

GENETICS

# FREDERICK SANGER R.I.P.

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## Frederick Sanger

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Frederick Sanger**, OM, CH, CBE, FRS, FAA /'sæŋər/ (13 August 1918 – 19 November 2013) was a British biochemist who won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry twice, the only person to have done so. In 1958 he was awarded a Nobel prize in chemistry "for his work on the structure of proteins, especially that of insulin". In 1980, [Walter Gilbert](#) and Sanger shared half of the chemistry prize "for their contributions concerning the determination of base sequences in nucleic acids". The other half was awarded to [Paul Berg](#) "for his fundamental studies of the biochemistry of nucleic acids, with particular regard to recombinant-DNA".

He was the fourth person to have been awarded two Nobel Prizes, either individually or in tandem with others.

Frederick Sanger



**Born** 13 August 1918  
Rendcomb, Gloucestershire, England  
**Died** 19 November 2013 (aged 95)<sup>[1]</sup>

There has been so much written about Frederick Sanger (see [nobelprize.org](#) or [Sanger Centre](#) itself) while I like most what he wrote himself in [Annual Reviews 1988](#):

These prefatory chapters are usually accounts of biochemists' experiences in research, teaching, and administration. In my case the last two are easily dealt with as I have done hardly any and have indeed actively tried to avoid both teaching and administrative work. This was partly because I thought I would be no good at them, but also out of selfishness. I do not enjoy them, whereas I find research most enjoyable and rewarding.

Sydney Brenner, another British nobel laureate (2002) [thinks](#):

A Fred Sanger would not survive today's world of science. With continuous reporting and appraisals, some committee would note that he published little of import between insulin in 1952 and his first paper on RNA sequencing in 1967 with another long gap until DNA sequencing in 1977. He would be labeled as unproductive, and his modest personal support would be denied. We no longer have a culture that allows individuals to embark on long-term—and what would be considered today extremely risky—projects.

Sanger remains one of my heroes – the only scientist from whom I possess an autograph, bought a decade ago on Ebay.

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