

**Stan Smith, “Wire”**

*A poem from “Family Fortunes,” a  
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**Arthur Smith**  
**(b. Warrington 1900; d. Warrington 1955)**  
**4 Howley Lane, Warrington**

Uncle Arthur was built like a brick shithouse,  
near enough square, as broad as he was high,  
a short-arsed wiredrawer. Once he saw  
a mate get sliced in two by white-hot wire  
snapping and flailing like a demon string.  
Yet ‘Now the Wire!’ was his and the town’s war-cry:  
League-toppers all, the home team made him sing.

Rebranded ‘Warrington Wolves’, American  
hype and rough-house rule where once wit and brawn  
– they were big buggers – hugger-mugged the Cup.  
I have a photo from the Isle of Man,  
him paddling in the sea in the flat cloth cap  
and shiny three-piece suit he always wore,  
too young for one, too old for the other war.