

HILLESDEN ACCOUNT BOOK, 1661—1667

The previous article (p.p. 135-144) dealt with income only; a kindly-disposed member of the Society drew attention to the rents appearing on p. 137. To him they seemed impossibly high, and he thought the amounts quoted referred to the six years; that they do not will be made clear to him by quoting specimen entries which relate to the highest rental:—

	£	s.	d.	
62—14	Recd. of Robt. Brashead, junr., in full for his rent for halfe a yeare ended at Michas, 1662, for his part of the New Parke, his homestall, Mareway ground and Kingsbridge meade in Hillesdon ...	52	0	0
68—98	Recd. of Robt. Brashead, junr., in part of his rent for halfe a yeare ended at Ladyday, 1663, for the lands before mentioned in the 14th parcell of this Accompt	40	0	0
75—208	Recd. of Robt. Brashead, junr., £12, which with £40, formerly received of him as is before mentioned in the 98 p'cell of this Accompt makes £52, which is in full for his rent for halfe a yeare ended at Ladyday, 1663, for the lands before mentioned in the 14 p'cell of this Accont.	12	0	0
Total for year		£104	0	0

The present and succeeding articles are concerned with the far more interesting side—expenditure. In this paper Labour and Materials are considered from several points of view, which serve to throw some light upon the economic conditions of the times. The cost of constructing Richard Wiseman's house is particularly interesting—and somewhat tantalising in these days when the building of houses is such an important question.

LABOUR.

The executors cultivated no land unless it were unlet, they did not own a horse, and there is not a single entry in the six years' accounts which relates to the purchase or repair of any tool; presumably the

day labourer (whose usual wage was 8d. per day) had to furnish his own tools. The following illustrations will show some of the different kinds of work at various rates :—

4D. PER DAY—

“ Weeding quicksetts,” “ clatting.”

6D PER DAY—

“ Weeding quicksetts,” “ back trenching.”

8D. PER DAY—

“ Trenching,” “ cutting thornes,” “ making hay,” “ carrying out the sheepe to the shearers,” “ helping about making a rick,” “ thrashing of tyth pease,” “ watling a barne,” “ setting willowes,” “ turning downe furrowes after the plough, and digging downe mole-banks.”

10D. PER DAY—

“ Digging post holes in that part of Hillesdon church-yard which is to be mounded.”

1s. PER DAY—

“ Mowing thistles,” “ ricking of hay,” “ steeping up the hayricks,” “ thatching a barn or rick,” “ felling timber.”

1s. 2D. PER DAY—

“ Ricking hay,” “ carpenter’s worke setting up a sheep pen,” “ sawing boards,” “ mason’s work about walling a well and pitching a pigstye,” “ making a gate.”

1s. 4D. PER DAY—

“ Cocking and pitching oats out of the cart.”

As to women, “ Goodwife Stokes and her sonne for spreading cow-clotts 1 day apeece ”—received 8d. between them; but when Goodwife Stokes, with various other Goodwives and “ Widdowes ” were hay-making they received 5d. per day each; but for “ raking and cocking oats ” the same women were paid 7d. and even 8d. a day each. For yelming³ a woman received 6d. per day.

¹ The meaning of this is possibly to break big clods of earth after the plough. A clod is called a “ clat ” at Hillesden to-day; on the other hand the entry “ spreading of cow-clatts ” was also remunerated at the rate of 4d. per day, and “ clatting ” may refer to that operation. Sometimes the phrase is clearly in the latter sense:

252—317 Paid to Stokes his boy for 3 daies breaking of clatts in the watermeadow, 1s.0d.

² The meaning of this operation, which frequently recurs, is obscure; possibly it refers to some kind of draining of the water-furrows, the ridges in the grass at Hillesden to-day are unusually high, and they were evidently much troubled with surface-water.

³ As this word is still in general use it is perhaps unnecessary to say that it means drawing out the straw for the thatcher.

