Tom O’Connor

About the author

Tom O’Connor graduated from West Point in 1973 and served as a U.S. Army artillery officer. He lives in Bolivia, North Carolina, and writes the five-book Steel and Honor Civil War series and the three-book Curious Cousins’ Adventures children’s series.

Steel and Honor

Two West Point roommates, Nathaniel McAllister and James Tanner, graduate in 1848 and eventually serve in opposing armies. The series follows their friendship and the consequences of divided loyalties for their families, from the antebellum Army through the war’s final campaigns.

How AI was used in the writing

O’Connor used ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini to find research leads, develop outlines, draft scenes, review prose, and create illustrations for Steel and Honor. He set the direction, reviewed the drafts, checked historical claims against sources, and made the final editorial decisions.

The project began in March 2025 as a novella. O’Connor rewrote it as a full-length novel so readers could see Nathaniel and James become officers, husbands, fathers, and friends before the war divided them.

Across five books, he tracked dates, ranks, and family relationships to catch continuity errors. In Book Three, Andrew McAllister serves as a first lieutenant for most of the novel and makes captain near the end. The scene date tells O’Connor which rank belongs on the page.

Read How I Wrote a Five-Book Civil War Saga With AI

Media contact

For interviews, review copies, or cover files, email tomfoc3@tomfoconnor3.com.

COMPLETE READING ORDER

Steel and Honor

Two West Point roommates, Nathaniel McAllister and James Tanner, graduate in 1848 and eventually serve in opposing armies. The series follows their friendship and the consequences of divided loyalties for their families, from the antebellum Army through the war's final campaigns.

01 Cadets to Captains: 1848–1860

Two West Point classmates begin their Army careers as the country moves toward secession.

02 Antietam: From Secession to the Bloodiest Day

Secession and the road to Antietam put the McAllister and Tanner families on opposing sides.

03 Gettysburg and Vicksburg: Summer of Decision

Two campaigns in the summer of 1863 test officers and families as the war reaches a turning point.

04 Chickamauga and Chattanooga: Lines of Command

The fighting in autumn 1863 tests the officers' judgment and loyalties in the Western Theater.

05 Atlanta to Appomattox: Final Commands

The series finale follows the war's closing campaigns and the choices that come with peace.

See current editions, purchase links, and samples

Curious Cousins’ Adventures

Three illustrated stories inspired by O’Connor’s grandchildren.

01 Brooks’ Bubble Adventure: Wonder, Discovery and Sibling Fun

A bubble wand sparks curiosity, imaginative play, and sibling fun.

02 The Curious Cousins’ Summer of Discovery

Three cousins explore, solve problems, and practice teamwork during a summer at Grandma and Papa’s home.

03 Parker Rose’s Summer Adventures: Trying New Things and Making Memories Together

Parker Rose learns to ride a bicycle, plays guitar onstage, and shares new adventures with her cousins.

Interview topics

- How AI-generated scene drafts changed through human revision and source checking
- What a five-book continuity record tracks and how it catches mistakes
- How a West Point friendship became the center of a Civil War family saga
- How to trace a Civil War ancestor from a name to a regiment
- How family experiences inspired the Curious Cousins’ Adventures

Media links

Author biography

Steel and Honor reading order

Books and editions

Civil War Research Tools

Author essay on writing with AI

Author website and media assets