

The Wrestling Match

F C Dm Bflat F C
 Twas of champions— bo - ld they wrestl-ed for a sum of go - ld, and
 5 Bflat F G F C7
 all the cry was Will tre-fry that he should win the day so— Will Tre- fry—
 10 Dm F F C7 F
 huz - zah the lad - ies clap their hands and cry, Tre - fry, Tre-fry huz - zah

Then up sprang little Jan,
 An undersized man,
 And I will be thy conqueror
 Where thou dost stand.
 So will I fight with thee
 I'll let thee know I can do so
 Today I'll fight with thee.

They wrestled on the ground
 His match Trefry had found,
 And back and back he bore
 He felt his force give way.
 So little Jan, Huzzah
 So some did say - but others nay,
 Trefry, Trefry, Huzzah.

Then with a desperate toss,
 Will showed the flying hoss,
 And Jan, he fell to the ground
 And Jan ceased to move.
 O little Jan - alack!
 The Ladies say, O woe's the day
 O little Jan - alack!

If killed he hadn't been
 A wedding there'd have been
 But Jan died aged eighteen
 Leaving his love behind.
 Oh little Jan - alas.
 The Ladies went in mourning all
 For little Jan - alas.

This song was collected by Baring Gould from James Olver of Launceston in 1890 (*Baring Gould Heritage Project/Wren Trust, Personal Copy Manuscript, p132, song no 60*). Olver told him that he had heard it sung 67 years earlier, when he was a lad, at Liskeard wrestling matches. The version in 'Songs and Ballads of the West' was modified a little, avoiding the suggestion that Jan and Will Trefry were fighting for prize money. This song is also included in the 'Guild of Handicraft Essex song book' Volume 6 (*Ashbee, Janet E., C. R. Ashbee, and Handicraft Guild of. The Essex House Song Book : (London: Essex House Press, 1905) Ashbee, Janet E., C. R. Ashbee, and Handicraft Guild of. The Essex House Song Book : (London: Essex House Press, 1905) Ashbee, Janet E., C. R. Ashbee, and Handicraft Guild of. The Essex House Song Book : (London: Essex House Press, 1905)*), no place of origin is stated but with names like 'Jan' and 'Trefry' and the Cornish Wrestling throw 'Flying Hoss' mentioned it is reasonable to assume a Cornish provenance.