



# **The Bonny Earl of Murray: The Man, the Murder, the Ballad (Folklore and Society)**

*Edward D. Ives*

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On 1592, James Stewart, Second Earl of Moray, was murdered by a party under the command of George Gordon, Sixth Earl of Huntly. This is a detailed history - drawn from contemporary records - of that murder, showing it to be almost the inevitable result of the power struggle of the two leading families in the Northeast. The book traces out the consequences, which were serious enough both to cause King James to leave Edinburgh for several weeks and to lead him to agree to certain undesirable compromises with the Kirk. Huntly himself was never punished. Moray was a popular figure in his time, and the two extant ballads on his murder are both expressions of a people's anger and a means of keeping that anger alive. Edward Ives traces their history across four centuries, showing that while they might not have been much sung in croft and bothy, one of them has earned itself a place in the concert world and in the great folksong revival of the 1960s and thereafter.

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