The entire labour employed during one year has been extracted, with the following result:—

Name.	No. of days worked in year.	Nature of work.
Thos. Butcher	108½	Scouring in a ditch, trenching, ditching, lopping and peeling of bark, hedging, weeding quicksets, levelling a rick-pen, mowing, thrashing, and winnowing.
Giles Channell	11	Peeling bark, hay-making, and pitching cart.
G. Griggs	6	Digging down banks, hedging. [Griggs also made 4,920 faggots and furze-faggots at 1s. per hundred.]
John Hill	157½	Weeding quicksets, thatching of a hovel, making mortar, hedging and cutting thorns, threshing and winnowing, trenching, digging down banks, helping at sheep-shearing, ricking hay, laying oats in the great barn, mending hedges.
John Hobbs	78	Hedging, scouring, peeling bark, shredding of rods to make hurdles, shearing sheep (at ½d. each), mowing, etc.
W. Knight	35½	Cutting posts and rails for gates and rick pens, making new grate for fish-pond.
Widow Lester	14	Winnowing, clatting, haymaking, raking oats.
Rowland Lewis	36	Quicksetting in the dead gaps, setting of setts, digging stone.
John Mawne	8	Mason's work.
W. Moore	8	Ditto.
W. Tyler	8	Serving ditto.
T. Stokes	89	Scouring, trenching, hedging, lopping, mowing, &c.
Wm. Toms	35½	Cutting posts, mending gates, &c.
Len Typpling	31	Threshing, ditching, ricking, scouring.
Dan Typpling	9½	Lopping and peeling of bark, hedging.
Val. Wright	72	Ricking, ditching, scouring, hedging, &c.

Goodwife Hobs	14	} Clatting, hay-making, raking oats.
Goodwife Cook	12	
Goodwife Butcher	12	
Widow Washbrook	3	
Goodwife Stokes	13	
Goodwife Hill	7	
Margaret Hollier	1	
John Hobs, his boy ...	8	
Middleton's boy	1	
J. Cook's boy and girl	1	
Phillips, his boy and girl	1	

The standard wage for the ordinary male labourer was 8d. per day, but the rate was raised at haymaking and harvest-time.

Piece-work was not often in operation, but the following are examples:—

		£	s.	d.
290—300	Paid to John Hobbs, Tho. Butcher, Tho. Stokes, and Len. Typing, for 103 perches of ditching at 5d. per perch in the new ditch, in Hawkins, his greater ground	2	3	0
153—657	Paid to John Hobbs and Willm. Attood for shearing 47 sheep in the Windmill ground, being unlett	2	8	
658	Paid for washing the said sheep	1	0	

Miscellaneous payments for odd jobs are illustrated by:—

		£	s.	d.
143—430	Paid to John Hobbs for foddering the Cowes in the Sand-pitt ground and Windmill ground for 1 weeke	1	4	
26—351	Paid to Edward Lester for spreading trench-heaps in the tyth meadow and looking to the cowes in the water-meadow 6 daies	3	0	
152—627	Paid to Rowland Lewis for 2 nights watching in the woods	1	0	

(The last-named payment was made in the middle of May, and there is nothing to explain the purpose of the watching.)

		£	s.	d.
40—620	Paid to Bedwin and Long, the sawyers, for sawing posts and railes to mound the Churchyard, 5 daies a peece	14	0	
42—652	Paid to the glasier for mending the glass in the church chamber window in Hillesdon aforesaid	1		

As to cartage or the use of a team the regular charge seems to have been 4s. per day, thus:—

25—326	Paid to Arneborough for carriage of Susan Hunter's barne to the said North's house—1 day	4 0
327	Paid to my brother Rich. Haynes for carrying a hovell out of the barne yard to the same place—1 day	4—0

The following charges give us the cost of hay-making in 1666:—

	£	s.	d.
259—433	Paid for mowing, making of hay, ricking, and other charges about the same in Hills leas and Hawkins his greater ground in the West field, which are unlett, viz. :—		
			£ s. d.
	To goodw. Typing and her daughter for making hay 5 daies a peece	4	2
	To goodw. Cooke the like 5 daies worke	2	1
	To Tho. Butcher, Geo. Griggs, Tho. Stokes, and Len Typing for mowing, 3 daies a peece...	14	0
	To my bro. Rich. Haynes for carrying with his teeme, 5 daies	1	0 0
	To Tho. Quainton for the like, 1 day	4	0
		<u>2</u>	<u>4 3</u>

