William Henry Eccles Encyclopedia Article

William Henry Eccles

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William Henry Eccles

1875-1966

English physicist and engineer best known for pioneering work in radio communication. To explain Marconi's transatlantic radio transmissions, Oliver Heaviside postulated an upper atmospheric layer capable of reflecting radio waves (1902). Eccles demonstrated how upper atmospheric ionization could produce this "Heaviside layer" and how diurnal variations in radio wave propagation could be accounted for by solar radiation (1912). He investigated effects of atmospheric disturbances on reception and developed various radio wave detectors and amplifiers.