

**STEPHEN MARSHALL:
A FORGOTTEN ESSEX
PURITAN**

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Stephen Marshall: a forgotten Essex Puritan by E. Vaughan

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E. VAUGHAN

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VINCHINGFIELD



THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, FINCHINGLEFIELD

STEPHEN MARSHALL

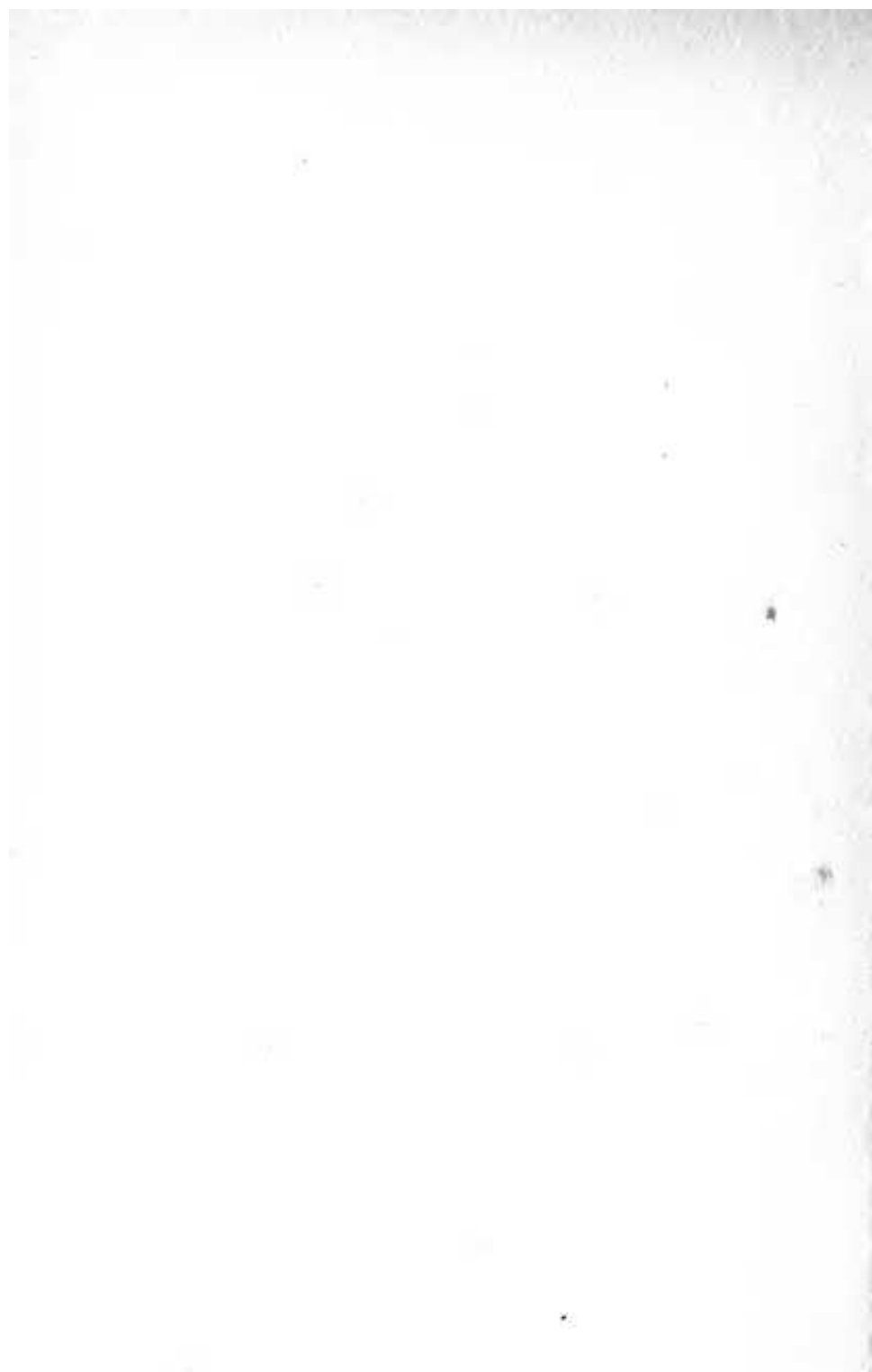
A FORGOTTEN ESSEX PURITAN

BY E. VAUGHAN

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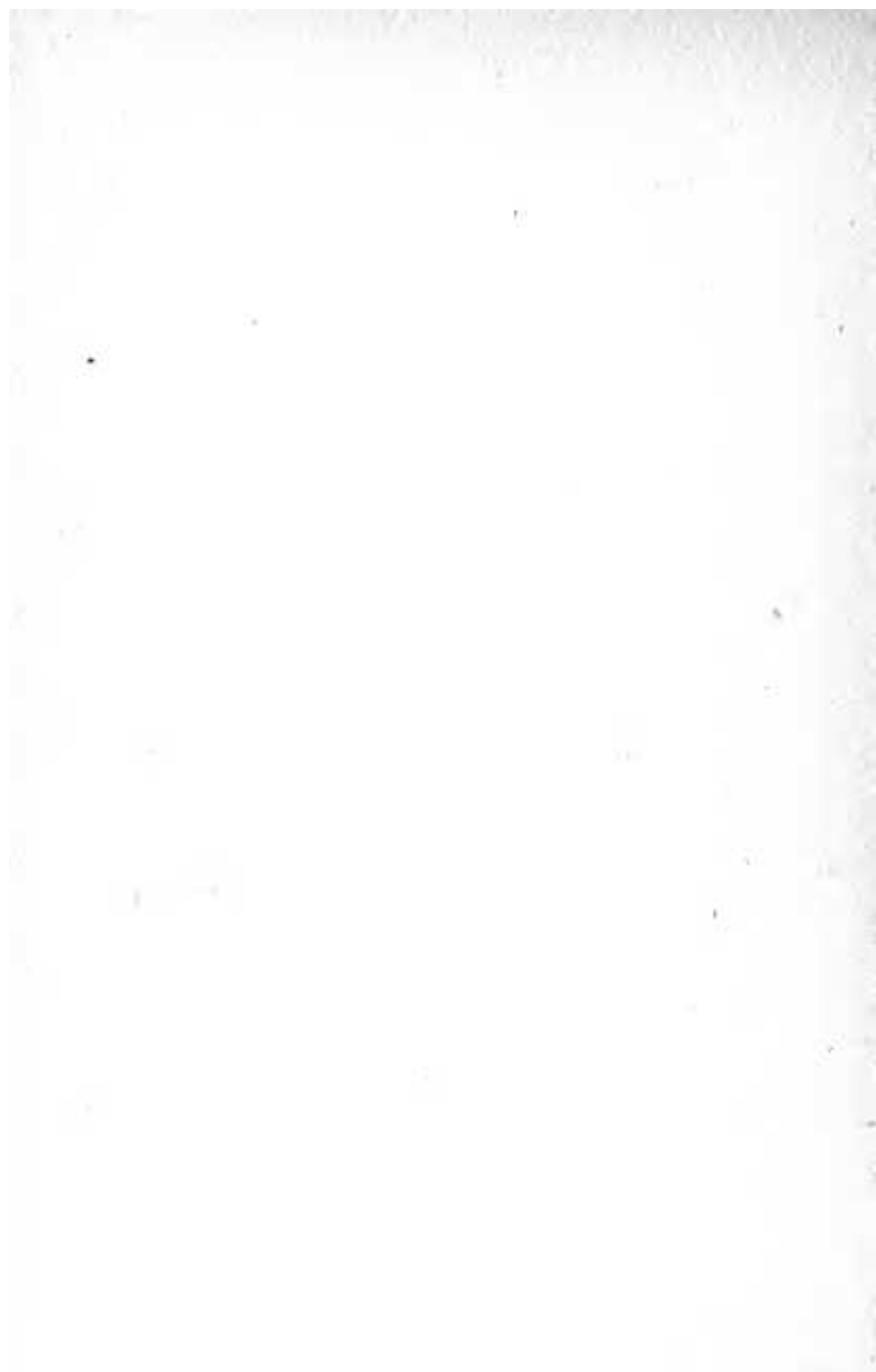
TO
THE DEAR MEMORIES OF
MATTHEW VAUGHAN
(SOMETIME VICAR OF FINCHINGFIELD)
AND
ELIZA, HIS WIFE
THEIR DAUGHTER DEDICATES THIS
LITTLE BOOK



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* The photograph of Shalford Church is by Mr. A. W. Brunwin; the other three on Plate VI. are by Mr. H. T. Lawson, of Braintree; and the remainder by the Publisher.



CHAPTER I

"A worthy, sober man."—*Baxter*, in 1654.

"That Mr. Marshall was a faithful servant of God . . .
I doubt not. That he was perfect . . . I affirm not."

Giles Firmin.

FEW more complicated problems present themselves to the thoughtful student of English history than the arrival at a definite conclusion respecting the individual integrity of those eminent men who swayed the world of religious and political thought throughout the stormy upheaval of the seventeenth century. And the reason is not far to seek. For in the controversial conflict that raged on all sides with equal bitterness, the weapon of personal abuse and unjust imputation was so freely made use of that to denounce an opponent as a rogue and a reprobate seemed but fair play even to such as John Milton, rendering it now a most intricate task to clear away the smoke of wordy battles across the centuries and see the combatants in their true light.

It is probable that not many personalities have been more obscured in the eyes of subsequent