

The Registrar and Historiographer's Report to the 228th Convention

To keep accurate data and statistics about the Diocese of New Jersey (a part of the responsibilities of the Registrar), one needs to know how records have been kept, whether they are complete, and so on. As noted in my report as Archivist, we are at present engaged in a thorough inventory and assessment of our holdings and records.

To write history (the responsibility of the Historiographer), one needs to be aware of what primary and secondary source materials are available to serve as the 'matter' of history. Our on-going assessment will allow us to be clearer in that regard and make those holdings available to church historians and scholars by publishing a comprehensive roster of our holdings online. And by having a clear understanding of our collection, it will be far easier for me to write and publish papers on aspects of our diocesan history.

One important but unknown period in the diocese's 'pre-history' is the life and career of the Reverend John Talbot (1669-1727), an early missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and a diligent and devoted minister in New Jersey. A man of tireless energy, in addition to founding Saint Mary's Church in Burlington in 1702 and St James's Church in Bristol, Pennsylvania, he served a number of fledgling congregations in and around Philadelphia, supplied Trinity Church, New York from time to time, and often took services in Salem, Hopewell, and 'points north'. A high churchman and something of a Jacobite, Talbot was consecrated a bishop through what is called the non-juring succession in 1722 in London to serve the churches in America. It's a fascinating and complex story at a roiling time in English history.

Talbot's early biographies were incomplete and contained uncertain and contradictory facts, so five years ago I set myself the task of researching and preparing a more comprehensive and accurate biography of this fascinating man. Entitled *Recovering John Talbot*, it was published in September 2011. It has been well reviewed by scholars in the field and is available for purchase in a soft cover and hard cover edition. I'll be glad to supply more information for anyone who wishes a copy.

Respectfully submitted,

Canon Cynthia McFarland

Registrar and Historiographer