

The 71st's Polka



The 71st's Polka: this is based on a setting preserved in Charles Scott's manuscript (NLS 22127) compiled between 1845 and 1859 which contains more than eight hundred marches, strathspeys, reels, jigs, hornpipes and polkas, making it one of the largest light music collections assembled during the 19th century.

Charlie Scott was born in Atholl in 1821, and was personal piper to the Sutherlands—his MS was completed at Stafford House, their London home (now Lancaster House). He was also an indefatigable collector of light music for the pipe.

Rather unusually, he often recorded the date when he had got a tune, where he was when he transcribed it, and who he'd got it from. In this case the source was the bandmaster of the 71st H.L.I. at Perth on 15th November 1855. Since the tune is simply called "Polka" in the original MS it seems reasonable to give it the title above.