

## Convincing Ground

*The site, in the Victorian town of Portland, of the first recorded massacre of Aborigines by white Australians.*

We drive past cemeteries,  
headstones bend in coastal breeze.  
All afternoon we drive, but headstones  
give no shadow. We wind up our windows,  
clouds retreat, we pretend that the day is blue.  
We drive past paddocks, scar-trees hold  
orders of service. We drive past towns  
full of cemeteries, headstones on pub verandas.  
We drive past cemeteries: wheat crops, wind farms,  
the unused olive branches. We drive past  
pools and lakes, pretend again the day is blue.  
Headstones rise all round us, we see them  
walk to courts of law. We drive and drive  
and drive, in search of an open grave.