

## **Tim O'Brien "Talkin' Cavan"**

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A while ago I chanced to roam to the place my great  
grandad called home  
It wasn't that much I saw that day, but I learned I whole  
lot along the way  
I was goin' to Ireland... retracing my family footsteps...  
diggin' up roots  
You could call 'em tubers

The closer to the root of my family tree, the more  
people seemed to look like me  
Saw a sign said Mollie O'Brien's bar, I knew right then I  
couldn't be that far  
I went in there and asked for beer, he pours this black  
stuff, he says, 'cheers',"  
'Guinness gives you strength'," he said, 'I'll tell you  
friends it's like drinkin' bread  
There's a loaf in every pint... I was feelin' strong... felt  
like I wanted to sing

My whistle was wet and my tongue was loose  
When the barman asked how come I'd choose  
To travel such a long, long way on such a cold and  
rainy day  
I said, 'I'm goin' up to Kingscourt town. That's in County  
Cavan, to look around.  
My great granddaddy came from there.  
I want to see if the old home place is still there."  
Well he shook his head up and down  
And then side to side and then he turned around and  
said  
'A Cavan man then... you know, a lot of people wouldn't  
admit to that,"

I figured I'd save a little hassle so I booked a room  
nearby in a fancy castle  
Had a hard time gettin' my dinner there  
It was full of these people with light blonde hair  
Danish tourists...two big busloads of 'em  
Now the owner of the place, his hair was black  
When I talked to him, I didn't get much back  
His people are what you call 'west Brits',"  
They're the ones that treated my people like dirt

That's what lead to the Irish civil war, I didn't know I'd  
come back for a little bit more  
His nose was way up in the air... but he took my money  
all the same

That night I dreamed I saw the ghost of the one I'd  
rather have as host  
It was Tom O'Brien walkin' round the cabin, there in  
Kingscourt town in County Cavan  
Then the very next day in the hardware store  
I found a cousin ten times removed or more  
But he was no apparition, he wasn't a haint - he was  
sellin' nuts and bolts and paint  
I told him about our family connection, and he kinda  
stood there still, reflectin'  
I could tell he wasn't that much impressed when he  
asked me with nary a trace of jest  
He said, 'How exactly may I help you sir?'"  
I just bought some nails and got the hell out of there

Then later that day after some detectin, I found the  
lane in the rural section  
It matched the picture in my dad's scrap book  
And my heart beat faster as I drove to look  
The sun burst through the clouds just then as I gazed  
at the current residents  
It was a little sheep dog and an old milk cow  
Yeah the old home place is an old barn now  
It's ashes to ashes... dust to dust... thatched roof to tin  
roof... and tin roof to rust

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