

ANTEBELLUM CULTURE WARRIORS: BISHOP MICHAEL O'CONNOR, *THE PITTSBURGH CATHOLIC*, AND JANE GREY SWISSHELM

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The phrase “culture war” in contemporary American usage refers to a conflict between liberal and conservative cultural values and issues. In the United States prior to the Civil War, the term “culture war” was not in use to describe different social conflicts, but there were many contentious issues confronting America besides the conflict over slavery. Some of those issues such as immigration, religious intolerance and publicly funded education were among those areas of conflict vexing political and religious leaders.

This article will attempt to highlight the differences between two opponents in Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania in the years just prior to the Civil War. The article will show the differences between Bishop Michael O'Connor¹ and his newspaper, *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, and those views of Jane Grey Swisshelm² – an early abolitionist, feminist, and newspaper writer and editor. Although the two opponents were often in conflict, there were some surprising areas of agreement. The article will also briefly describe the American Catholic Church's attitude toward slavery.

The Civil War was the defining experience of the United States. It has been suggested that before the war, each state was its own independent state. After the cataclysmic experience of the war,

only then could the United States be called one nation. Shelby Foote, in the PBS documentary *The Civil War*, claimed that the war was the crossroads of our being. And the Civil War was catastrophic – 620,000 lost their lives and Foote maintained that three million Americans fought in the Civil War.³

Slavery

Slavery, called the original sin of the United States, was the primary cause of the war. The Southern states, which viewed slavery as part of their heritage, wished to secede from the Union so they could continue to use slave labor on which the South's economy depended.

The Catholic Church in the United States at this time existed in both the Northern and the Southern states. The attitudes of Catholic leaders mirrored those of their geographic fellow citizens. Generally speaking, the Catholic Church in the North was more opposed to slavery than the Catholic Church in the South.⁴ Northern and Southern Catholics however, were generally in agreement in their opposition to the immediate emancipation of slaves, for various reasons.

Bishop Michael O'Connor

Bishop Michael O'Connor (1810-1872), the first bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh (1843-1860), was an Irish-born, Rome-educated, and hierarchically connected prelate. He reluctantly accepted the leadership of the new Diocese of Pittsburgh, but he brilliantly steered and nurtured the diocese in its formative years. His accomplishments were many during his tenure: he began one of the first Catholic newspapers in the United States, developed Catholic education, helped to found the first hospital in Western Pennsylvania, and brought numerous orders of male and female religious to serve the different ethnic populations who were just beginning to immigrate in large numbers to the United States. He did all this while overseeing the spiritual welfare of Catholics in the western half of the state of Pennsylvania. Within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, he was respected and influential on many different fronts. He was consulted on the establishment of other American dioceses and the selection of new bishops. Bishop O'Connor was also influential in development of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary that was dogmatically defined in 1854.

During O'Connor's episcopal tenure, he had to struggle with many forces, chief among them was the anti-Catholic bigotry of American nativism. Bishop O'Connor had struggles from without the Church as well as conflicts from within, most notably with Archabbot Boniface Wimmer O.S.B. and the Sisters of Charity. He was also criticized by diocesan clergy for his frequent travels outside the diocese and the naming of his brother as administrator



Bishop Michael O'Connor

Source: Archives of Diocese of Pittsburgh

of the diocese. But the historian John Gilmary Shea deemed O'Connor "one of the glories of the American Church."⁵

Bishop O'Connor started *The Pittsburgh Catholic* newspaper and it became his main instrument of communication with the world inside and outside the local church and community. Newspapers were the chief means of sharing and promoting church policies and teachings. Pittsburgh during O'Connor's time had many newspapers, both secular and religious. In a society that lacked electronic media, newspapers were in great demand in Pittsburgh and surrounding environs.

Jane Grey Swisshelm

One such newspaper was the *Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter* [*sic*], owned and edited by Jane Grey Swisshelm (1815-1884). Swisshelm was unique in that not many women were as deeply involved as she in journalism, politics, and religious controversy in the mid-nineteenth century. Swisshelm was an abolitionist and an early feminist. She served as a nurse during the Civil War and later had a clerk's position in the War Department in Washington after the war.

