

# **First Black Autos**

## **The Charles Richard "C.R." Patterson & Sons Company African-American Automobile Manufacturer of Patterson-Greenfield Motor Cars, Buses and Trucks**

### **Electronic Press Kit**

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**\*\* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \*\***

## **New Book on First African-American Automotive Pioneers**

### **C.R. Patterson & Sons Company Credited with Being First African-American Automobile Manufacturers in United States**

MOUNT VERNON, N.Y. - In First Black Autos (Stalwart Publications), retired New York City educator Henry May illustrates the struggles and triumphs of Greenfield, Ohio's Patterson family and traces the story of America's first African-American automobile manufacturer.

The book examines the life of Charles Richard "C.R." Patterson, an escaped slave who traveled from West Virginia to the "free state" of Ohio. C.R.'s blacksmithing skills brought him financial success and he eventually launched his own company, C.R. Patterson & Sons, manufacturing carriages and horse-drawn vehicles. His son Frederick Douglas Patterson led the company into a new era after C.R.'s death with the design and manufacturing of the first Patterson-Greenfield sports coupe in 1915.

Henry May describes the Patterson family's efforts to operate a racially diverse business during segregation, and the difficulties endured from evolving national automotive standards and by competition from automaker Henry Ford. Mr. May takes the existing documentation and facts regarding that era and creates a cohesive picture for the reader.

First Black Autos grew from family research. Mr. May's mother, the late Ernestine May would recount tales of her youth, traveling from Tuskegee, Alabama with her mother to Greenfield, OH to visit Aunt Estalene (Frederick Patterson's wife). As children they would play in and around the Patterson automobile factory. It was Mr. May's curiosity and inability to find cohesive information available on these incredible pioneers that resulted in First Black Autos.

An invaluable resource for people interested in American automotive history and African-American "firsts", First Black Autos is AVAILABLE NOW for purchase at:

[www.stalwartpublications.homestead.com](http://www.stalwartpublications.homestead.com)

**TITLE:** *First Black Autos: The Charles Richard "C.R." Patterson & Sons Company / African American Automobile Manufacturer of Patterson-Greenfield Motor Cars, Buses and Trucks*

**AUTHOR:** Henry A. May      **PUBLICATION MONTH:** Dec. 2006      **ISBN:** 987-0-615-14771-03      **PRICE:** \$20.00

**SPECS:** 72 pages, paperback, 6" x 9"      **WEBSITE:** [www.stalwartpublications.homestead.com](http://www.stalwartpublications.homestead.com)

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*\*\* Whenever possible, please send up to two tearsheets of any review and/or mention to:  
Stalwart Publications, Ltd. c/o AM Media Group II, Inc., 616 E. Lincoln Ave, Suite C-32, Mt. Vernon, NY 10552*



## About Henry A. May

Author of:

First Black Autos: The Charles Richard "C.R." Patterson & Sons Company / African American Automobile Manufacturer of Patterson-Greenfield Motor Cars, Buses and Trucks

Henry A. May is a retired educator and reading curriculum specialist who served in the New York City public school system for over thirty years. First Black Autos is his first book, chronicling the struggles and successes of his distant relatives, Greenfield, Ohio's Patterson family, credited as America's first African-American automotive pioneers.

Mr. May was born in Queens, NY during the Great Depression and raised in Harlem surrounded by the arts in his community and in his home. He is a graduate of New York University, has served in the United States Army and is a Korean War veteran. Mr. May is active in his community of Mount Vernon, NY. He is a Board Member of the Audubon-BRASS society and a founding member of the Mount Vernon Parent and Community Forum on Education - a grassroots parent involvement organization.

"Writing has always been a form of personal expression and stress relief for me," says Henry. "When I decided to write a memoir entitled Walk Awhile With Me... on the life of my mother, *Sweethearts of Rhythm* swing band pianist and composer Ernestine May, I joined the dynamic Martin Simmons Writers Workshop at the Frederick Douglas Creative Arts Center in Manhattan to further develop my writing skills." There he was encouraged and challenged by published poets and authors including the late Martin Simmons, Jaira Placide and Quincy Troupe who questioned and critiqued his work.

