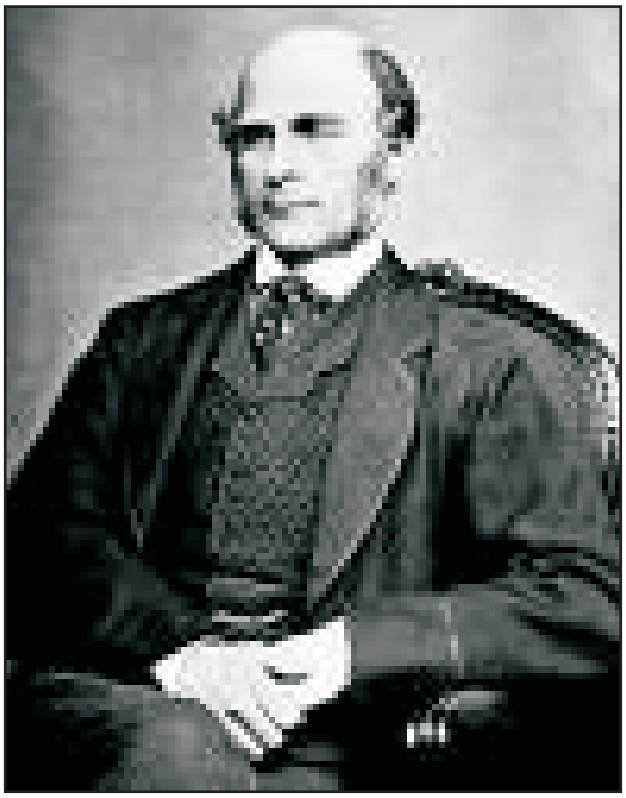
# Francis Galton

**2/16/1822 - 1/17/1911**
**ENGLISH SCIENTIST,**
**EXPLORER, BIOMETRICIAN**



Forensic science has benefited from Galton's pioneering anthropometric research. The system of fingerprinting in use today resulted from his work.

Francis Galton was born is Birmingham, England, the son of Samuel Galton, a businessman, and Vlotetta Galton. After schooling in Boulogne, he began to study medicine in 1838 and also read mathematics at Trinity College, Cambridge.

The death of his father in 1844 he abandoned further medical study to travel, he published Topical South Africa and the Art of Travel (1855). Brought him fame as explorer, and in 1854 he was awarded the Gold Medal of the Geographical Society. He was elected fellow of the Royal Society in 1856.

Galton published Meteorographica in which he described weather mapping, pointing out for the first time the importance of an anticyclone.

Meanwhile, Galton had developed an interest in heredity, Galton made detailed studies of families conspicuous for inherited ability over several generations. These studies laid the foundation for the science of eugenics (a term he invented), or race improvement.

Finding that advances in the study of heredity were being hampered by the lack of information, Galton started anthropometric research, devising instruments for the exact measurement of every quantifiable faculty of body or mind. 1884, he finally set up and equipped the Biometric Laboratory at University College, London. He measured such human traits as of sight and hearing, color sense, reaction time, strength of pull squeeze, and height and weight. The system of fingerprints in universal use today delved from this work.

Galton used his considerable fortune to promote his scientific interests. Founded the journal Biometrika in 1901, 1903 he established the Eugenics Laboratory in the University of London. He died at Haslemere, Surrey, In 1911. He bequeathed $45,000 to found a professorship in eugenics in the hope that his disciple and pupil Karl Pearson might become its first occupant. This hope was realized.