

## MEDIA RELEASE

# THE MAP OF WILLIAM

by MICHAEL THOMAS

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Western Australia, 1909. William Watson's beloved father is set on an expedition to the north-west to map water sources in the Pilbara. Invited along, fifteen-year-old William embarks on the outback journey of a lifetime.

At sea and on land, William will forge lasting friendships with his fellow travellers, and transform his relationship with his father as together they face the darkness in some men's hearts – including the cruel and vengeful Sergeant Jardine.

*The Map of William* is a gripping, adventurous tale about the triumph of friendship, and the price of survival in a land with its own ancient story to tell.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Thomas was born and raised in Carnarvon, Western Australia, and spent his formative years travelling across the vast Gascoyne–Pilbara region with his father, who was a shearer. After graduating from university, he returned to teach in the Gascoyne–Murchison before eventually settling in Perth. He retired in 2021 to write his memoirs, but gave up when fact and fiction became entangled. *The Map of William* is his first novel.

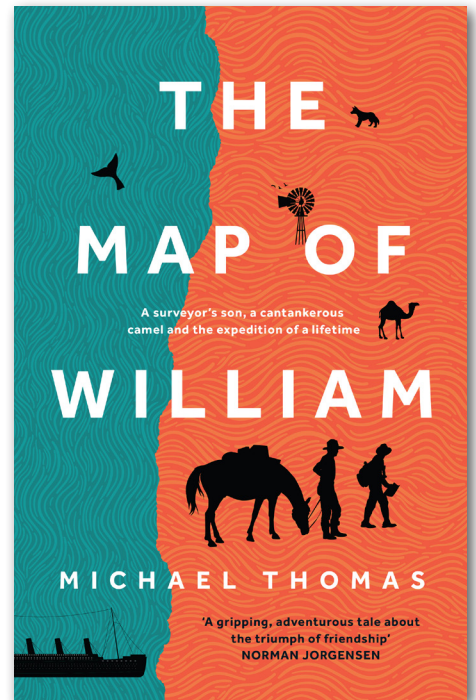


### NOTES

- A classic rite-of-passage novel which, though written for adults, is also suitable for readers aged 15+.
- William's experiences and the novel's settings are strongly connected to the author. His great-great-grandfather, Alexander Thomas, was buried in a bush grave near Nullagine, and his son, also Alexander, was laid to rest at Roebourne Pioneer Cemetery. The author's father, Roy, was born in Old Fremantle.
- Michael Thomas says, 'It was a challenge to find a balance between hope and tragedy, and from my experience children seem to do it best, so William was born. How to construct a narrative from such brutality and make it resonate in a respectful and meaningful way was difficult, to say the least. To align the novel with my own family history gave me permission to tread lightly, but only lightly. It was always my intention to confront our history and avoid the trap of rewriting it. What I learned changed me.'

### PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

'Michael Thomas' characters and locations are as authentic as anything I have ever read. His tale of a teenage hero overcoming all obstacles with courage and wit in an unforgiving desert makes for a remarkable debut.' *Norman Jorgensen*



Pub. Date	30 May 2023
ISBN	9781760992187
eISBN	9781760992194
RRP	\$32.99 AU \$37.00 NZ \$19.95 US
Genre	Historical fiction
Format	PB, C
Extent	288 pp



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