Born and raised in Pittsburgh and its outlying rural areas, she belonged to the Covenanter branch of Presbyterianism.⁶ The Covenanters had a negative view of human nature and believed that only a select few could be saved. Her ancestors were Scots from the North of Ireland. They were opposed to all forms of "Popery," hierarchical rule by bishops, and Anglicanism that held that the King was the head of the Church. They also considered the Constitution of the United States as immoral because it did not hold God's law as the highest. The Covenanters were also strictly opposed to slavery. Their governing body in 1800 forbade anyone to own slaves or to associate with those who owned slaves.⁷

Swisshelm's Covenanter beliefs held that men and women were equal in the eyes of God and that human nature was sinful. It is incorrect, however, to view her as a modern day feminist. Swisshelm's biographer maintains that she believed that women were the weaker sex and that her views of what comprised manhood were conventional for that time period.⁸

Swisshelm's religious background gave her a strong sense of independence, but according to her biographer "it also ensnared her in a web of bigotry."⁹ The main object of this intolerance was the Catholic Church. American anti-Catholic nativism began with the arrival of large numbers of Irish immigrants in the 1820's. Prior to that time Catholics were in the minority and were met with some degree of tolerance in Western Pennsylvania. An example of this tolerance would be the use of the Pittsburgh Academy to celebrate Mass before the construction of St. Patrick Church, the first Roman Catholic edifice in Pittsburgh.¹⁰

Father William F. X. O'Brien

Father William F. X. O'Brien served as pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Pittsburgh from 1808 to 1820. In the 20 extant letters of Father O'Brien to Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore and his successors, O'Brien does not mention any anti-Catholic hostility. In one letter he asked Bishop Carroll if it was permissible to

baptize children of Protestants or if a Protestant was allowed to stand as a "proxy" for a Catholic at the baptism of a child of a Catholic.¹¹

It is unfortunate that Bishop Carroll's response is unknown. Contrast these early calm Catholic-Protestant relations with then-Father Michael O'Connor's early report to Rome after arriving in Pittsburgh in 1841 in which he concluded that anti-Catholic prejudice in Pittsburgh was stronger than in any other area he had visited in America.¹² O'Connor made this statement with the knowledge of the violent anti-Catholic riots that had occurred in Boston in 1834.

The *Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter*

Against this backdrop, Jane Grey Swisshelm became the editor of the *Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter* [*sic*] in 1847.¹³ She did not wish to attack the Catholic Church. She initially established relatively cordial relationships with the Catholic bishop in Pittsburgh and the editor of *The Pittsburgh Catholic*. In January 1849, for example, she complimented Bishop O'Connor on his "naturally fine mind" in a review of one of his public lectures and thanked the editor of *The Pittsburgh Catholic* for printing a copy of the *Visiter's* "Prospectus."¹⁴ The prospectus was the mission statement or purpose of the newspaper.

The Pittsburgh Catholic was not initially hostile to Jane Grey Swisshelm. Not only did it print the *Saturday Visiter's* Prospectus, but it also reprinted an article she wrote of her direct experience with slavery. Most of the articles printed in the early editions of *The Pittsburgh Catholic* were reprints of articles from other



Jane Grey Swisshelm

Source: Paul Dvorchak



Pittsburgh Catholic Masthead 1859

newspapers. *The Pittsburgh Catholic* of the 1840's in fact is mostly comprised of articles from Catholic newspapers in Ireland, Great Britain and the United States. In an article written by Swisshelm and reprinted in a December 1849 issue of *The Pittsburgh Catholic* titled "Mrs. Swisshelm on Slavery," she related an experience she had while visiting Kentucky as an eighteen-year-old. In the article, she ridiculed not just slavery, but what she considered the character of Southern culture:

Nothing appeared so thoroughly disgraceful as work. This was the business of slaves; and it appeared, generally conceded that a white woman would secretly sell her honor rather than submit to the disgrace of working for a living.¹⁵

Slavery

The most persistent social and political issue within the United States in the 1840s and 1850s was slavery. For Michael O'Connor who became the first bishop of Pittsburgh in 1843 and whose jurisdiction comprised the western half of Pennsylvania, many other pressing issues took priority – especially due to the fact that only a small number of African-American Catholics existed in Western Pennsylvania at the time.