	£	s.	d.
260—434	Paid more charges about the hay in the grounds last mentioned, viz. :—		
			£ s. d.
	To Wm. Quainton for helping about the rick—1 day	1	0
	To John Hill for 5 daies making the rick	5	0
	To Val. Wright for 5 daies helping about the rick	3	4
	To John Ash for the like 5 daies	3	4
	To Margaret Helliard for hay-making—4 daies	1	8
		<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>

And our next extract gives us the cost of sowing oats in March, 1666:—

		£	s.	d.
253—326	Paid for Oats to sowe in Blackland Leas, and for plowing there, viz. :—			
		£	s.	d.
	To Mr. Blinkoe for 4 quarters of oats	3	18	0
	To Robt. Brashead for 7 bush. of oats		16	4
	To Wm. Isaack for plowing 3 daies		12	0
	More to him for harrowing— 1 day		3	0
	To Elnatn. Wootton for plow- ing 3 daies		12	0
	More to him for harrowing 3 daies with 2 horses		6	0
	To Tho. Long for plowing 4 daies		16	0
	To John Kinton for harrowing 3 daies with 3 horses		9	0
	To a boy for breaking clotts 3 daies		1	0
	To John Hill for breaking clotts 3 daies		2	0
		7	15	4

MATERIALS AND SUNDRIES.

The stores purchased were almost restricted to build- ing material and ironmongery; the buildings will be considered separately later on; among the hardware are numerous entries for such iron-work as is needed for gates, for example:—

		£	s.	d.
18—196	Paid for hooks and thimbles weighing 30lbs for gates		10	0
156—721	Paid for hooks, thimbles and cotterills ⁴ weighing 21lbs. for the gates of the new Inclosures		7	0

⁴ The fifth definition given by Halliwell comes nearest to the meaning here: "The small round iron plate in the nut of a wheel." As a matter of fact this might be expressed in one modern word "washer." Mr. James Cadd, who to-day farms some of the land mentioned in these accounts, when asked what a cotterill was immediately produced a washer from his waistcoat pocket; but the word is commonly used by the older generation of Buckinghamshire farmers and labourers.

Other purchases are:—

		£	s.	d.
105—785	Pair for tarr for the sheep in the West field			6
202—591	Paid for 6lbs. of pitch to brand 101 sheepe	1	1	
105—789	Paid to Tho. Holding for 14 quarters of lyme for the repaire of Buckingham bridge	3	15	2
32—452	Paid for 2 quire of paper a peece of wax, a bundle of packthread, and 2 bundles of tape for the use of the said Exors. and Trustees		2	4
290—297	Paid for 4 new Sacks to put corne in	10		8

This last item is the only one which seems to be highly priced, particularly having regard to the relative value of money then and now.

One suspects that the hurdles referred to in the following entry were merely wattled, and not of the modern split-oak construction:—

		£	s.	d.
2—15	Recd. of my brother Richd. Haynes for 6 hurdles sold to him out of Bradfords Wood in Hillesdon		2	10

A very interesting expense is provided by the cost of entertaining the trustees; presumably Hillesden House (which we all remember was practically destroyed by the Parliamentary Army in 1644) was not habitable, and apparently they ate at the house of Henry Parker, the cost being follows:—

		£	s.	d.
205—660	Paid for a surloyne of beefe for a dinner for Dr. Denton, Mr. Woodward, and Mr. John Smyth (3 of the Trustees aforesaid), when they met at Hillesdon on the 28th of Augt., 1665, about the affaires of the said Mr. Edmund Denton's Estate		2	6
205—661	Paid to Henry Parker for a couple of rabbets for the said dinner	1	0	
662	Paid more to him for 6 pigeons for the same dinner	1	0	
663	Paid more to Henry Parker for beere then	2	0	
664	Paid more to him for fire, butter, and sugar then	1	0	
665	Paid more to him for bread then			9

This was a very modest affair compared with the cost a year previously, when, however, one of the trustees stopped for a month:—

