

1962

DR CRICK 'SMUGGLED' INTO CAIUS

NOBEL THEORY WAS DISCUSSED IN 'PUB'

DR. FRANCIS CRICK said yesterday that most of the early work for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine was discussed with Dr. James Watson, an American scientist, in a Cambridge publichouse.

"At the time I shared an office with Watson in the Cavendish Laboratory working for a thesis on a different subject," he said. "We were put in an office together so that our talk would not disturb anyone else."

Dr. Crick worked with Dr. Watson for two years.

"The crucial part of this work was done in two months," he said.

Practical Side

While Dr. Crick and Dr. Watson theorised on the manner in which genetic "information" is impressed upon germ cells of parents and transmitted to succeeding generations, Dr. Maurice Wilkins, now Deputy Director of the Medical Research Council's biophysics research unit at King's College, London, was working on the practical side.

All three were named yesterday as joint winners of the prize, worth 257,219 Swedish crowns, or about £17,730.

In an interview yesterday, Dr. Crick said he was going to Stockholm to receive the prize from King Gustav of Sweden.

Money Problem

"I am sure my wife will come with me, but I am not sure whether my two daughters will accompany us," he said.

"I am sure I don't know what I shall do with the money. I haven't thought about it yet. I haven't even decided what to do with the money I was awarded last month."

He was referring to the £9,000 Gairdner Foundation Prize earlier in October. He also won a £4,600 prize last year, and £880 the previous year.

Dr. Crick began his career as a physicist and spent seven years from 1940 to 1947 in the Admiralty, designing the "brains" of magnetic and acoustic mines.

At the age of 30 he decided to

change his subject to biology. "By the time one is 30, one usually has some sort of reputation, but I couldn't see that I was going to get much further making weapons," he explained.

Other Work

Dr. Crick worked for two years at the Strangeways Laboratory, Cambridge. In 1949 he went to the Cavendish Laboratory and began working with Dr. Watson.

"For a long time we talked over lunch in a Cambridge pub. When I had finished my thesis on another subject I stuck this in a folder as 'other work done.'

"I wouldn't say this was hard work. It was mainly theorising, there were no long hours of laboratory work—nothing dramatic."

Dr. Crick's appearance at Cambridge caused him a few difficulties.

No Tutor

"I came up on a Medical Research Council studentship," he said. "I used to 'pirate' a few lectures and a friend smuggled me into Caius College. Eventually they granted me limited dining rights."

"But it wasn't until I sat at the High Table that someone remembered I ought to have a tutor. So at every cocktail party we went to, another chap used to pretend he was my tutor."

The announcement of the award yesterday came nine years after Dr. Crick completed his theory.

In the afternoon his office was swamped with congratulatory calls. Dr. Crick also met most of the staff.

Open House

"Unfortunately it was half closing day and we couldn't get any champagne," he said.

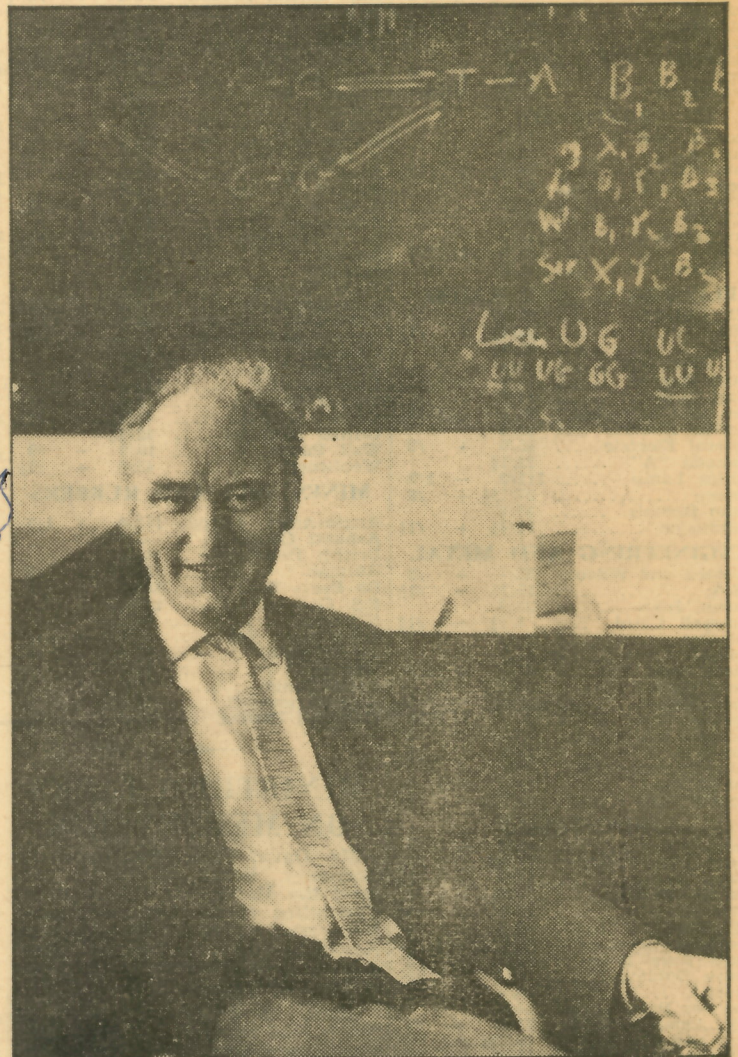
Soon afterwards he issued an invitation to an "open house" party at his home in Portugal Place.

DOCTOR'S HOBBY

DR. CRICK is 46. He was educated at Mill Hill School, University College, London, and Caius College, Cambridge.

He has been married twice and has a son by his first wife, and two daughters by his second wife.

His recreation is listed in "Who's Who" as conversation, especially with pretty women.



Dr. Francis Crick.