

THE SIEGE OF SKEWIS

Words and music written
by Tanya Brittain © 2016

When Rogers died he left two sons
His only heirs and kin
The elder son was childless
And on his death, this tale begins

In a farmhouse on the highroad
That leads to Helston town
They lived alone, a peaceful pair
Until fever brought him down

He died right there inside the house
He'd lived for all his life
His worldly goods and family home
He gifted to his wife

The widow Anne, laid claim the house
His will produced in court
But brother Henry challenged her
And a vicious battle fought.

"Go!" said the King, "and leave this place
This house is hers by deed
The law is the law and Skewis Farm
Your brother's will decreed."

ESEDHVA SKEWYZ

Translation into Cornish by Ken George

Pan verwis Rogers, y dhew vab
y erylion o, hepken;
yth eza y vab kottha
annedhyz 'vel dewdhen

Yn treveth war an karrhynz;
'ga bewnanz kosel o
yn Skewyz, byz y'n pryzweyth
pan verwis yn y dro.

Awoz nag eza dhodho flogh
y wreg hepken yth o
a dhegemmeras oll y byth
ha'n chi 'vel kemmyvro.

Y wedhwes, Anne, a dheuth dhe'n lys
y'n dorn an kemmyskrif;
mez broder Henry eth y'n chi
pareuzis ev rag strif.

"Ke!" 'medh an ruw, "ha gaz an le;
hy chi dre reyth a vydh,
dre gemmyskrif dha vroder-jy
tre Skewyz dhedhi bydh."

“No!” said Henry, “leave my land
The house is mine by right
The law is wrong, I do dispute
And I will stand and fight.”

With entry forced and Anne removed
He settled at the farm
His children and his best friend Street
They armoured and forearmed

When Tillie’s men arrived in force
The King’s Writ duly served
Henry fired upon the crowd
Stayed put and held his nerve

He killed the bailiff Carpenter
Then Hatch, and Woolsten too
Sadler and his cannon tried
But Rogers overthrew

They left on foot by dark of night
To London they were bound
And in an inn on Salisbury Plain
The fugitives were found

At Launceston Gate the men were tried
And guilty they were found
They hung for shooting three men dead
At the Skewis battleground

“Na!” ’medh Henry, “gaz ow thir;
an chi yw dhymm yn ta;
an reyth yw kamm, dell synzav-vy,
batalyaz my a wra.”

Y hworris ev y deylu oll
yn Skewyz ra’ga thre
ha ganz y was o henwyz Street
ragarva i a wre.

Pan dheuth lu Tillie ganz y nerth,
an skrifenn ryel rez,
y tennas Henry war an routh,
’th o stag; nynz eth yn-mes;

Y ladhas bayli Carpenter
Woolsten, ha Hatch kefryz;
Sadler ha’y wonnys bras
y’s fesyas ev dhe-ves.

Street ha Rogers eth dhe’n fo
ha Loundres aga fal,
mes kynzez doz dhe’n sita vras
’feu kechyz an dhew al.

Orth yet Lannstevan triyz enz
ha kablus sur enz-i
rag arva Skewyz kregyz vonz
awoz moldranzow tri.