159—785 Paid the sune of £26: 7: 3½ for expenses for house-keeping and other charges laid out at Hillesdon from the 17th of August, 1664, to the 18th Septr., 1664, during which time Mr. Alexander Denton, one of the said Trustees, staid there about the Affaires of the said Mr. Edm. Denton's Estate in pursuance of an Order of all the said Trustees dated 11 July, 1664, the number of p'sons then in family being 8 or 9 besides Tenants and Others which had accesse to him about the said affaires, viz.:—

	£	s.	d.
For Dyett	16	3	10½
For washing of linnen		10	6
For horsemeate and given to Hen. Parker for looking to the horses	2	14	11
For cleaving wood and other odd businesses		12	0
For horsehire and charges of travailing	2	1	0
Given to severall persons	3	5	0
For the Carrier for carriage ...	1	10	0
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For the whole as appears by the particu- lar payments in a booke	£26	17	3½

We find also the costs of the Manor Court of the Prebend-end estate:—

216—204 Paid charges at a Court Leet and Court Baron held within the said Manor of the Prebend-end of Buckingham cum Gawcott on the 10th Octob., 1664, viz.:

	£	s.	d.
To Mr. Cadwallader Coles for a dinner then at his house, as by bill and Acqtt.	2	10	8
To Mrs. Reeve for the use of her house where the said Court was kept		10	0
To her servants then		3	0
To goodwife Oliff for the use of her house and for beere for the Jury		2	0
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	£3	5	8

Certain miscellaneous payments have been included in this group, which are set out in full below:—

	£	s.	d.
20—224 Paid to Widd. Phillips for bulling her 5 Cowes		2	6

47—676	Paid to Mr. Thomas Bilcliff for drawing and ingrossing a lease from the said Mr. Edmund Denton's Trustees to Mr. Edw. Paxton	1	0	0
35—504	Paid to Oliver Mayne for the hire of his horse to carry John Kersey ^a from Hillesdon to Alisbury in his returne to London	1	6	
78—231	Paid for 4 daies horsehire to carry John Kersey into Gloucestershire about the said Trustees businesse	4	0	
232	Paid for horsemeate in the returne of the said horse to Hillesdon and setting a shooe by the way	2	2	
87—394	Paid to Giles Chennells for his charges in a journey to Gloucestershire about the said Trustees' business	5	6	
92—486	Paid to Tho. Stokes for carrying writings to Sir Edw. Fust in Gloucestershire concerning Buckingham Vicarage, his journey being 6 daies	9	0	

BUILDING.

By combining those items of Labour and Materials which relate to the same job we can extract very useful building costs. Sometimes we find a series of consecutive entries relating to the same work, as in an ordinary case of repairs:—

		£	s.	d.
32—463	Paid for 500 Laths for repaire of the house wherein Willm. French lately dwelt	5	10	
464	Paid for a doore lock for the same house	1	4	
33—465	Paid for 1,000 Lath nailes for the house last mentioned	1	4	
466	Paid for a pair of hooks and hinges for the same house		10	
467	Paid for 2,000 eight penny nailes for the same house	11	8	
468	Paid to Simon Smyth and his two men for 4 daies worke a peece about laying the floores of the same house	13	4	
469	Paid more to his two men for making a sinke and seeling the milke house there, 5 daies a peece	11	8	

^a John Kersey was the regular bearer of cash and messages between the Trustees, most of whom seem to have been living in London and Hillesden. He was evidently a most trusted servant.

But far more important jobs were recorded, and we can obtain what purports to be the complete cost of erecting a house; the payments run from January to June, 1664, and are entered in the order of payment so that the principal item of contract-labour does not occur until April.

RICHARD WISEMAN'S HOUSE.

