

## THE AMERICAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY— THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS\*

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SOON AFTER the turn of the twentieth century plant pathology began to assume increasing importance in the United States Department of Agriculture and in many of the agricultural colleges and experiment stations. A number of botanists who had been trained primarily as mycologists had gone into this profession and the first departments of plant pathology were being organized. The time was ripe for bringing the plant pathologists together into a national association and awaited only a man with the vision to take the first step. A senior plant pathologist of the Department of Agriculture, Dr. C. L. Shear, had the necessary vision and initiative, and in the summer of 1908 began to discuss the possibilities with his associates in the Bureau of Plant Industry and elsewhere. Finally he called a meeting of the Bureau plant pathologists on December 15, 1908. Here it was agreed to hold a formal organizational meeting in conjunction with the forthcoming convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Baltimore, Maryland, and a committee composed of C. L. Shear, Donald Reddick, and W. A. Orton extended invitations to a number of interested persons to participate.

In response to this call 54 persons met in Baltimore on December 30, 1908, and heard the committee report in part, "It is our opinion that an American Phytopathological Society, placed upon a broad and generous foundation, may be of invaluable aid in promoting the future development of this important and rapidly growing subject in America, and that its influence may be made of international importance." The motion to form such a society

\* In addition to the bibliography, information has been drawn from reports of annual meetings of the American Phytopathological Society, published in each volume, and from personal correspondence with D. Reddick, C. L. Shear, and John A. Stevenson in 1953.

resulted in animated discussion. The doubters thought that such a move was detrimental to the advancement of botanical unity and organization, but the proponents for the new society stoutly maintained that the aims of the proposed organization could be attained only by a separate society and they successfully carried the day by a vote of 32 to 12.

Officers of The American Phytopathological Society thereupon were elected: President, L. R. Jones of the University of Wisconsin; Vice President, A. D. Selby of the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station; Secretary-Treasurer, C. L. Shear of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Councilors, J. B. S. Norton of the University of Maryland and B. M. Duggar of Cornell University. The Council proceeded to draft a constitution and bylaws. It was decided to affiliate and meet annually with the American Association for the Advancement of Science and to cooperate closely with the newly formed Botanical Society of America. Annual dues were set at the munificent sum of 50 cents. Invitations were issued to plant pathologists to become Charter Members. A total of 130 persons accepted.

The first regular annual meeting was held in Boston in conjunction with the A.A.A.S., December 30-31, 1909. Some 50 members attended the meeting, which was considered a great success. A total of 45 papers was presented dealing mainly with diseases of a wide variety of crops. Dues were given their first of many advances and set at one dollar. The most important action taken at this meeting was the authorization for the Council to undertake the publication of a phytopathological journal. The newly elected officers were: President, F. L. Stevens of North Carolina State College; Vice President, A. F. Woods of the University of Minnesota; Secretary-Treasurer, C. L. Shear; and Councilors, L. R. Jones and A. D. Selby, and H. H.



Whetzel of Cornell University. The previous doubting Thomases agreed "that the large membership list, the numerous papers presented, and the great enthusiasm showed by the men had thoroughly convinced them that the organization of the Society was fully justified."

### Growth and membership

On October 25, 1915, The American Phytopathological Society was incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia, "to promote investigation and advancement in plant pathology and coöperation among plant pathologists, to hold meetings for the presentation and discussion of the results of research and investigation, to exchange ideas and experiences and consider methods and means of promoting research, to stimulate and encourage the members, to coöperate in all practical ways with other scientific organizations and agencies for the advancement of science and to publish and encourage the publication of contributions to plant pathology."

From an original 130 members the Society has had a rapid growth, except for marked dips during the depression years of the early 1930's and World War II. Membership had reached a total of 500 by 1919, 1,000 by 1937, and by December, 1957, had attained 1,900. At the time of the Stanford meetings of the American Institute of Biological Sciences in August, 1957, the Society had just passed the American Society for Horticultural Science in total membership, and among the 18 member societies of the A.I.B.S., was exceeded only by the National Association of Biology Teachers and the Botanical Society of America.