The history of Roman Catholicism and the issue of slavery in the decades prior to the American Civil War is complicated by many different factors. As early as the late 15th century, Pope Leo X (1513-1521) had declared, "not only the Christian religion, but Nature herself cried out against a state of slavery." Pope Paul III (1534-1549) in two encyclicals denounced enslavement of Indians.¹⁶ Pope Paul III declared as excommunicated anyone regardless of their "dignity, state, condition, or grade ... who in any way may presume to reduce said Indians to slavery or despoil them of their goods."¹⁷ On December 3, 1839, Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846) issued the papal bull, *In Supremo Apostolatus*, which emphatically condemned the institution of slavery and the slave trade.¹⁸

In the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, slavery was an already established fact. Catholics in the United States were a distrusted minority and with the increase of immigrants from Ireland and Germany, an increasingly hated minority. Northern immigrants saw freed slaves as competition for jobs. The economy of the Southern states, including Maryland, the seat of early Catholic America, depended on slave labor.

Religious orders such as the Jesuits and a few American bishops not only tolerated slavery, but owned slaves despite the decrees

of Rome. In the Colonial period, Capuchins, Jesuits, and Ursuline Nuns in Louisiana owned slaves. The Jesuits and Capuchins used slave labor on their farms.¹⁹ After Fr. William F. X. O'Brien left Pittsburgh, he became involved in an effort to procure a slave for Archbishop James Whitfield of Baltimore (1828-1834).²⁰ So, it appears that even though the teaching of the popes was opposed to the enslavement of human beings and the slave trade, American Catholics went their own individual ways.

Antebellum Catholic opinion on slavery mirrored the opinions of their non-Catholic fellow citizens. *The U.S. Catholic Miscellany*, the organ of the Diocese of Charleston (South Carolina) was emphatically opposed to the abolition of slavery. The newspaper also supported a group in New Haven (Connecticut) who blocked the founding of a black college in that city. *The Catholic Advocate* in Bardstown (Kentucky) argued against the religious arguments of the Abolitionists. This paper stated that Catholic morality did not support the idea that slavery was always sinful.²¹ The *Catholic Telegraph* of Cincinnati was not as pro-slavery as Bardstown's paper, but termed the cause of the Abolitionists as "imprudent."²² An editorial in the Boston Catholic paper, *The Pilot*, also opposed the founding of the black college in New Haven and opposed the cause of the Abolitionists. An editorial maintained that the slaves of the South were better off than the freed blacks of the North – and also argued that if the Founding Fathers thought slavery was wrong, they would have abolished it at the founding of the country.²³ Many of those supporting the immediate emancipation of slaves also opposed many of the conservative social issues supported by the leaders of the Catholic Church. An article in *The Pilot* stated:

As a general thing, wherever you find a free-soiler, you find an anti-hanging man, a woman's rights man, an infidel frequently, bigoted Protestant always, a socialist, a red republican, a fanatical teetotaler.... You get in a rather dirty set ... when you join their ranks.²⁴

This is not to say that all Catholics, their leaders, and their newspapers favored slavery. On the contrary!

The Pittsburgh Catholic

The Pittsburgh Catholic was established in 1844 by Bishop Michael O'Connor. The newly consecrated bishop of Pittsburgh arrived in the city on December 20, 1843. He wasted little time in establishing a diocesan newspaper. The first edition of *The Pittsburgh Catholic* is dated March 16, 1844. As previously

mentioned, most of the articles appearing in the paper during its early years were articles reprinted from other mostly Catholic newspapers in the United States and Europe. Local news and opinion articles were unsigned. The Prospectus of *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, from the first edition, stated that “The editorial department will be conducted exclusively by a clergyman, or other person appointed by the Rt. Rev’d. Dr. O’Connor, Bishop of Pittsburgh.”²⁵ So it can be safely assumed that opinions and attitudes expressed in the paper if not those of O’Connor himself would have been close to those of the bishop. Madeline Hooke Rice’s *American Catholic Opinion in the Slavery Controversy* states that *The Pittsburgh Catholic* “was distinguished among its contemporaries for moderation of language and restraint.”²⁶

Much of the substance and tone of the early articles in *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, especially those dealing with anti-Catholic bigotry, were polemical and argumentative. Also, many articles reprinted from other American Catholic newspapers reflected a negative attitude toward immediate emancipation and a distrust of abolitionists. But *The Pittsburgh Catholic’s* attitude toward slavery was clear:

If there be a social evil that includes extensive and galling wrong to thousands – nay millions, that evil is negro slavery even as it exists in these United States. This, we believe, is admitted by all – in these quarters.²⁷

