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SMALL TOWN MEMORIALS

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Abstract
No matter how small Every town has one; Maybe just the obelisk, A few names inlaid; More often full-scale granite, Marble digger (arms reversed), Long descending lists of dead: Sometimes not even a town, A thickening of houses Or a few unlikely trees Glimpsed on a back road Will have one.

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Maybe just the obelisk,
A few names inlaid;
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Marble digger (arms reversed),
Long descending lists of dead:
Sometimes not even a town,
A thickening of houses
Or a few unlikely trees
Glimpsed on a back road
Will have one.

1919, 1920:
All over the country;
Maybe a band, slow march;
Mayors, shire councils;
Relatives for whom
Print was already
Only print; mates,
Come back, moving
Into unexpected days;

A ring of Fords and sulkies;
The toned-down bit
Of Billy Hughes from an
Ex-recruiting sergeant.
Unveiled;
Then seen each day –
Noticed once a year;
And then not always,
Everywhere.

The next bequeathed us
Parks and pools
But something in that first
Demanded stone.
West Wallsend Unveiling, 28 January 1922

Culcairn, NSW. ‘Our Soldiers Memorial’