ON SOLDIER'S ROAD

"It's only an old pile of stones now," he said,"the fruit trees are all that remain,
it's rocky hard ground, but there's room for a dam, and the power lines run down the lane."
"This Soldiers Road sale has some good blocks for grabs, there's town water to the main road.
You can even get onto the internet now, 'cos the telephone network has grow'd."

So even a humble bush block today, civilisations web birds like glue.
I lifted my eyes to the far great divide, would those mountains get plugged in too?
A light swirling breeze fanned the tangled grey gums, red dust from cattle feet fled.
Will it be the same bush we wake up to tomorrow, with the radio news in our bed?

In the shimmering heats' white daze I walked, woke by crows cawing news vaguely ill,
to find at my feet these two rocky mounds, side by side on the brow of the hill.
But too small and forlorn for a couple they seemed, and I wondered what mystery their story,
and of the bush folk first to build on this block, him returned with his soldier's grim story.

She held on for letters that came, oh so late from Gallipoli, Flanders and France.
Praying her school love would come back a man scarce sixteen when he took that bold chance.
He'd aged ten years more, marching back into town with the pitiful few that weren't killed.
But he'd bought her back a gold wedding ring, and a soldiers block on which they'd build.

"It's only a pile of stones now," he said, "but it'll be our homestead right soon,
we'll plant your fruit cuttings brought in from the town, and a garden we'll have in sweet bloom."
"A verandah will catch the Divide's cooling breeze, with the wild untamed range for a view.
It's not so much now, but forever a home, when you bear forth our own little two."