This came from an article ironically praising the *Gazette* of Pittsburgh for criticizing the fanaticism of an anti-slavery meeting at Oberlin, Ohio that took “joy at the declining state of American religion.”²⁸

Pittsburgh’s Catholic Chapel for Blacks

Another indication of Bishop O’Connor’s attitude toward slavery was the opening of a chapel to serve African-American Catholics. This action also occurred early in O’Connor’s episcopacy as the chapel was dedicated on June 30, 1844, some six months after his arrival in Pittsburgh. The chapel is reported under different names – the Chapel of the Nativity, the Church of the Nativity, and the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Pittsburgh’s first diocesan historian, Msgr. Andrew Lambing, stated that the chapel was located at the corner of Smithfield and Diamond Streets in Downtown Pittsburgh. The chapel was under the direction of Fr. Robert Wilson, the first rector of Bishop O’Connor’s seminary. A rumor was spread that Fr. Wilson was pro-slavery and that the chapel was used as a ruse to capture runaway slaves.²⁹

A minister declared from the pulpit of one of the churches that Dr. Wilson was a proslavery man, who was planning to collect a number of the negroes together, and have them seized, taken south and sold into slavery by his agents.³⁰

The chapel was closed within a year of its opening.

Further evidence of Bishop O’Connor’s attitude toward African-Americans can be inferred from his priestly ministry after he resigned as bishop of Pittsburgh. It is known that Michael

O’Connor was reluctant to accept the bishopric of Pittsburgh, and wanted to instead become a Jesuit. Pope Gregory XVI told O’Connor to become a bishop first and a Jesuit later. This O’Connor did. After becoming a Jesuit, O’Connor helped organize the first African-American Catholic parish in the United States – St. Francis Xavier in Baltimore. In 1871, Michael O’Connor assured the permanency of the Baltimore church by persuading the Jesuits to transfer St. Francis Xavier Parish to the Josephites, whose mission it was to serve African-Americans.³¹

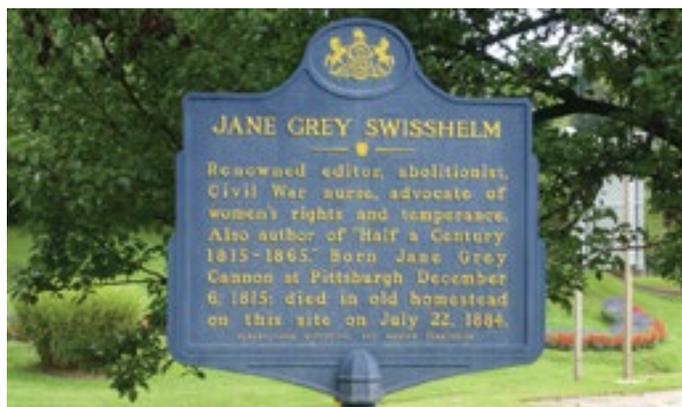
Swisshelm’s View of Bishop O’Connor and Catholicism

Jane Grey Swisshelm’s conclusion as to Bishop O’Connor’s attitude toward slavery was expressed in her autobiography, *Half A Century*. Interestingly, she titled Chapter XXXI, of that work “The Mother Church.” The early paragraphs of the chapter expressed both her admiration of the bishop, and her attitude toward the Catholic Church:

When the *Visitor* entered life, it was still doubtful which side of the slavery question the Roman church would take. O’Connell [*sic*] was in the zenith of his power and popularity, was decidedly anti-slavery, and members of Catholic churches chose sides according to personal feeling, as did those of other churches. It was not until 1852, that abolitionists began to feel the alliance between Romanism and slavery; but from that time, to be a member of the Roman church was to be a friend of “Southern interests.”

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The Bishop of the Diocese, R.R. O’Conner [*sic*], was, I think, a priest of the Capponacchi [*sic*] order, one of those men by whose existence the Creator renders a reason for the continuance of the race. After the days of which I write, there was an excitement in Pittsburg about Miss Tiernan, a beautiful, accomplished girl, who became a nun, and was said to have mysteriously disappeared. When the Bishop resigned his office and became a member of an austere order of monks, there were not lacking those who charged the act to remorse for his connection with her unexplained death; but I doubt not, that whatever that connection was, it did honor to his manhood, however it may have affected his priesthood.<sup>32</sup>



Historical Marker for Jane Grey Swisshelm

Source: Paul Dvorchak

Swisshelm's autobiography, written many years after the Civil War, does reflect her admiration for Bishop O'Connor, but she is blind to the hostility and the always underlying secretly nefarious practices for which Catholic clergy were often accused.

