

Florence

Once upon a time, along the Murrumbidgee.
Among the Grey Gums, Ghost Gums, Wattle and some Gidgee.
There were three tunnel boring machines.
Names Florence, Kirsten and Eileen.
All machines were made in Germany.
Heading for a place in infamy.
Florence was to bore the tunnel.
To the underground power station site.
400 metres below the surface terrain.
Tunnelling nonstop, day and night.
For Florence it should be a piece of cake.
Connecting Tantangara Dam and Talbingo Lake.
Geologists had taken many core samples.
Of earth, rock and timber.
That Florence would encounter every single day.
But they had missed some soft earth.
Together with lots of clay.
Florence ran out of luck.
Ploughed into the ungodly mess.
And became firmly stuck.
One thing about Florence.
Which was quite perverse.
She was designed to go only forward.
Was never manufactured, to go in reverse.

Jack Colless, Whiddon Laurieton