

The West Essex Gazette Wed Sat 13th Oct 1934

Death of Alfred Willingale

Aged 91, Alfred Willingale, of Loughton, has died. He was, with one exception, the last of the little band of working men who 70 years ago preserved the lopping rights of Loughton and in so doing saved Epping Forest to the people forever. Alfred was the nephew of old Tom Willingale, who struck the first blow in the struggle. Alfred was prosecuted by the Lord of the Manor of Loughton for doing damage to trees and was fined 2s 6d or seven days imprisonment. The fine could have been paid but Alfred preferred the seven days, which he served in Ilford gaol. The action of the Willingales resulted, when the forest was taken over the City of London Corporation, in a sum of £7,000 being awarded to Loughton for its loss of lopping rights, part of which went to householders and the major proportion to the erection and endowment of a public hall, named Lopping Hall. The sole survivor is now William Willingale, son of old Tom Willingale, who is 83 years of age.

The West Essex Gazette Sat Oct 20th 1934

Funeral of Alfred Willingale

The funeral of Mr Alfred Willingale took place at St John's Churchyard, Loughton on Monday. As stated in our last issue, he was 91 years of age, and to the present generation was hardly known. The service was conducted by the Rev. J W Hayes, and in addition to the family mourners we noticed Mr P Thompson (of the Essex Field Club) Mr & Mrs G L Bruce Mr D Clark, Mr J A Herd, and Mr H Lebbon and others who had known the deceased for many years. No doubt many others would have been present but for the difficulty in their daily occupations. However, when November 2nd comes round, perhaps those who cherish his memory and his doughty fight for the loping rights, will find it convenient to attend the service of Commemoration of All Souls, held in the parish Church, and join in the supplication "rest eternal grant to him O Lord, and may perpetual light shine on him".

Transcript taken by Steven Willingale 10/04/2010 from original newspaper held at the British Library Newspaper Archive