In the same Chapter XXXI of her autobiography, Swisshelm did attack Bishop O'Connor on his desire for public funding for Catholic schools. O'Connor made his case for public support of Catholic schools in a letter to the governor of Pennsylvania, which was reprinted in *The Pittsburgh Catholic*. The bishop anticipated a negative reaction and made a plea for diversity, "it is no more necessary that all the children of a district should attend the same school, than that they should be provided with food from the same store."<sup>33</sup>

*The Pittsburgh Catholic* then responded to an argument by Swisshelm:

Mrs. Swisshelm is almost the only person who has presented anything like a fair argument on our position regarding the Common Schools.

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Mrs. S., unconsciously, we feel assured, does us an injustice in taking it for granted that Catholics, or any portion of them, are opposed to "our institutions" or to republican government.³⁴

What is striking is the tone of civility and the willingness to listen to and present the opposition's argument.

The establishment of Mercy Hospital in 1847 provided another occasion for Swisshelm to comment on Catholic-Protestant relations. The secular papers in Pittsburgh were positive in their attitude toward the opening of Mercy Hospital, but the Protestant papers were opposed. In April of 1848, the *Presbyterian Advocate* accused the Sisters of Mercy of prostitution among other things.³⁵ *The Pittsburgh Catholic* of April 22, 1848 reprinted an article from the *Pittsburgh Saturday Visitor* titled "Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of Charity" in which Swisshelm wrote:

But we have wandered from our purpose, which was to protest against a mean, ungentlemanly, unchristian and brutal attack upon those Societies we name at the head, which appeared in a late number of the *Presbyterian Advocate*. As they are Catholics, we have no sympathies with them, as they are women they are entitled to our poor defence. ... How any woman, with any regard for her sex, could patronise the paper ... we know not.

It is strange that any gentleman could thus wantonly insult a few ladies, who are living quietly in their own houses, doing good according to their peculiar notions.³⁶

Another example of *The Pittsburgh Catholic's* admiration for Jane Grey Swisshelm is the *Catholic's* defense of Swisshelm's debunking of Spiritualism. Antebellum Spiritualism was the New Age movement of the day. Swisshelm attended a meeting where the participants were in contact with dead relatives. She debunked the meeting in her *Saturday Visitor* and evidently met with some opposition from fellow Protestants. *The Pittsburgh Catholic* defended Swisshelm and at the same time declared that the spiritualists were

just another example of a logical outcome of Protestantism:

[O]ur community is indebted to the talented and amiable editress of the *Saturday Visitor*, who has been subjected ... to a great deal of coarse abuse at the hands of the dupes of the jugglers who have been playing off their clumsy tricks to the complete satisfaction of a large circle of her Protestant acquaintance.³⁷

In another section of her autobiography, Swisshelm's ignorance of the Catholic Church and her anti-Catholicism are quite evident. She wrote that she witnessed the dedication of St. Paul's Cathedral on June 24, 1855, and related that her newspaper article about the dedication

caused Bishop O'Conner [*sic*] to make a very bitter personal attack on me. He did not know how truly the offensive features of my report were the result of ignorance; but thought me irreverent, blasphemous.³⁸

She then proceeded to describe the dress of the priests and bishops attending the dedication. "Some of the things they wore looked like long night-gowns, some short ones; some like cradle quilts, some like larger quilts. ... [S]ome of the men wore skirts and looked very funny."³⁹ Swisshelm reported this some thirty-five years after the dedication. *The Pittsburgh Catholic's* comment on her article stated:

Mrs. Swisshelm's article is, indeed, in this respect, an interesting document. It shows how deep is the ignorance of everything Catholic prevailing in certain classes who think themselves well-informed....⁴⁰

A much later *Pittsburgh Catholic* printed a letter that quoted a letter of Swisshelm's to the *Pittsburgh Telegraph*. Swisshelm claimed that Irish servant girls were as a class "thieves":

