Harold Stephen Black Encyclopedia Article

Harold Stephen Black

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Contents

Harold Stephen Black Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Harold Stephen Black.....3

Harold Stephen Black

1898-1983

American electrical engineer who revolutionized the telecommunications industry with his method of eliminating distortion in amplification. Harold Stephen Black was born in Leominster, Massachusetts. He graduated from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1921, and several years later received an honorary doctorate in engineering from Worcester Tech. After graduation, he accepted a job with the Western Electric Company, the forerunner of Bell Telephone Laboratories. While there, he discovered the principles for his negative-feedback amplifier, which fed systems output back into the input, producing amplification virtually without distortion. His principles were later used in telephones, radar, weaponry, and electronics.