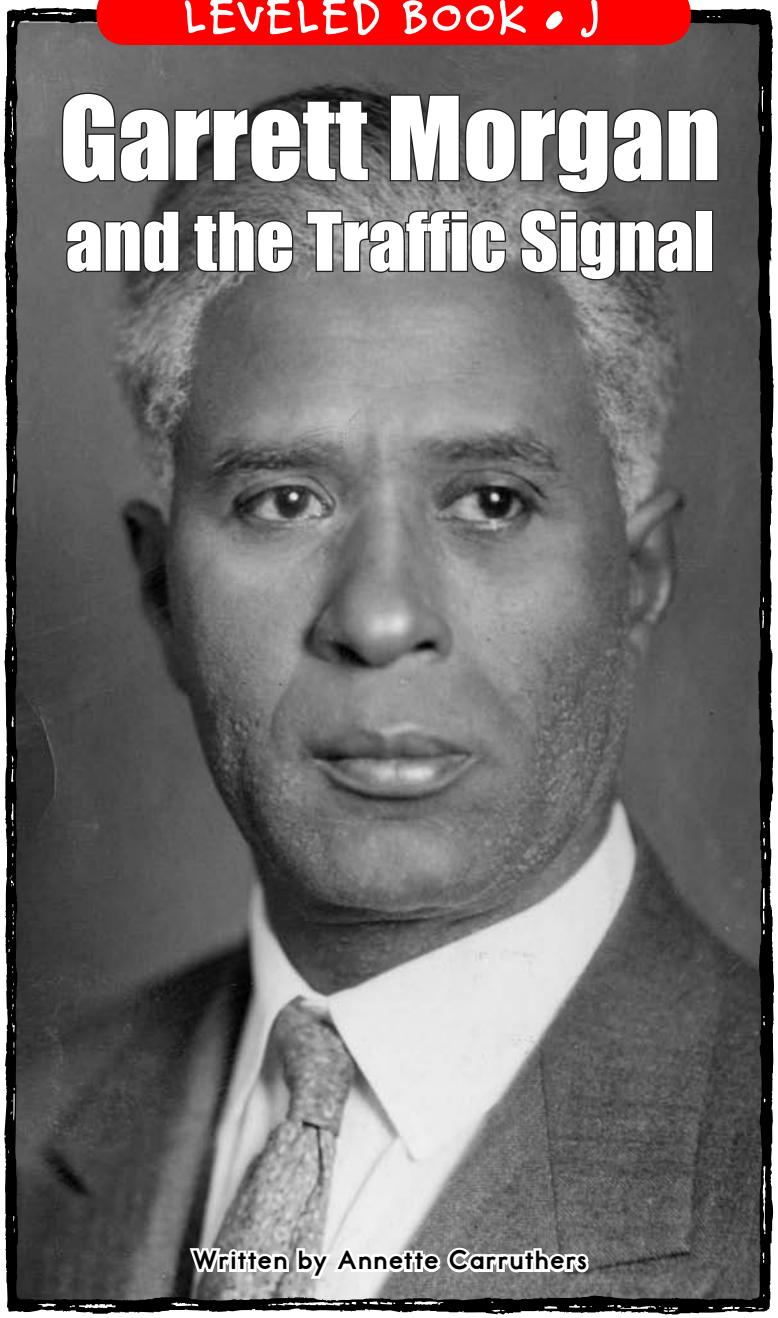

Written by Annette Carruthers

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and the Traffic Signal

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Title page: A crowd looks at new traffic signals in New York City in 1929.

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Level J Leveled Book
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Correlation

LEVEL J	
Fountas & Pinnell	J
Reading Recovery	17
DRA	18

Table of Contents

Traffic Problems 4

Making a Plan 7

The Traffic Signal 9

The Man with the Plan 13

Glossary. 16

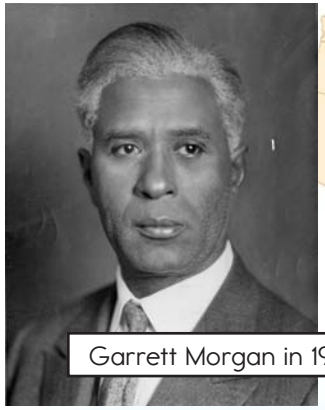
Cars and buggies shared streets in many cities.