[They] "do a tremendous amount of stealing;" in fact, that "they seldom, if ever, fail to double, treble, or quadruple their wages by theft." Secondly – That having to confess these thefts to the Priest, they certainly pay him for the indispensable commodity of absolution; and, Thirdly, That the Priest grants absolution, on the condition that they divide the stolen property with him.⁴¹

Cultural Echoes

It is a fascinating exercise to attempt to put oneself in the minds of fellow faith members and citizens during a time of social and political upheaval, especially in the years before the occurrence of the unthinkable, the breaking apart of the country. A major resource for understanding their thinking and values are the contemporary newspapers and those who edited and wrote for them. Catholics and Protestants in the years before the Civil War staked out their positions in their respective newspapers and provide later readers with insights that reflected their thoughts and principles during a time that too eerily reflects our own era and society. It is also remarkable how many issues our ancestors struggled with that have echoes in the cultural and political struggles of our present age.

Endnotes:

- ¹ Michael O'Connor (1810-1872) was a native of Ireland. He studied at the Urban College of the *Propaganda Fide* in Rome, earning a Doctor of Divinity degree. Ordained a priest in 1833, O'Connor was appointed vice rector of the Irish College in Rome. In 1839, he joined the faculty of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia, becoming president. In 1841, he was appointed pastor of St. Paul Church in Pittsburgh and vicar general of the western half of the Diocese of Philadelphia. O'Connor was consecrated first bishop of the newly erected Diocese of Pittsburgh in 1843. He served briefly as first bishop of the new Diocese of Erie 1853-1854, then returned to Pittsburgh. Upon his resignation of the bishopric of Pittsburgh in 1860, O'Connor entered the Jesuits. He died at the Jesuit house in Woodstock, Maryland, where he is buried. The definitive biography of Bishop O'Connor is that by Henry A. Szarnicki, *Michael O'Connor, First Catholic Bishop of Pittsburgh ... 1843-1860: A Story of the Catholic Pioneers of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Wolfson Publishing Co., 1975). A revised edition was published in 2003.
- ² Jane Grey Swisshelm (1815-1884) was a native of Pittsburgh. At age 20, she married James Swisshelm. Moving to Kentucky in 1838, Jane encountered slavery, which made a strong impression on her. She headed a girls' seminary in Butler, PA, and then rejoined her husband on his farm in Swissvale. She founded the *Pittsburgh Saturday Visitor* [sic] in 1847, which reached a national circulation of 6,000. Jane divorced in 1857 and moved to Minnesota, where she controlled a string of newspapers, promoting abolition and women's rights. She served as an army nurse during the Civil War. A prolific author, Swisshelm published *Letters to Country Girls* (New York: J. C. Riker, 1853) and an autobiography entitled *Half of a Century* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co., 1880). Swisshelm died at her Swissvale home in 1884 and is buried in Allegheny Cemetery in Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh neighborhood of Swisshelm Park, adjacent to Swissvale, is named in her honor. The principal biographies of Swisshelm are: Sylvia D. Hoffert, *Jane Grey Swisshelm: An Unconventional Life, 1815-1884* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), and Arthur J. Larsen (ed.), *Crusader and Feminist: Letters of Jane Grey Swisshelm, 1858-1865* (Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1934). Jane Grey Swisshelm was featured in the 2008-2009 University of Pittsburgh exhibition "Free at Last? Slavery in Pittsburgh in the 18th and 19th Centuries" at the Heinz History Center. She is also profiled in the ongoing Heinz History Center exhibition "From Slavery to Freedom."
- ³ Shelby Foote, Jr. (1916-2005) was an American historian who wrote *The Civil War: A Narrative*, a three-volume history of the American Civil War. Foote became nationally known with his appearance in Ken Burns's PBS documentary *The Civil War* in 1990, where he introduced a generation of Americans to a war that he believed was central to all American lives.
- ⁴ See William G. Peters, *The Catholic Bishops in the Confederacy* (Chattanooga: C.S. Printing Office, 2016).
- ⁵ John Gilmary Shea, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States* (New York: John G. Shea, 1892), 419.
- ⁶ Members derived their name from the word "covenant" meaning an agreement. Covenanters bound themselves by covenant to maintain Presbyterian doctrine as the sole form of religion wherever they settled.
