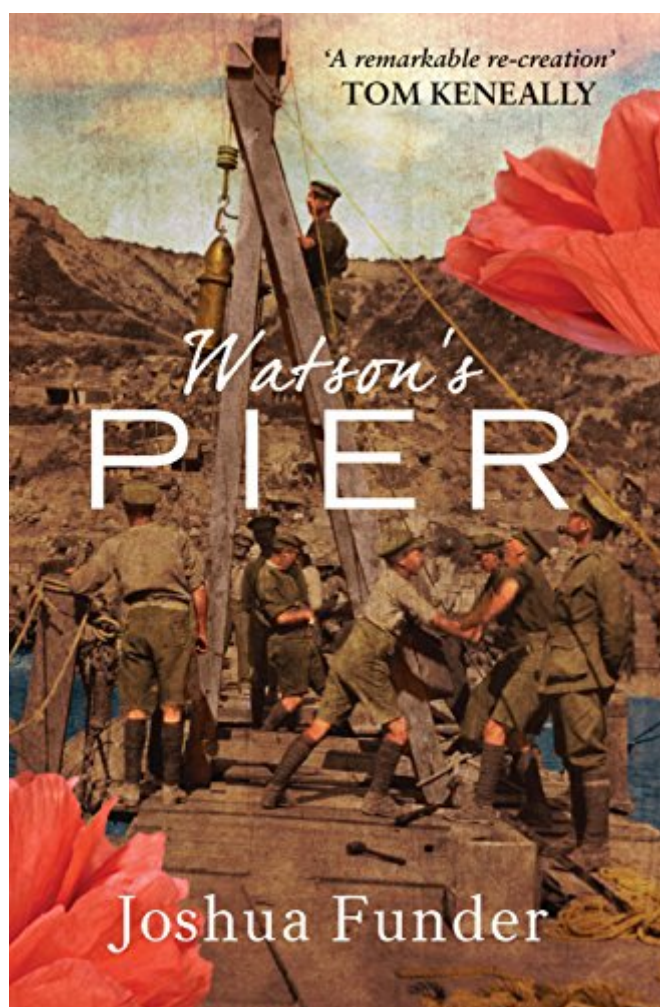


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# Watson's Pier



## Synopsis

The story of the campaign that almost lost the Anzacs and the retreat that saved a nation. On 20 December 1977, as Stanley Watson takes the slow train journey to family Christmas, memories from over 60 years ago play in his mind. He had been and still was a man of his time, as steady, simple and direct as the railway lines he built. As an engineer in the 28th Signalling Company, recently wed and with a young child, he knew it to be his duty to enlist as soon as war broke out in 1914. He left for Egypt in October and he knows his wife is pregnant as he reaches Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, a participant in that fateful landing that is writ large in Australian history. He survived that landing to construct the first pier at Anzac Cove, from which the Anzacs withdrew on the nights of 18 and 19 December. For a long time, he was known as the last man to leave Gallipoli. Watson's Pier is a beautifully told story as seen through the eyes of Stanley Watson, one of the leaders of the escape from Gallipoli. It draws on Watson's story, his writing, oral history and the official war records. While telling one man's remarkable experience of war for the first time, Watson's Pier challenges history on the final moments at ANZAC Cove and offers a new perspective on the meaning of Gallipoli.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Stanley Holm Watson (1887-1985) was one of the first ashore at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, and amongst the last to leave on the night of the 19-20th December 2015. The withdrawal from Gallipoli used the pier at Anzac Cove which Watson had built and which provides the title for the book, written by Watson's great-grandson, Joshua Funder. "One Christmas, when I was a small boy, I sat with my brother at the feet of our great-grandfather, Stanley Watson, to hear his account of Gallipoli." Sixty-two years after leaving Gallipoli, Stanley Holm travels to Melbourne on a slow train to spend Christmas with his family. He was then aged 90, and it was the account of him shaving with a cutthroat razor whilst on the train that reminded me of my own grandfather, also at Gallipoli, and who was also still using a cutthroat razor until he died aged 80. From that point on, I was spellbound. "The war. It was horrible. All the mud and shells and gas." This book is a blend of fact and fiction. Joshua Funder states that the events closely follow the historical accounts in Charles Bean's "Official War History" and in Stanley Watson's "Gallipoli: Sapper Signalmen". These historical accounts provide the framework for Joshua Funder's account of his great-grandfather's life, for his experiences of Gallipoli. While Gallipoli is the major focus of the book, Stanley Holm's long life (he was 97 when he died), it is not the only aspect of his life covered. There's an account of Stanley Watson's return to the Gallipoli peninsula in 1977, of his consciousness of what actually happened there in contrast to how it might have been: "It had taken Watson more than sixty years and less than two hours to conquer the peninsula."

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