

Charles B. Brooks

“Invented the Street Sweep in 1890”

“If you could imagine the days where a man would manually have to sweep the streets with a long horizontal head broom, shovel and dustpan, one would quickly surmise that this invention was not only a time saver but also extremely economical. Historically, prior to Brooks' truck, streets were commonly cleaned by walking workers, picking up by hand or broom, or by horse-drawn machines. Brooks' truck had brushes attached to the front fender that pushed trash to the curb.

There was less manual labor, less down time as we know what sweeping can do to one's back. Well, a man by the name It was a towed attachment with a built-in rotating brush wheel. Charles Brooks actually decided to improve on the sweeper design of C.S. Bishop, from Pennsylvania, who is credited with having invented the first street sweeper on September 4, 1849. Because Bishop's sweeper was a tow-behind machine, Brooks decided he could make the job a lot easier. As far as Brooks was concerned, the regular way of cleaning the streets was too daunting and not very cost-effective. So, he decided to create a sort of broom – or sweeper – and attach this device to a truck. Hence the concept was born of the 'street sweeper truck.' This was the first time a machine was built that looked more like what is used today.

Brooks patent was approved on March 17th, 1896; his application for the patent was filed on April 20, 1895. The street sweeper could best be described as a truck frame mounted on the axles which are

supported by front and rear wheels. There are drive-wheels for the sweeping, elevator mechanisms, and an endless chain that travels around a sprocket-wheel and travels up to an additional sprocket-wheel. There is a squared shaft, which is mounted at opposite ends in bearings in the upper parts of a pair of vertical standards consisting of the back or rear parts of the truck-frame and then sustained by braces, which extend from the standards to the truck-frame.

The patent drawings go on to explain the complete composition of the invention. For those who are lost on the technical terms, above, here it is in layman terms: The truck had brushes attached to the front fender which would revolve. These revolving brushes could interchange to a flat scraper that could be used in the winter months for snow and ice."

Source: World Sweeper

Information Link:

<https://www.worldsweeper.com/History/BrooksSweeper.html>

Patent Link:

<https://patents.google.com/patent/US556711A/en?q=US556711>