- ⁷ Sylvia D. Hoffert, *Jane Grey Swisshelm: An Unconventional Life, 1815-1884* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 14.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 23-24.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.
- ¹⁰ Letter of Rev. William F. X. O'Brien to Bishop John Carroll, Pittsburgh (November 16, 1808), Archives of the Archdiocese of Baltimore (hereinafter cited as AAB). The Pittsburgh Academy was the first institution of learning west of the Allegheny Mountains granted a charter by the state legislature of Pennsylvania on February 28, 1787. It was the forerunner of the University of Pittsburgh.
- ¹¹ Letter of Rev. William F. X. O'Brien to Bishop John Carroll, Pittsburgh (November, 16, 1809), AAB.
- ¹² Henry A. Szarnicki, *Michael O'Connor, First Catholic Bishop of Pittsburgh ... 1843-1860: A Story of the Catholic Pioneers of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Wolfson Publishing Co., 1975), 28-29.
- ¹³ The Pittsburgh-based newspaper published weekly between December 20, 1847 and January 28, 1854. It was "Designed for the instruction and entertainment of the home circle, and the promotion of moral and social reform." The newspaper is available on microfilm at the Carnegie Library (Oakland), Pittsburgh.
- ¹⁴ Hoffert, *Jane Grey Swisshelm*, op. cit., 26.
- ¹⁵ "Mrs. Swisshelm on Slavery," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (December 29, 1849), 331-332.
- ¹⁶ Madeleine Hooke Rice, *American Catholic Opinion in the Slavery Controversy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 16.
- ¹⁷ See Rodney Stark, "The Truth About the Catholic Church and Slavery," *Christianity Today* (July 1, 2003), 2, appearing at the website: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/julyweb-only/17-14-53.0.html> (accessed September 21, 2017).
- ¹⁸ See Pope Gregory XVI, *In Supremo Apostolatus* (Condemning the Slave Trade), appearing at the website Papal Encyclicals Online: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Greg16/g16sup.htm> (accessed September 21, 2017).
- ¹⁹ Rice, *Jane Grey Swisshelm*, op. cit., 33.
- ²⁰ Fr. O'Brien wrote to Archbishop Whitfield: "On last Friday, Mr. Middleton ... told me he has a boy 14 years old, whom he would let you have, if he still suits you. From Mr. Middleton's observations he is of a good family of blacks; he is young & you might more easily train him up to your liking." Letter of Rev. William F. X. O'Brien to Archbishop Whitfield (April 1, 1829), AAB.
- ²¹ Rice, *American Catholic Opinion*, op. cit., 72, 74.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 76.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 77.
- ²⁴ "Free-Soilism," *The Pilot*, as reprinted in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 7, 1851), 98.
- ²⁵ "Prospectus of the Pittsburgh Catholic," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (March 16, 1844), 1.
- ²⁶ Rice, *American Catholic Opinion*, op. cit., 111.
- ²⁷ "Violence and Ultraism at Home and Abroad," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (December 22, 1849), 324.
- ²⁸ Resolution at Oberlin anti-slavery meeting, as quoted in *ibid.*
- ²⁹ Szarnicki, *Michael O'Connor*, op. cit., 116.
- ³⁰ "Rev. Robert A. Wilson, D.D." in Andrew Arnold Lambing, *Brief Biographical Sketches of the Deceased Bishops and Priests who Labored in the Diocese of Pittsburgh from the Earliest Times to the Present, with an Historical Introduction* (Pittsburgh: Republic Bank Note Co., 1914), 196-197.
- ³¹ Francis A. Glenn (R. Stephen Almagno and Marylynn Pitz, eds.), *Shepherds of the Faith 1843-1993: A Brief History of the Bishops of the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1993), 81.
- ³² Jane Grey Swisshelm, *Half A Century* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Company, 1880), 150-151.
- ³³ "The Bishop of Pittsburgh and Our Common School System," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (February 5, 1853), 380.
- ³⁴ "Mrs. Swisshelm and the Public Schools," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (May 7, 1853), 69.
- ³⁵ Szarnicki, *Michael O'Connor*, op. cit., 119.
- ³⁶ *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 22, 1848), 44.
- ³⁷ "The Spiritual Knockings," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (May 17, 1851), 76.
- ³⁸ Swisshelm. *Half A Century*, op. cit., 153.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ "A Short Criticism on a Long One," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 7, 1855), 138.
- ⁴¹ "Bridget's Shortcomings: Mrs. Jane G. Swisshelm's Presentment," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (January 12, 1878), 4.