

# John Cutler Torrey

*April 19, 1876 — October 7, 1946*

Dr. John C. Torrey, retired head of the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine of Cornell University Medical College, died at the age of 70, at his home in Yonkers, October 7, 1946.

Immediately after obtaining his doctorate at Columbia University in 1903 Dr. Torrey came to Cornell and proceeded to teach and conduct research in his chosen field of bacteriology. He was one of the pioneers in the bacteriology of bacillary dysentery, the bacteriology of milk and of the intestinal tract as influenced by diet, and developed typing of the gonococcus. Perhaps his most notable contribution was his "Studies in Absorption" with B. H. Buxton, in which the roles of the cellular elements in phagocytosis were established.

Even after his retirement in 1941 his activity was undiminished and he completed work on the changes in the flora of the respiratory tract which he had earlier begun. His lively mind engaged new interests and he set out in search of a precipitin test for malaria, which he conducted with great tenacity and success.

Dr. Torrey was for many years editor of the *Journal of Immunology* and a member of several scientific societies.

A descendant of William Torrey who landed at Weymouth Mass. in 1640, Dr. Torrey was born at Burlington, Vt., son of the late Sarah Paine and Henry A. P. Torrey. In 1898 he was graduated from the University of Vermont where his father was Professor of Philosophy and his grandfather had been president.

Dr. Torrey organized at Cornell what is now the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine in 1916, and was the active head until 1937 as Professor of Epidemiology. Following his retirement in 1941, he gave his full time unstintingly to research, which he conducted up to the time of his death.

His kindly demeanor was blended with a keen sense of humor. He was at all times an inspiration to his students and members of the faculty, and will be remembered with deep affection by those who knew him.

*Morton C. Kahn*