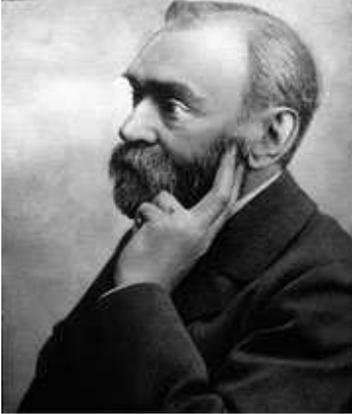


Alfred Nobel



Alfred Nobel

Alfred Nobel was born in Stockholm in 1833. His father Immanuel was an inventor and engineer. His mother Andriette came from a wealthy family. When his father's business went bankrupt he went alone to Russia and became successful in the war industry. After a few years the rest of the family followed behind. Alfred and his brothers were superior training of tutors. At age 17 Alfred spoke five languages: Swedish, Russian, English, French and German.



One of Nobel's old factories in Vinterviken in Stockholm. Photo: Tobias Lund Voice.

Father dismissed Alfred's interest in poetry and sent him to Paris to become a chemist. In Paris he met the Italian Ascanio Sobrero who had invented nitroglycerine, a highly

explosive liquid which was considered too dangerous to be useful. Alfred Nobel returned to Sweden and began experimenting with nitroglycerin. This led to several fatalities. Finally, the Alfred Nobel solution: he mixed the liquid with a special kind of sand. Dynamite was invented.



Bertha von Suttner was Nobel's secretary a time.

Dynamite was in high demand in the construction industry and Nobel started factories in more than 20 countries. He became wealthy and lived a wandering life of work, with homes in Paris, San Remo, Stockholm, Sweden, Germany and Scotland. He became good friends with the Austrian Countess Bertha von Suttner, whose involvement in the peace movement made a deep impression on the Nobel. He never formed a separate family.



The will consists only of one page hand-written text. Photo: Bert Style Ling

Alfred Nobel died December 10, 1896 in San Remo, Italy. There was great excitement when his will was published: Nobel wanted the most of his fortune would be used to reward outstanding contributions in physics, chemistry, medicine / physiology, literature and peace. The will was questioned by disappointed relatives, authorities in several countries - and by the Swedish King Oscar II. After many complicated tours the Nobel Foundation was formed in 1900 and the following year the first prizes were awarded.