Traffic Problems

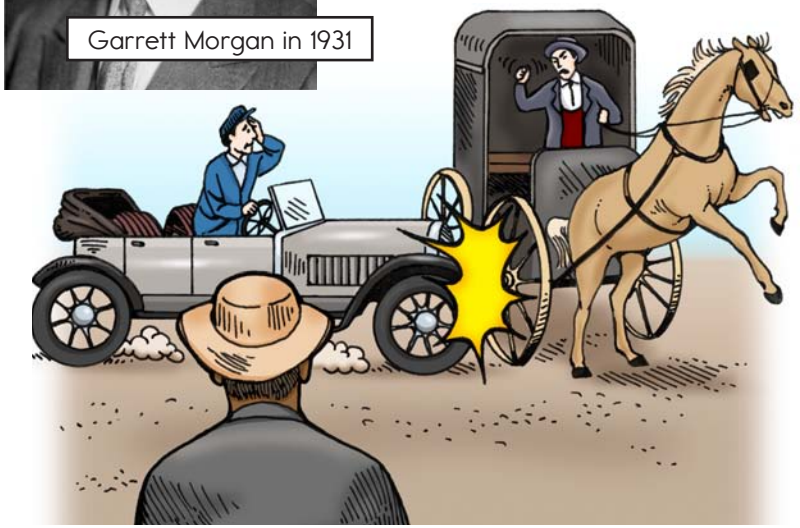
In the 1920s, the streets were getting very **busy**.

Many things shared the streets.

Cars were on the streets.
Horses and **buggies** were
on the streets.
People and bikes were
on the streets, too.



Garrett Morgan in 1931



A man named Garrett Morgan lived
in Cleveland, Ohio.
He saw a car on the street hit
a horse and buggy.
He saw that the streets
were not safe.

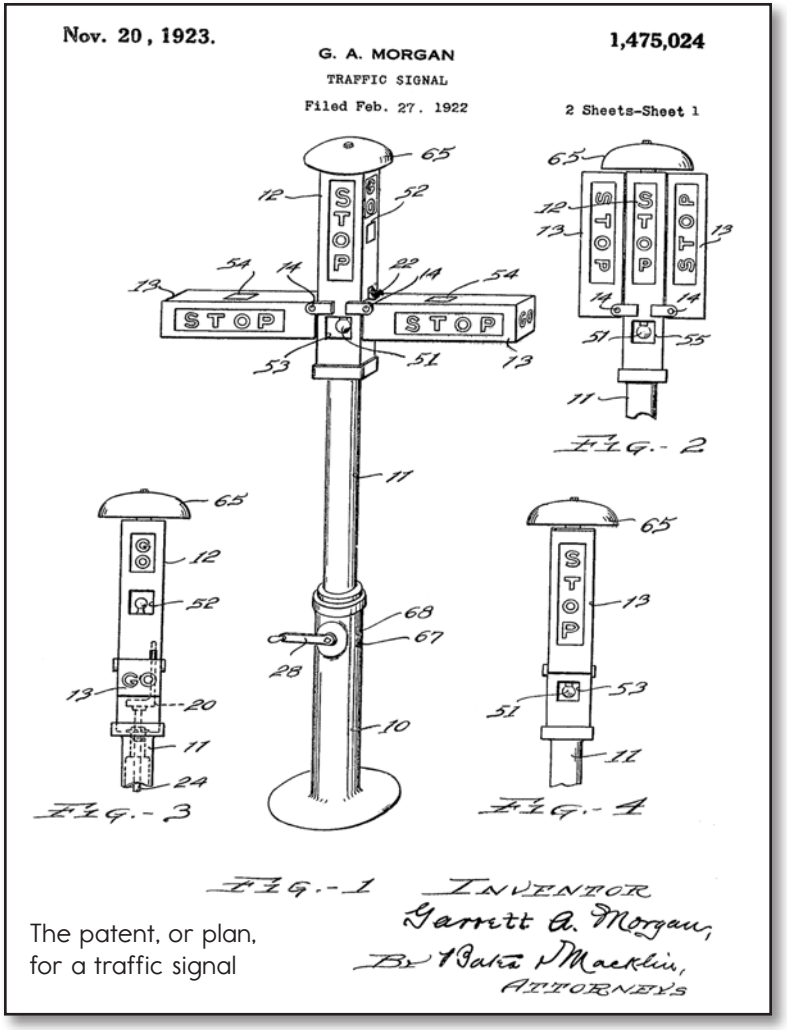
A police officer tries to keep traffic moving.

