

two terms used in present day genetics: *dominance*, for a trait that shows up in an offspring, and *recessiveness*, for a trait masked by a dominant gene.

Mendel published his findings in 1866, but their full significance was not realized until the late 1920s and the early 1930s.

Elevated as abbot in 1868, his scientific work largely ended as Mendel became consumed with his increased administrative responsibilities, especially a dispute with the civil government over their attempt to impose special taxes on religious institutions.

Mendel read his paper, "Experiments on Plant Hybridization", at two meetings and received plenty of criticism. His experimental results have later been the object of considerable dispute. Mendel showed the laws of inheritance in a simple mathematical ratio. People had thought that characteristics were passed on by chance. In 1865, he proudly announced his findings to the local Natural History Society in Brno, at first Mendel's work was rejected, and no one took any notice. Mendel was very disappointed.

He did make some attempt to contact scientists abroad by sending them reprints of his work but this was a uphill struggle for an unknown author writing in an unknown journal.

In 1874 the government proclaimed a new law relating to the contribution of the cloisters to the religious fund. Mendel refused to pay the high assessed taxes and thus, from the end of 1875, got himself into trouble with the provincial government and with the Ministry of Education in Vienna. The result of this conflict was the lasting sequestration of the landed monasterial property. The long struggle over taxation had a serious effect on Mendel's health.

Mendel lived around the same time as the British naturalist Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882) and many have considered a historical evolutionary synthesis of Darwinian natural selection and Mendelian genetics during their lifetimes.

When died on Jan. 6, 1884, in Brno, Czech Republic, from chronic nephritis, mourned by his fellow monks and the towns people—but unknown to the world of science. His death was without any public recognition of his outstanding scientific achievements. The new abbot of the monastery burned all Mendel's papers. His work lay unrecognised for about 34 years. When a Dutch scientist, also working on heredity, discovered his papers and Mendel's work became famous.