One workshop session in particular planted a seed for what would become Henry May's first major work. While reading aloud a chapter on Ernestine's childhood, Henry mentioned "travels north from dusty Alabama to Greenfield, Ohio... we would stay with our aunt and spend our days playing in the car factory." This tidbit resonated with many of the writers. "A Black car manufacturer? I've never heard of such a thing! Tell us more!" Henry took a detour from his mother's memoir and began to gather facts and information about the Patterson family. Few could be found. Realizing there was no existing book or resource on the topic, Henry accepted a challenge from the writers group to create one, and First Black Autos was born.

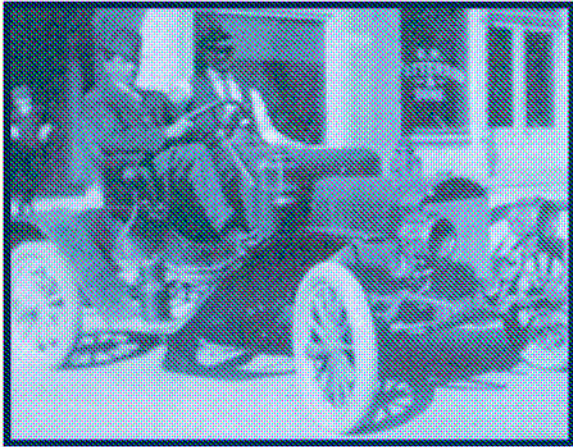
For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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# *First Black Autos*



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Charles Richard "C.R." Patterson & Sons Company

African-American Automobile Manufacturer  
of  
Patterson-Greenfield  
Motor Cars, Buses and Trucks

By Henry A. May

"This is a story of Black achievement – a story of that inner fortitude which enables one to survive and overcome incredible obstacles, and of perseverance..."

This is the story of C.R. Patterson, an escaped slave, and his family, the first African-American pioneers in the automotive industry. "

- HENRY A. MAY

retired educator and author of  
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FIRST BLACK AUTOS

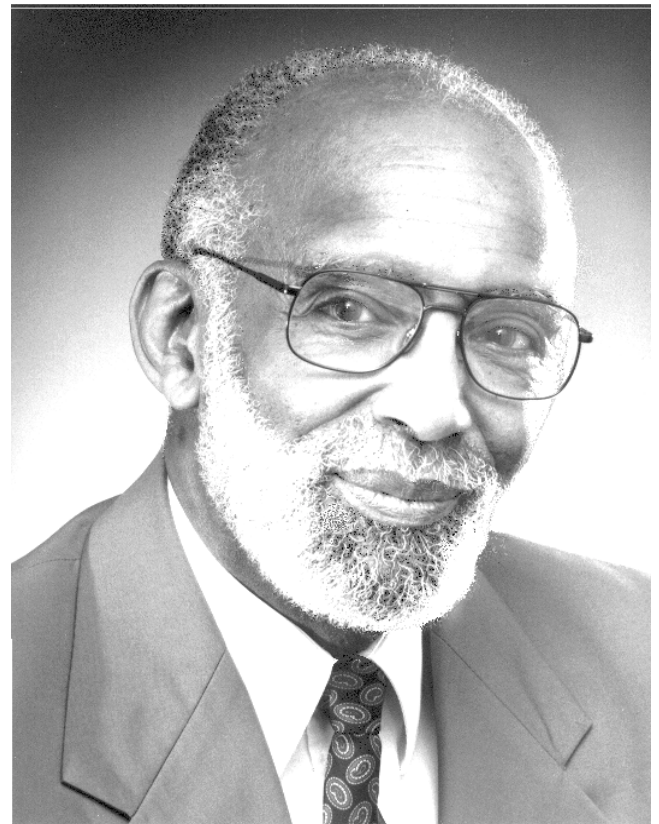
*by*

HENRY A. MAY

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127 East Cedar Street - Mount Vernon, NY 10552

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS for Henry A. May  
Author of *FIRST BLACK AUTOS*

- **What is your professional background? OR How long have you been an educator?**
- **What was the inspiration for / why did you decide to write this book, and how did you decide to approach it the way you did?**
- **What is your connection to the Patterson family?**
- **WHO did you write your book for? OR What type of person should buy your book?**
- **Do you have any plans for additional books, and if so, what will be the topic?**
- **When is the book available in stores / online? Where can people buy it?**

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