In addition to the Charter Members, membership in the Society presently includes Regular or Annual, Student and Emeritus Members, Patrons and Sustaining Associates. Beginning in 1916, "to meet the present needs of the Journal and to provide for the immediate future," the class of Life Members was created whereby the members agreed to pledge \$100 in ten consecutive annual payments; Patrons contributed the total sum in one payment. A number of generous members participated in the plan. However, in 1936 because of changed economic conditions these two classes of membership were discontinued. In 1946 a new class of Patrons was created, whose contribution should be

\$1,000, payable in one sum. Sustaining Associates are industrial firms who contribute at least \$100 annually. There are currently 13 Sustaining Associates. The class of Emeritus Members was initiated in 1949 for members of at least 20 years' standing who would retain all rights and privileges but be exempt from dues. At present there are 20. The most recent class, Student Members, to encourage and aid senior and graduate students with reduced dues was started in 1953 and has been enlarged to include enlisted personnel of the armed forces. There are presently 256 Student Members.

Since the founding of the Society the United States Department of Agriculture, Cornell University, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Minnesota, and the University of California have furnished large centers of membership. During the first decade these institutions supplied some 43 per cent of the total membership and even today it is 30 per cent of the total.

### Divisions

From the beginning, provision was made for including geographical divisions within the Society. The first group to avail itself of this provision was on the Pacific coast. In June, 1914, at Davis, California, the Western American Phytopathological Society was organized and in the following year it became the Pacific Division. The area embraced by this oldest division originally was limited to the Pacific slope west of the continental divide including British Columbia. At present its territory includes California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, British Columbia, Alaska, and Hawaii; and at least informally New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming.

The southern plant pathologists organized the Southern Division in 1918. Its membership derives generally from the states of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Meetings of this Division are commonly held in February, in conjunction with the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers.

The Canadian Division likewise was created in 1918. It played an active part in Society affairs until its dissolution in 1930 upon the



formation of the Canadian Phytopathological Society, with the good wishes of the American Society.

The New England Division was formed in 1941 from an earlier group of "New England Plant Pathologists." In 1946 it expanded to become the present Northeastern Division. In addition to the New England States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, the states of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania are included within its area. Its annual meetings are usually held in late fall.

The Potomac Division held its first annual meeting in 1944. The territory includes the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, northern Virginia, and West Virginia. Meetings are commonly held in February.

The newest Division, formally organized in 1947, is the North Central, which draws its membership from Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. The North Central Division currently holds annual summer meetings without formal papers.

Each division of the parent Society is represented by a Councilor, and abstracts of formal papers presented at divisional meetings are eligible for publication in the Society Journal. When the national Society meets within the area of a Division the two meetings are usually held in conjunction. The geographical areas of divisions need not be mutually limited and may overlap other divisions. For example, Virginia and Kentucky are included in each of two different divisions.

### Phytopathology

"The Society was organized around and for the journal *Phytopathology*" as stated by the first president and chairman of the editorial board. This fact was largely responsible for declining to merge the Society with the newly formed Botanical Society of America. *Phytopathology* was launched with the February issue of 1911 as a bimonthly journal. The Chairman of the Editorial Board was L. R. Jones who was supported by Editors C. L. Shear and H. H. Whetzel, twelve Associate Editors, and Donald Reddick as Business Manager. The title Editor-in-Chief was assumed in 1921. This form of

organization has been continued to date, except that the difference between Editors and Associate Editors gradually diminished in significance and recently all have been designated Editors.

The first article fittingly was a short biography of the founder of modern mycology, Anton de Bary, prepared by the dean of American plant pathologists, Erwin F. Smith. This custom of presenting biographies of noted plant pathologists or mycologists at the beginning of the first issue of each volume was continued for many years. Primarily the Journal has provided members of the Society with an outlet for original research articles and abstracts of papers presented at the annual Society or divisional meetings. Also it now accepts review articles and notes not based on original research.

