



“As I started getting ready to write in earnest, I’m thinking I need some advice, a direction to go in to make sure I’ve got my head on straight,” O’Conor said. “I thought, gosh, James Bradley would be a good person to talk to.”

Bradley is the New York Times bestselling author of “Flags of Our Fathers,” a book which focuses on the six men who raised the iconic flag at Iwo Jima.

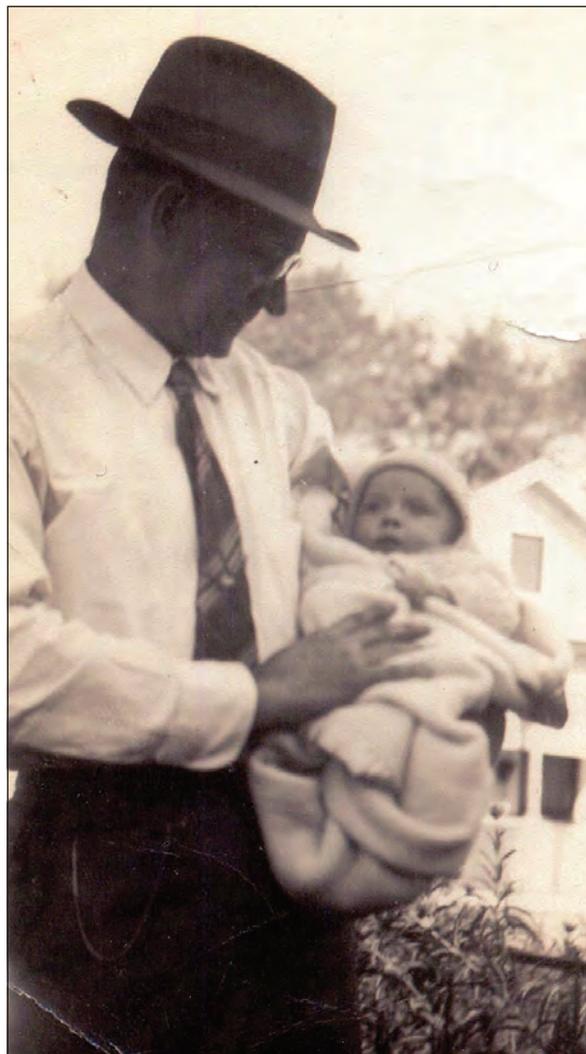
Going through a friend of his who knew Bradley’s agent, O’Conor was eventually able to get a chance to speak with Bradley about his plans to write a book telling Stephenson’s story.

“I spent an hour and a half on the phone with James Bradley,” O’Conor said. “And he is just telling me about what he did when he first started writing “Flags of Our Fathers.” the research he did and how it took him four years to get everything together. He talked about how he traveled all over the country talking to the guys who raised the flag. It’s just an amazing story.”

When he asked Bradley what message he was trying to get across when he wrote the book, O’Conor said Bradley said not to worry about that, just write the book, tell the person’s story and people will get from the book what they get from it.

“He asked me to grab a pen and paper and write down one word: history,” O’Conor said. “H-I-S-T-O-R-Y. He told me to look at that word. ‘You know what that word says,’ he told me, ‘His story. Ray, just tell his story.’”

And that is what O’Conor is seeking to do, he said. And just like Bradley, the mission is taking him all over the country in pursuit of information to add life to his future novel.



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