



# Charles Babbage: Pioneer of the Computer

*Anthony Hyman*

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# Charles Babbage: Pioneer of the Computer

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## **Charles Babbage: Pioneer of the Computer** Anthony Hyman

This book discusses the career of Charles Babbage (1791-1871), British advocate of the systematic use of science in industry and creator of machines that were precursors of the modern computer. Babbage used his immense personal charm and vitality in an attempt to change the thinking of contemporary industrialists who had little use for the higher reaches of science. Shifting his own energies from pure mathematics, he planned engines that would "calculate by steam": the Difference Engines, designed to compute tables according to the method of finite differences, and the more complex Analytical Engines, forerunners of the modern computer.

Almost forgotten and then rediscovered in the middle of the twentieth century, the Analytical Engines are among the great intellectual achievements of humankind. This biography of their polymathic inventor gives a convincing account of his tragic personal life and his important place in the history of science.

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