*Phytopathology* has also aimed for international contacts and in 1924 an "Editor for Europe" was established and "An International Journal" was added as a subtitle to *Phytopathology*. H. M. Quanjer of Wageningen, Holland, served as Editor for Europe until 1943, when this editorship was discontinued. Canadian members, in particular, have contributed articles and occasionally there have been papers from other foreign members. Some 14 per cent of the Society membership is held by foreign members.

The first volume totaled 204 pages and contained 37 papers exclusive of abstracts, reviews, and notes. With Volume 8 in 1918 *Phytopathology* became a monthly journal. Growth was rapid with the first 24 volumes, but the size of Volumes 25 to 41 (1935-51) was more or less static and averaged between 1,100 and 1,200 pages. However, the number of pages per scientific article, exclusive of notes, gradually fell from about 12 at the beginning of this period to between 8 and 9 at the end. The make-up was changed and markedly improved with Volume 42 (1952) into a two-column format with smaller type so that almost double the amount of text could be gotten on one page. The volumes with new format have run to about 725 pages including index and an average of between 3 and 4 pages per scientific paper.

At the St. Louis meeting of 1935, the 25th birthday of *Phytopathology* was fittingly celebrated in a candlelighting ceremony staged in



front of the 25 volumes, while Editor-in-Chief H. B. Humphrey discussed past achievements.

*Phytopathology*, in common with most society journals, has had its share of financial problems but fortunately the Society has met successfully the various crises. From time to time the members have been called on for donations, business procedures have been modified, printers changed, and dues and subscriptions raised. The George Richard Lyman Memorial Fund, named in honor of a devoted past secretary-treasurer and president, was established in 1929 to encourage gifts from members and others in order to provide an endowment for *Phytopathology*. A Sinking Fund also has been built up principally with payments from Life Memberships. More recently a *Phytopathology* Contingency Fund was set up to receive dividends and interest derived from the above funds. In 1951 annual dues and subscriptions were set at \$10.00. A most successful step was made with the change in format, which has been estimated to save at least \$1,000 annually. As a result of these various moves the finances of *Phytopathology* and of the Society in general are in excellent shape.

Perhaps the most significant action concerning the policies of *Phytopathology* was that initiated at the Memphis meeting of 1950. In a resolution it was pointed out that some 80 per cent or more of the membership dues in most scientific societies are required for the publication of their journal. Furthermore, it was stated that the institutions concerned should be primarily responsible for financing the publication of the results of their own research. The resolution was given wide circulation and the Society adopted a system of assessing institutions for reprints of articles published in *Phytopathology* that would meet a small portion of the cost of printing the journal. Other societies are following suit and it is hoped that this logical arrangement will become general.

Abstracts of papers presented at the annual or at the divisional meetings have posed problems for the Abstract Committee and Editor-in-Chief as regards acceptable content. A few times action was taken to discontinue their publication in *Phytopathology* but such actions were later revoked on the grounds that abstracts provide a valuable source of information on current work and a preview of papers to come.

The *Phytopathological Classics* were initiated in 1926. These consist of translations of important classical articles issued from time to time independently of *Phytopathology*. To date nine classics have been published and a tenth is in preparation.

A short *News* sheet was issued separately beginning in June, 1948, and in January, 1951, it was promoted to a place among the advertising pages of *Phytopathology*. The *News* has filled a real need and because of its interest probably is the first matter read by many members upon opening the pages of a new issue of *Phytopathology*.

Currently plans are under way to issue a series of *Phytopathological Reviews* and *Phytopathological Monographs*.

### Meetings

The Society is portrayed most vividly to the members at the annual meetings and the first Council rightly gave considerable attention to the planning for meetings. It was decided to meet annually during the Christmas vacation with Section G (Botanical Sciences) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. This plan was maintained uninterrupted for 33 years or up to and including the meeting in Dallas, Texas, in 1941, immediately after the entry of the United States into World War II. Since then the meeting dates have been somewhat irregular. The one scheduled for New York City in December, 1942, and for which abstracts of papers were received and published, was actually cancelled. Subsequently the Council and War Emergency Committee met in Columbus, Ohio, in February, 1943. The next two annual meetings were held by the Society alone in early December, 1943, and 1944, also in Ohio because of its more or less central location. The Society met again with the A.A.A.S. at St. Louis for the thirty-seventh meeting. However, this meeting had also been postponed until March, 1946.