Making a Plan

Each day more **traffic** was on the streets.

Mr. Morgan knew there would be more traffic **problems**.

He thought about how to solve these problems.

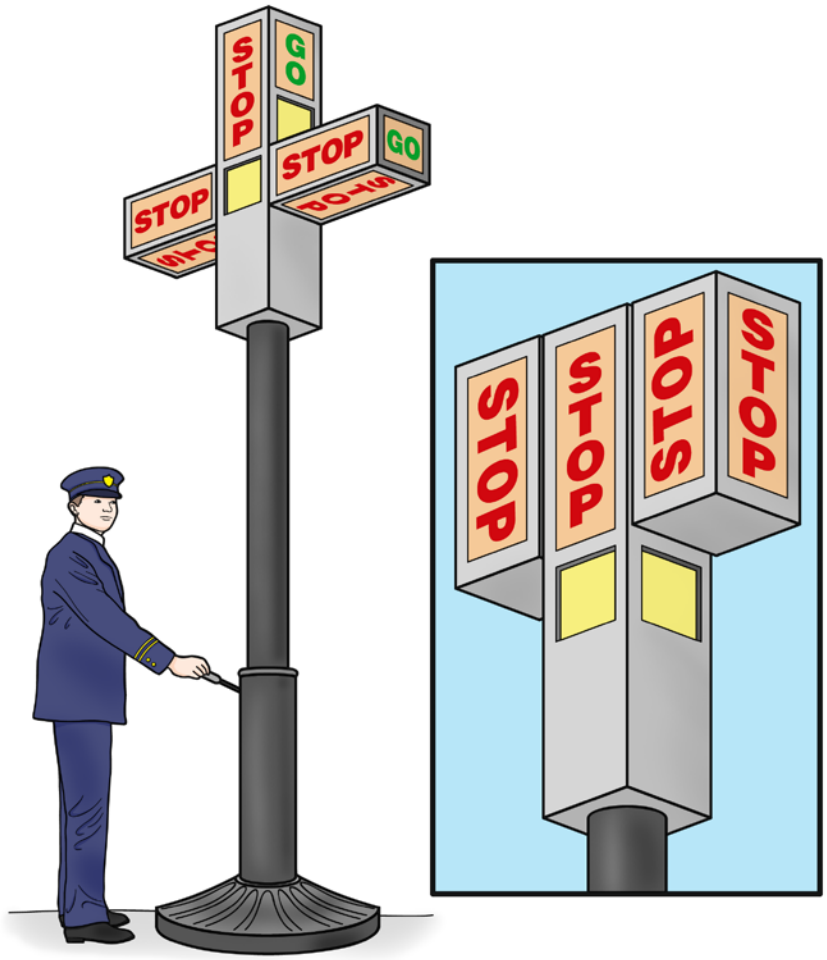


The patent, or plan, for a traffic signal

Mr. Morgan knew Cleveland needed a way to help the traffic.

He thought about how to do this.

He made a **plan** for a traffic **signal**.



This drawing shows how the traffic signal worked.

