

Tom Russell, The John Bull Tin

He said his pride and joy was that old John Bull Tin.

He said it saved him from a bullet once - but I did not believe
He was just an old man in the park, half drunk on rum
As he rolled another smoke and closed the John Bull Tin
He said, "I've carried that since 1931."

Rubbed and worn shiny silver - blue letters chipped away
Old memories and tobacco fit within
He had one religious medal that he carried near his heart
But his pride and joy was that old John Bull Tin

He said, "it used to be a tyre-patch kit but that was long ago...
It's memories and tobacco now, my friend.
Ya know some folks need a magic lamp to conjure up their dreams
But mine are kept inside the John Bull tin."

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I found it lyin' in the grass,
in a park near Shepherd's Bush
I never saw that old man again
I guess he rolled his final smoke and went to his reward
Why else would he have dropped the John Bull Tin?

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