The meetings of the war years demonstrated certain advantages of meeting at times other than Christmas, and of having meetings alone or with other special groups, such as the Potato Association of America. These kinds of meetings have been continued at intervals. The unique one was that held in August, 1954, at Estes Park, Colorado, in the setting of a western



camp with a record attendance, including wives and children, of over 1,000.

The war also brought out the need for an effective union of the biological sciences comparable to the American Chemical Society and the American Institute of Physics. This culminated in the organization of the American Institute for Biological Sciences in 1947 under the auspices of the National Research Council. On January 1, 1949, the Society joined the A.I.B.S. as a member society. A.I.B.S. meetings are held on university campuses in late August. In 1952 the Society first met with the A.I.B.S. at Cornell University and again the next year at the University of Wisconsin. This was appropriate since these two campuses had led the universities in Society membership for the first three decades. The affiliation with the A.I.B.S. was sufficiently strong to bring the Society finally to the Pacific coast when the annual meeting of 1957 was held at Stanford University, California. The Golden Anniversary meeting of 1958 is also being held with the A.I.B.S. at the University of Indiana.

In the present time of simultaneous meetings and crowded programs it is interesting to note that as early as 1914 this was also considered something of a problem and speakers were limited to a six-minute presentation with five minutes allowed for discussion. Fortunately this problem of scheduling crowded programs should always be with us if we expect to continue as an actively growing society.

Very early there was interest in informal summer meetings in areas where the diseases of special crops could be studied at first hand. The first summer meeting sponsored by the Society was held at Riverhead, Long Island, New York, in 1919 on potato diseases. The following year there was one dealing with apple and peach diseases in the Cumberland and Shenandoah valleys, which include portions of the four states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia. The third summer meeting was held in 1921 at St. Paul, Minnesota, and Fargo, North Dakota, in conjunction with the conference of cereal pathologists. Similar meetings continued more or less regularly until the advent of World War II when they were discontinued by the Society as a whole. However, summer meetings are now being sponsored by some of the divisions.

### Committees

A great many of the activities of the Society necessarily are in the hands of committees, the members of which are usually hard working and virtually unrecognized and unrewarded. From an original of three committees, there are currently 23. In addition a great many have performed their functions and been dissolved. Appropriately one of the newest is the "Fiftieth Anniversary Committee." Several of the present committees have been in existence for over twenty years, namely, Extension, Finances and Investments, Membership, Nomenclature and Classification of Plant Viruses, Phytopathological Classics, and Regulatory Work and Foreign Plant Diseases. The last-named committee has cooperated actively with the government concerning quarantine laws. Additional committees at least ten years old are Collecting and Disseminating New Fungicide Data, Fungicide Colloquium, International Cooperation, Placement, Public Relations, Seed and Plant Material Certification, Teaching, Utilization of Plant Pathologists and Facilities in National Emergencies, and Virus Type Culture Collection. The first-mentioned committee immediately above was originally organized by the Potomac Division. Reports on results with new fungicides have been appearing in the journal *Agricultural Chemicals*.

Several of the older committees now disbanded deserve special mention. During World War I the War Emergency Board was appointed with H. H. Whetzel as chairman and the members designated as commissioners. The Board, while having no governmental authority, nevertheless accomplished valuable results by advisory powers and stimulation and coordination of essential war work in plant pathology. Upon the termination of the war, many of the functions of the board were taken over directly by the Advisory Board of American Plant Pathologists, with G. R. Lyman as first chairman. The members represented the U.S. Department of Agriculture, specified geographical areas of the United States, and Canada. The Advisory Board was active in many matters such as cooperating with the National Research Council and with the Crop Protection Institute and arranging summer meetings and other conferences. Eventually its functions were taken over by the Society Council and other committees. With



