**Charles Brooks  
Paper punch, 1893; street sweeper, 1896**

In 1893, Charles Brooks, an African-American inventor of Newark, New Jersey patented an early paper punch. It could be used to punch holes in train tickets and had a built-in container that collected the round circles punched out. That way, there was no litter on the train floor.

Charles also created improvements to the street sweeper trucks that cleaned the city streets. He received a patent for these improvements on March 17, 1896. The Brooks truck had revolving brushes attached to the front fender. The brushes were interchangeable with scrapers that could be used in winter for snow removal. He invented a wheel drive for the automatic turning of the brushes and for powering a lifting mechanism for the scrapers. Charles Brooks also designed an improved trash container to store the collected garbage and litter.