

## The Shadow

Grandad's shadow is cast in the back yard of the small house in Smethwick. His outline is immediately recognisable: the photographer seen and unseen. Grandad's shadow falls on little Steven, just short of Dad, adjacent to those knees we are so fond of. Dad's hands are folded in front of him and he has his best smile on; Steven is turned away, hand to his chin.

Knee, knee.

My own little shadow is himself firmly attached. Stitched to his Mama's shoes with an unbreakable thread.



As he leapt at the window Nana had closed it quickly, too late to catch him, but his shadow had not had time to get out; slam went the window and snapped it off. You may be sure Mrs. Darling examined the shadow carefully, but it was quite the ordinary kind.

Nana had no doubt of what was the best thing to do with this shadow. She hung it out at the window, meaning 'He is sure to come back for it; let us put it where he can get it easily without disturbing the children.'

But unfortunately Mrs. Darling could not leave it hanging out at the window, it looked so like the washing and lowered the whole tone of the house.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Pan, Chapter 2: The Shadow, J.M. Barrie, 1911



## The Welder

My grandmother was not built for industry; neither was her father though he worked it.

Built like song birds. Bright gleaming eyes in a shared, crinkled face.



It will be seen from the list given under our name at the foot of this page that we manufacture a wide range of equipment for factories. We should appreciate your enquiries for the projects listed.

An important feature in the design of the Pneulec Cupolas is the arrangement of the tuyeres. Instead of being inside the belt, all tuyeres are set in a single row below the belt. The blast is led from the belt to the tuyeres through C.I. bends, each of which is fitted with regulating valve, giving proper individual control. The illustration makes the advantages of this arrangement quite obvious.

Pneulec Cupolas have a reputation of being a really first-class job. Ever since we began to build cupolas, our policy has been to build as good and not as cheap as we can. That the small extra cost is considered worth while is shown by the extent to while Pneulec Cupolas are used.<sup>1</sup>

Dad: . . . You've got that one of Pneulec haven't you?

Me: Ooh. No.

Dad: And the postcards? This was in Smethwick. I sent this off to the Black Country Bugle and they put it on the front cover. It's something like pneumatic electricity. It's obviously a professional photographer that's taken it, you've only got to look at the shafts of light coming through and everything else. Arthur was an oxy acetylene welder.

Me: A what welder?

Dad: Oxy acetylene. You know when you see the big round top tanks where they're doing the cutting . . . sometime during the war they were . . . Mom always said they were locked in. They might have been working on something for the Mulberry harbours for D Day, to get an order finished, locked in for two or three days. The people on there, they're either beyond war service years or haven't reached war service years. You have a look carefully how many have got fags in their hands.

Me: Hm. I bet they have. Or in their mouths.

Dad: This is the back of Auntie Elsie's. This is the back of the bedroom and the shed in the garden. That might be stuff from Margaret's wedding.

Me: Did you ever have the photograph scanned in high resolution? Can I have one of these?

Dad: I took it into the Black Country Bugle offices and they copied it there and then. And then when I took it down to the printers he hung on to it and produced these from it . . . it's a bit disjointed isn't it. It's odd things I remember at the time.

Me: That's the way life is, Dad. The way memories work (laughs).

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<sup>1</sup>Advertisement for Pneulec Cupolas, Foundry Trade Journal, 1940s