the start of World War II a "War Emergency Committee" was organized with representation similar to the World War I Emergency Board. E. C. Stakman was chairman, later to be succeeded by J. G. Leach. Various active subcommittees were also set up and much good war work was accomplished especially concerning the protection, production, and preservation of food supplies. The Committee on Coordination in Seed Treatment Research actively investigated cereal and vegetable seed treatments from 1935 to 1949. In the decade following 1938 the Committee on Standardization of Fungicidal Tests published a number of recommended methods. At the first Council meeting a committee was delegated to report on Common Names for Plant Diseases. The Committee deliberated for a number of years but apparently never published its recommendations, at least in permanent form. Finally there should be mentioned a more recent committee which, with highly commendable zeal, attempted, but failed to find a suitable common name for The American Phytopathological Society itself. The need for this committee was prompted by the general incomprehensibility to the public of our name and such episodes as a letter, otherwise correctly addressed, to the secretary of the "American Psychopathological Society"!

#### Associations with other organizations

Since its founding the Society has maintained very close contacts with the Botanical Society of America. Actually in the early days there was a committee to promote this. For many years the Society has had a representative on the Editorial Committee of the *American Journal of Botany*. Close ties have also been kept with the Mycological Society of America which was founded in 1931, in part through the efforts of a number of active members of the "Phytopath." Society. The Potato Association of America has often held its annual meetings in conjunction with those of the Society even when the Society did not meet with the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Institute of Biological Sciences. The Society, of course, is a member of both of the last two mentioned organizations and is represented on their governing bodies. The Society is also represented on various committees

of the National Research Council, namely, the Agricultural Research Institute, the Division of Biology and Agriculture, and the Food Protection Committee. There is further representation with the Associated Food and Container Institute, the American Type Culture Collection, the Joint Committee on Grasslands Farming, and the American Standards Association, the last being in connection with common names for pest control chemicals.

For a number of years the Society was interested in establishing a Phytopathological Institute and the committee responsible was discontinued only upon the founding in 1924 of the Boyce Thompson Institute which essentially performed the functions envisioned. In cooperation with the National Research Council, the Society played an active role in the founding of the Crop Protection Institute and for many years maintained a close affiliation. Also the Society was intimately interested in the organization of the Tropical Plant Research Foundation under the guidance of W. A. Orton and was subsequently represented on its board. *Biological Abstracts* has been actively supported through representation on the Union of American Biological Society, a forerunner of the A.I.B.S.

Our ties with the Canadian Phytopathological Society were mentioned above. In addition several other national Phytopathological Societies such as those of Mexico and India were organized in part by members or former members of our Society, many of whom had been students in the United States.

#### Charter members and early leaders

In concluding this account of the American Phytopathological Society it is fitting that tribute be paid to those who in the early formative period had faith in the aims and future of the Society. The 130 charter members, whose names are inscribed below, made this beginning possible. Happily 42 are with us to look back on 50 years of achievement; an asterisk is appended to their names.

The early leaders were willing to take responsibilities and assignments and to work hard and effectively for the Society and in so doing to provide inspirational stimulation for their fellows. Among the many, five in particular



may be cited: Cornelius Lott Shear, prime organizer, first and long-time secretary-treasurer, editor, business manager, and president; Lewis Ralph Jones, first president and first editor-in-chief of *Phytopathology*; William Allen Orton, member of the organizing committee, councilor, editor, editor-in-chief, vice president, and president; Donald Reddick, member of the organizing committee, first business manager of *Phytopathology*, editor-in-chief, councilor, and president; and Herbert Hice Whetzel, councilor, editor, chairman of World War I Emergency Board, and president.

In his *History of Phytopathology*, Professor Whetzel stated, "The establishment of this society . . . and the journal it publishes has done more to stimulate and unify the phytopathologic work and workers of this country than any other one thing."

The first fifty years of The American Phytopathological Society are past and a matter of record of which we are justly proud. It falls now to the present members of the Society to carry forward these ideals and successes, to keep abreast of the future and to interpret its demands.

