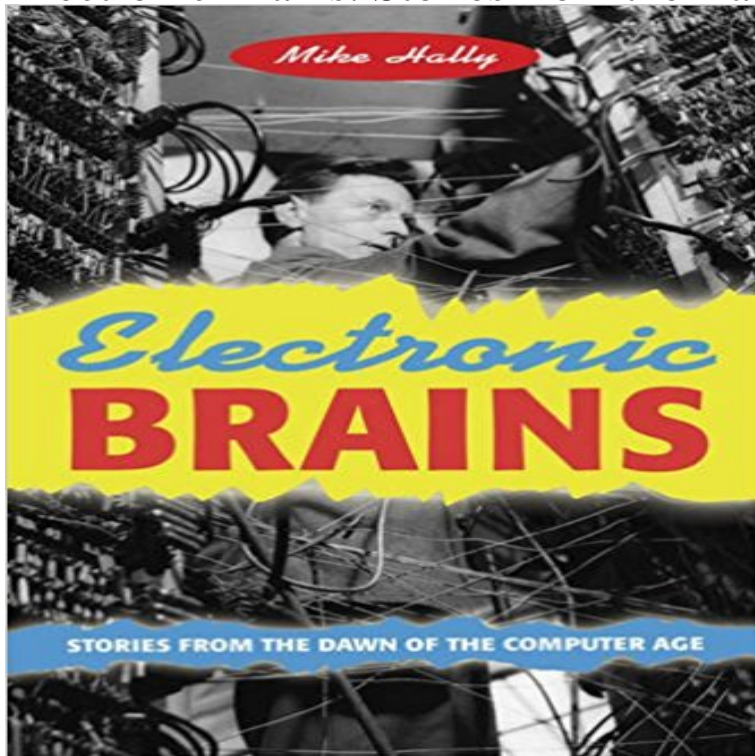


## Electronic Brains: Stories from the Dawn of the Computer Age



We've come so far, so fast. Within a relatively short period of time, we've managed to put enormous computing power in offices and homes around the globe. But before there was an IBM computer, before there were laptops and personal PCs, there were small independent teams of pioneers working on the development of the very first computer. Scattered around the globe and ranging in temperament and talent, they forged the future in basement labs, backyard workshops, and old horse barns. Tracing the period just after World War II when the first truly modern computers were developed, *Electronic Brains* chronicles the escapades of the world's first techies. Some of the initial projects are quite famous and well known, such as LEO, the Lyons Electronic Office, which was developed by the catering company J. Lyons & Co. in London in the 1940s. Others are a bit more arcane, such as the ABC, which was built in a basement at Iowa State College and was abandoned to obscurity at the beginning of WWII. And then - like the tale of the Rand 409 which was constructed in a barn in Connecticut under the watchful eye of a stuffed moose - there are the stories that are virtually unknown. All combine to create a fascinating history of a now-ubiquitous technology. Relying on extensive interviews from surviving members of the original teams of hardware jockeys, author Mike Hally recreates the atmosphere of the early days of computing. Rich with provocative and entertaining descriptions, we are introduced to many eccentric, obsessive, and fiercely loyal men and women who laid the foundations for the computerized world in which we now live. As the acronyms fly fast and furious - UNIVAC, CSIRAC, and MESM, to name just a few - *Electronic Brains* provides a vivid sense of time, place, and science.

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