The Traffic Signal

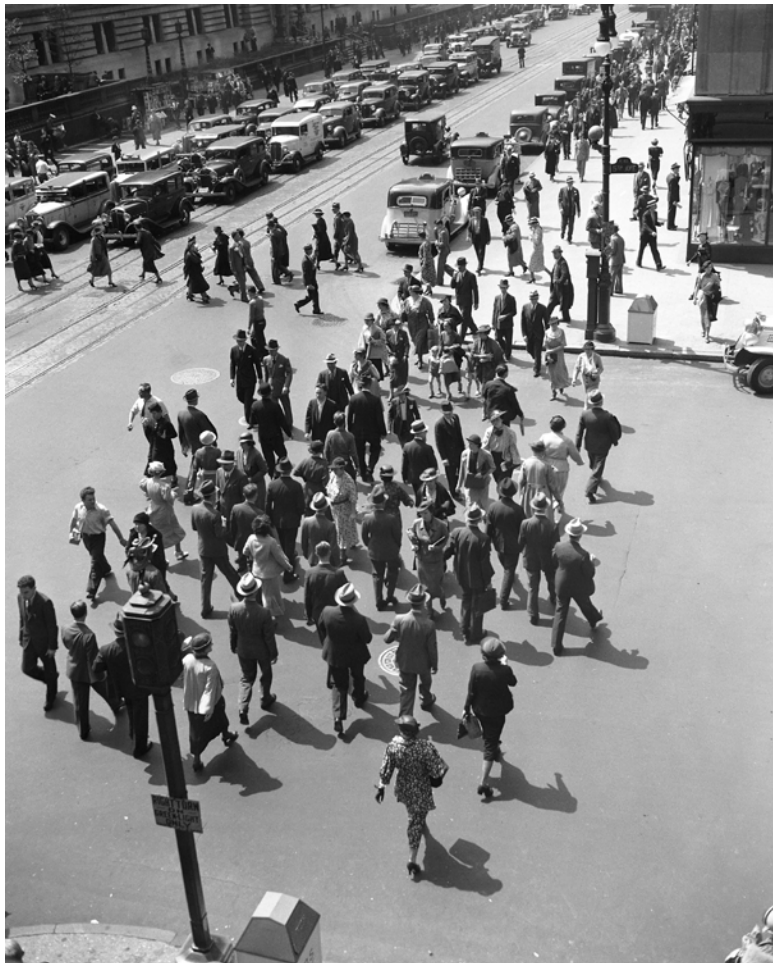
The traffic signal had arms.

The arms went up and down.

Later, traffic signals used lights.

The lights told traffic when to stop

and when to go.



People walk across the street when traffic is stopped by a signal.

Mr. Morgan's traffic signal could
also stop all traffic.
Then it was safe for people
to cross the street.

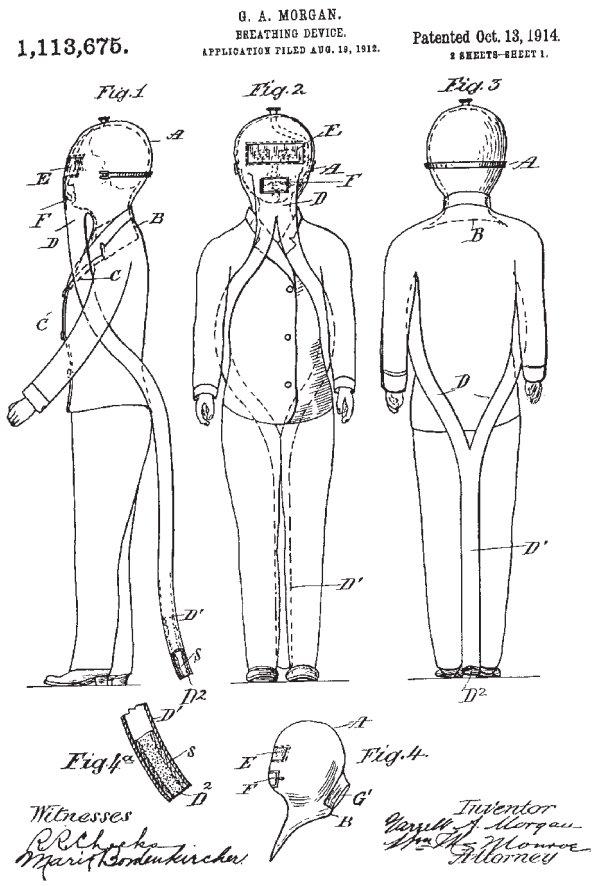
New York's busy 34th Street

The traffic signal was put
on street **corners**.
It was easy to make traffic stop
and go at corners.
Mr. Morgan's plan worked!

