

IN MEMORIAM

† GLENN E. TORREY

(1930-2022)

Participants in international Romanian Studies were saddened to hear that perhaps the last of the giants of the first generation of American scholars specializing in Romania passed away over the 2022 Fourth of July weekend. Glenn E. Torrey, Professor Emeritus of Emporia State in Kansas, was the third Fulbright fellow to Romania in 1961, joining Keith Hitchins and Frederick Kellogg who had come in 1960. Prof. Torrey was born December 4, 1930 and passed away in Seattle July 3, 2022. He completed all three of his degrees at the University of Oregon, including the Ph. D in 1960 with Gordon Wright, before going to Iron Curtain Romania in 1961. He spent his entire teaching career at Emporia State University in Kansas.

My wife, Jean, and I were students of Prof. Torrey. Thus we were privileged to discuss many times with him his first trip to Romania in 1961 as well as his many subsequent visits ranging into the 21st century. For example, we heard from Prof. Torrey how in the early 1960s, the Director of the Institute of History in București, Andrei Oțetea, frequently went out of his way to support the work of Profs. Hitchins, Kellogg, and Torrey. For instance, Oțetea berated recalcitrant directors of archives and libraries, telling them that if they didn't extend a cooperative hand to the researchers of these young American scholars, they would go back to America and write bad things about Romania instead of helping make Romania and its culture more widely known on the international level. Oțetea's sustaining of his American colleagues worked. Access and even cooperation was granted and the pioneer generation of Americans in Romanian studies went on to spend highly successful careers in academia, helping Romanian civilization, culture, and history achieve their rightful place in World culture, and sharing this with their students and American colleagues. It was clear to us that the seriousness of the work they carried out in Romania under not always easy circumstances in the 1960s paved the way for subsequent generations of American scholars that followed.

One of Prof. Hitchins and Prof. Torrey's many gifts was the ability to facilitate contacts between the serious scholars they encountered in Romania and those of us who came after. It would be invidious here to even begin to list all the deep academic and personal friendships between Americans and their Romanian colleagues that started with a recommendation from Keith or Glenn. They also gave us a heads up on those who were genuine scholars and those whose work was seriously vitiated by Marxist mumbo-jumbo and lack of real historical integrity. If Romania today has a positive image among American specialists, this is due in part to the benevolent efforts of Professors Hitchins and Torrey.

It was also Prof. Torrey that introduced us to the legendary „private” book dealer Radu R. Sterescu in 1971, whose unbelievably well-informed efforts and vast knowledge of Romanian bibliography laid the foundations for most serious American scholarly libraries in the 1960s to 1980s. He was a contact that was passed on and on, and was responsible for enriching personal and academic libraries in the United States from the rather deplorably incomplete status they were in prior to 1960, particularly of the rich historical literature from before 1940.

Prof. Torrey's primary interest was in Romania during the First World War, a virtual black hole of research, but his tireless work in Romanian, French, British, Austrian, Italian, Russian, and American archives, produced a string of impressive articles (many of them collected in 1998 in *Romania and World War I*). Despite the mountain of archival work that these studies were based on,

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they were always accessible to the general reader, impeccably argued, and unimpeachably documented. He was especially skilled at making confusing diplomatic and military issues and events clear, something I fear is rather uncommon among diplomatic and military historians.

Despite our trepidations that he would never be satisfied enough that he had seen all the relevant sources – published and unpublished – to finally publish his magnum opus, this was accomplished with the publication in 2012 of his *The Romanian Battlefield in World War I*. Reviewers both in the West and in Romania were uniformly pleased with the result, so much so that a Romanian translation was published in Romania in 2014 as *România în Primul Război Mondial* and has gone through numerous printings. This book definitively confirmed Prof. Torrey as the leading international expert on the Romanian First World War, both inside and outside of Romania.

