

J. Presper Eckert, Jr Encyclopedia Article

J. Presper Eckert, Jr

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J. Presper Eckert, Jr

1913-1995

American electrical engineer who is credited with co-inventing the first electronic computer. J. Presper Eckert, Jr. graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's Moore School of Electrical Engineering with a degree in electrical engineering in 1941. At Moore, he became fascinated with his professor John Mauchly's (1907-1980) ideas of building a computer. In 1943, Eckert began work on an electronic digital computer for the United States government. His enormous ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) weighed 30 tons (27 metric tons) and filled an entire room. The computer performed high-speed calculations, and became the precursor to all modern-day computers. Eckert and Mauchly also designed the BINAC (Binary Automatic Computer) and UNIVAC I (Universal Automatic Computer).