#### Charter Members

- 1909
- \* Ames, Adelina
  - Arthur, J. C.
  - Bain, S. M.
  - Ball, O. M.
  - \* Ballard, W. S.
  - \* Barre, H. W.
  - \* Barrett, J. T.
  - \* Barrus, M. F.
  - Beckwith, T. D.
  - Bessey, Chas. E.
  - Bessey, Ernst A.
  - Blakeslee, A. F.
  - Bolley, H. L.
  - \* Brooks, Chas.
  - Brown, Nellie A.
  - Buller, A. H. R.
  - Butler, O.
  - Carlton, M. A.
  - Charles, Vera K.
  - Clinton, G. P.
  - Collins, J. Franklin
  - Cook, Mel T.
  - Dandeno, J. B.
  - Davis, J. J.
  - \* Dorrance, Anne
  - Duggar, B. M.
  - \* Eastham, J. W.
  - \* Edgerton, C. W.
  - \* Edson, H. A.
  - Farlow, W. G.
  - Fawcett, H. S.
  - \* Field, Ethel C.
  - Fitzpatrick, Harry M.
  - Floyd, B. F.
  - Freeman, E. M.
  - French, G. T.
  - \* Fulton, H. R.
  - Galloway, B. T.
  - \* Garman, Harrison
  - \* Giddings, N. J.
  - \* Gilbert, A. H.
  - Gilbert, W. W.
  - \* Griggs, Robert F.
  - \* Groh, Herbert
  - Grossenbacher, J. C.
  - \* Güssow, H. T.
  - Hall, J. G.
  - Halsted, B. D.
  - \* Harding, H. A.
  - Harper, R. A.
  - \* Hart, W. O.
  - Harter, L. L.
  - \* Hartley, Carl
  - \* Hawkins, Lon A.
  - Heald, F. D.
  - Hedgecock, G. G.
  - Hedges, Florence
  - Hibbard, R. P.
  - Horne, Wm. T.
  - \* Humphrey, C. J.
  - Jackson, H. S.
  - Jagger, Ivan C.
  - \* Jamieson, Clara O.
  - Jensen, C. N.
  - \* Johnson, Edw. C.
  - Jones, L. R.
  - \* Kern, F. D.
  - Lawrence, W. H.
  - \* Lewis, C. E.
  - Lochhead, W.
  - Lutman, B. F.
  - McCulloch, Lucia
  - McKenney, R. E. B.
  - Manns, Thomas F.
  - \* Markham, Frances G.
  - Metcalf, Haven
  - Miles, Geo. F.
  - Morse, W. J.
  - Murrill, W. A.
  - \* Norton, J. B. S.
  - O'Gara, P. J.
  - \* Olive, E. W.
  - Orton, W. A.
  - Pammel, L. H.
  - Patterson, Flora W.
  - Peck, Chas. H.
  - Pollock, J. B.
  - \* Pool, Venus W.
  - \* Rand, F. V.
  - Reade, J. M.
  - Reddick, D.
  - Reed, Geo. M.
  - Reed, H. S.
  - Rittue, E. C.
  - Roberts, J. W.
  - Rolfs, F. M.
  - Rolfs, P. H.
  - \* Rorer, James Birch
  - Scott, W. M.
  - \* Seaver, Fred J.
  - Selby, A. D.
  - Shaw, H. B.
  - Shear, C. E.
  - Sheldon, J. L.
  - Smith, Erwin F.
  - Smith, Ralph E.
  - \* Snyder, Clifford E.
  - \* Spaulding, Perley
  - \* Speare, Alden
  - Stevens, F. L.
  - Stewart, F. C.
  - Stewart, V. B.
  - Stone, R. E.
  - Swingle, Dean B.
  - Taubenhaus, J. J.
  - Thaxter, Roland
  - Thomas, M. B.
  - Townsend, C. O.
  - Van Hook, J. M.
  - von Schrenck, Herm.
  - Waite, M. B.
  - \* Walcott, Geo. N.
  - \* Walker, Leva Belle
  - \* Wallace, Errett
  - Whetzel, H. H.
  - Wilcox, E. Meade
  - Wilson, Guy West
  - \* Wolf, F. A.
  - \* Wood, Anna K.
  - Woods, A. F.

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