This reputation had already been established not only by the aforementioned meticulously written articles, but also for his work on General Henri Matthias Berthelot, France's World War I hero in Romania. He was responsible for uncovering the memoirs and papers of General Henri Berthelot, which he published in 1987 as *General Henri Berthelot and Romania: Mémoires et Correspondance 1916-1919* (Romanian edition 2012: *Generalul Henri Berthelot: Memorii și Corespondența 1916-1919*). His work with the Berthelot papers led to another important pathbreaking monograph, *Henri Mathias Berthelot: Soldier of France, Defender of Romania* (2001).

Prof. Torrey not only exhaustively researched the Romanian World War I and won the respect of scholars everywhere, he also was a highly sought after participant in academic conferences, discussion panels, and other academic interchanges on World War I as a result. It is certain that his work will leave its imprint on studies of Romania in the Great War, both inside Romania and elsewhere, for the foreseeable future.

It must be further noted that Prof. Torrey was also a pioneer contributor to the development of Romanian Studies. From 1961 onward, he was a close friend and collaborator with Prof. Keith Hitchins in promoting Romanian studies in the United States and corresponding connections between American and Romanian scholars. He was chosen as a co-editor of Hitchins' journal *Rumanian Studies*, published between 1970-1986. The journal had been born out of conversations between Hitchins, Torrey, and Petru Comarnescu as they contemplated the status of Romanian academic exchanges and cooperation after a decade of Romanian-American dialogue. Motivated by the desire, in the words of Prof. Hitchins' preface to Vol. 1 (1970), „to extend the scope of collaboration to include new work being done on both sides of the Atlantic”, the purpose of the journal was to subtly breach the Iron Curtain for Romanian scholars whose work was worthy of international attention. Contributors from Romania included David Prodan, Dan Berindei, Mircea Zăciu, Petru Comarnescu, Ștefan Pascu, Paul Simionescu, Ludovic Demény, Paul Cernovodeanu, Alexandru Duțu, Radu R. Constantinescu, Sergiu Columbeanu, Romulus Vulcănescu, Ștefan Ștefănescu, Costin Feneșan, Sever Dumitrașcu, Dinu C. Giurescu, and Ioana Em. Petrescu. Some of the international contributors included among others Glenn Torrey, Barbara Jelavich, Philip Eidelberg, Richard Todd, Emil Turdeanu, Michael Impey, Paul W. Schroeder, Katherine Verdery, and Catherine Durandin. In addition to contribution articles to the journal, Prof. Torrey was a member of the editorial board throughout its existence and an avid promoter of its purposes.

Additionally, from the academic point of view, Prof. Torrey was a founding member in 1973 of the Society for Romanian Studies (then called the Romanian Studies Group) and for many years served on the SRS board. Here, again, he was unusually effective in fostering scholarly relationships between Western academics and their Romanian colleagues in București, Iași, and Cluj, where he was always a welcome visitor to the historical institutes in those cities. As Secretary of the SRS from 1977 to 2015, I appreciated very much his steady participation in the work of the SRS and his useful advice in various situations that arose for the SRS in that period, situations that usually involved difficulties in dealing with Communist Romanian officialdom.

As a scholar, Prof. Torrey will be remembered as a genial and irenic scholar, an indefatigable and exhaustive explorer of archives and libraries, and a willing sharer of his knowledge of Romanian

history and society, both past and present. He was truly a devoted friend of Romanian culture, history, and civilization, and played a significant role in making Romania known and appreciated internationally.

On the personal level, Glenn Torrey always an encourager of students and colleagues alike. My wife and I found him to be the most approachable of professors, one whose office door was always open to all students. Of course, his guidance when we decided to focus on Romanian studies and then go to Romania to do research in 1971 was not only forthcoming, but indispensable. It was also our pleasure to be in Romania several times when Glenn came to Romania and to discuss the past, present, and future of a people and culture that we both had come to respect and love. We became warm friends with Glenn (as did many others) and though we valued his academic counsel, in the long run, we were most significantly impacted by his impeccable integrity and his vibrant Christian faith. Să-i fie țărâna ușoară !

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