Garrett Morgan in 1945

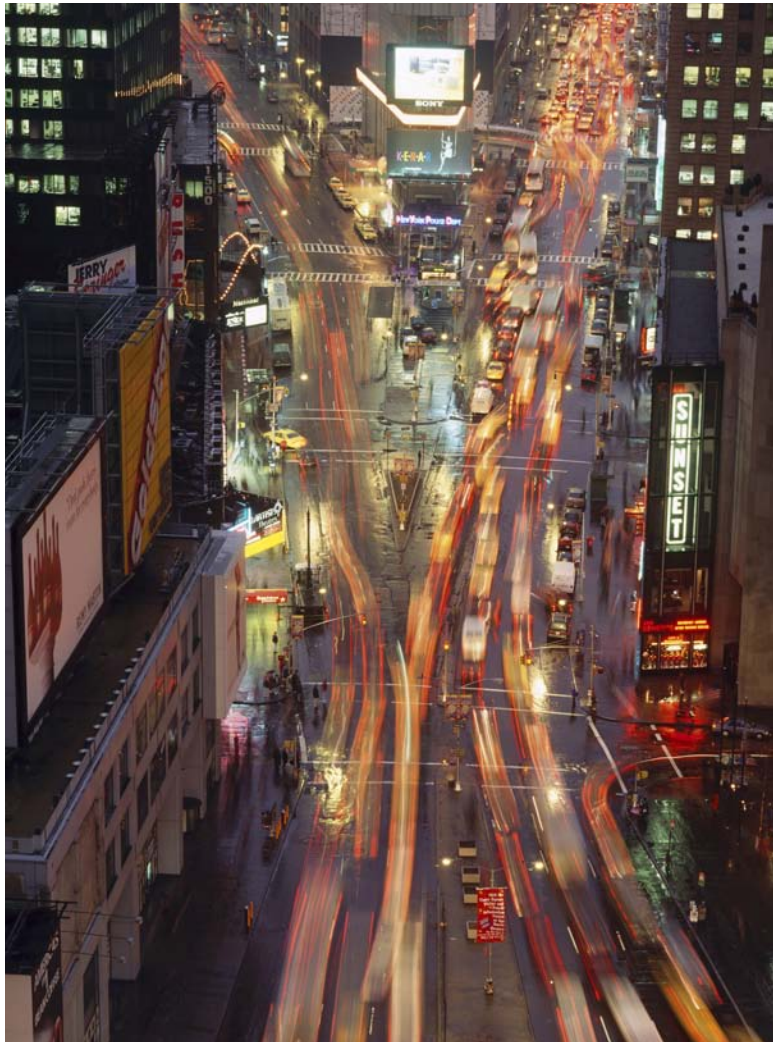
The Man with the Plan

Garrett Morgan made the streets safe for people, cars, and horses and buggies.



Garrett Morgan's patent, or plan, for a firefighter's mask

Mr. Morgan also made other things. He made a mask to help keep firefighters safe.
He also started a newspaper in Cleveland.



Today, city streets are busier than ever.

Mr. Morgan was a problem solver.
He saw a problem.
He looked for a way to solve it.

Glossary

buggies carts with wheels, pulled by one horse, that can carry a person (p. 5)

busy full of activity (p. 4)

corners the places where two streets meet (p. 12)

plan a way of making or doing something (p. 8)

problems things that are hard to work out or solve (p. 7)

signal an action, sound, or object used to send a message (p. 8)

traffic the movement of people or things along a street (p. 7)