As indicated by the Editor and Publishers „This book is dedicated to many woman plant pathologists whose lives have not been chronicled but have worked tirelessly in the past and continue to work today to improve our understanding of plant diseases and their management, to increase our food supply, and to make the world a better place for all humanity”. To illustrate accomplishments of all these outstanding scientists the editor invited 37 authors who in 26 chapters demonstrated woman’s contribution to the knowledge of plant diseases in Europe and in the United States.

In „Introduction” (p. 1–7) the book editor J. B. Ristaino explains that with the American Phytopathological Society (APS) turning 100 in 2008 this book is an essential part of the Society’s centennial celebration. He provides also basic data concerning early involvement of the USDA in the studies of plant diseases. First part titled „Early Woman in the United States and at the U.S. Department of Agriculture” (p. 9–83) contains information on biographies and scientific achievements in the following chapters: (1) „Mary Elizabeth Banning (1822–1903) – the forgotten mycologist” by C. Matta (p. 11–17); (2) M. E. Banning; (2) Effie A. Southworth (1860–1947) – „First woman plant pathologist hired in the United States Department of Agriculture” (p. 19–27); (3) „Flora W. Patterson (1847–1928) – first woman mycologist at the United States Department of Agriculture” (p. 29–39); (4) „Vera Katherine Charles (1877–1954) – One of the „dozen or more” woman mycologists at the United States Department of Agriculture” (p. 41–46). (5) „Charlotte Elliot (1883–1974) – great interest and unusual ability” (p. 47–56); (6) „Anna E. Jenkins (1896–1972) – pre-eminent systematist of the scab pathogens in the genus Elsinoë and its anamorph Sphaceloma” (p. 57–66); (7) „Edna Marie Buhrer (1898–1988) and Grace Whitney Shermann Cobb (1905–1993) pioneering nematologists at the USDA Nematology Laboratory” by S. L. F. Meyer and D. J. Chitwood (p. 67–83).


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Without any question the Society, the Book Editor and the Authors of particular biographies merits sincere congratulations. It is very nice that the American Phytopathological Society recognized and acknowledged contribution to the field of plant pathology made by European female phytopathologist.

I recommend all plant protection specialists to get familiar with that book as they may obtain a great volume of useful information as well as an inspiration for their current research in plant pathology and plant protection.

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