		£	s.	d.
142—400	Paid to my brother Richard Haynes for 1 daies work with his teeme to carry timber to a Sawpitt for the house which is to be sett up in the Sandpitt ground for Rich. Wiseman	4	0	
417	Paid to John Hill for levelling the ground and digging mortar for Richard Wiseman's house in the Sandpitt ground in the West Field, 6 daies	4	0	
418	Paid to Giles Chennells for the like worke, 1 day		8	
143—125	Paid for 2,000 of Lath-nailes for Richard Wiseman's house in the West field before mentioned	3	8	
426	Paid for 1,000 of 8 penny nailes for the same house	5	10	
436	Paid to John Hill for 2 daies digging of mortar for Rich. Wiseman's house aforesaid in the West Field	1	4	
439	Paid to Elnathan Wootton for a load of straw for Richard Wiseman's house in the West field aforesaid	12	0	
441	Paid to Tho. Long for 7 daies work with his teeme carrying stones and timber from the house where Francis Long lately dwelt into the Sand-pitt ground in the West field for the setting up a house there for Richard Wiseman ^o	1	8	0
144—450	Paid for 2,000 of Lath nailes for Rich. Wiseman's house	3	8	
452	Paid to my brother Rich. Haynes for 7 daies worke with his teeme carrying timber and stone from the house where Francis Long lately dwelt to the said Richard Wiseman's house	1	8	0

^o In this and in the next building we see that it was usual to take down a timber-framed building and erect it again in a place where it would be more useful. This is highly interesting, and explains why it is that we often see the timbers of a barn with mortice-holes, which could never have been needed in their present position. The present editor lives near to a barn which is known to have been moved some, seventy years ago from Bledlow, ten miles away.

454	Paid to John Hill for 3 daies digging of mortar for Rich. Wiseman's house	2 0
456	Paid for 1,600 setts to quicksett about Rich. Wiseman's house	4 0
460	Paid to George Griggs and Tho. Butcher for 2 daies worke a peece ditching about Rich. Wiseman's House in the West field	2 8
144—461	Paid to John Hill for 7 daies thatching of Rich. Wiseman's house	7 0
462	Paid to Goodwife Hill for 8 daies yelming there	4 0
467	Paid to a Brick-maker at Bourton for 350 bricks and 9 pavement tiles for the said Rich. Wiseman's house	8 10
468	Paid there for 2 quarters of lime for the said house	8 0
145—469	Paid to John Kinton and Tho. Bennett for fetching the said brick and lime	8 0
476	Paid to John Hill for 2 daies thatching of Richard Wiseman's house	2 0
477	Paid to Goodwife Hill for yelming there, 1 day	6
478	Paid to Francis Long for serving the said thatcher, 2 daies	1 4
491	Paid to my brother Rich. Haynes for 4 daies work with his teeme carrying timber and stones to Rich. Wiseman's house ...	16 0
146—510	Paid to Jer. Browne the glasier for 24 feet of new glasse for Rich. Wiseman's house in the Westfield	12 6
511	Paid for lattice windows for the said house	1 6
147—526	Paid for 12 bushells more of lime for the said Rich. Wiseman's house	6 0
527	Paid for 3 bushells of haire for the said house	1 8
530	Paid to Simon Smyth in full due to him of Agreement for Carpenter's worke and Mason's worke in taking downe the house wherein Francis Long lately dwelt and to sett it up in the Sand-pitt ground in the West Feld for R. Wiseman	10 5 0
149—568	Paid to Tho. Arnott for hooks and hinges, 10lbs., 23lbs., for Rich. Wiseman's house	7 8
569	Paid for 3,000 of reparacon nails for the same house	6 0
570	Paid for crosse garners' and staples for the said house	5 2

⁷ This is presumably the modern "garnet," a kind of hinge with plates for affixing to doorpost and door.

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571	Paid for 1,000 of 8d. nails for the said house	5	10
572	Paid for 200 4d. nails for the said house		8
573	Paid for joints, hooks, and hinges for the said house	3	3
153—654	Paid for a lock for Rich. Wiseman's house in the West field	2	2
		<hr/>	
		£20	12 11
		<hr/> <hr/>	

Another job of less importance was the rebuilding of a barn, which appears to have been blown down; few new timbers were required, but the entries are worth quoting for the sake of the "watling." The entirely lost art of making wattle and daub was apparently performed by an ordinary day-labourer at his usual remuneration of 8d. per day.⁸

ROBERT BRASHEAD'S BARN.

		£	s.	d.
81—296	Paid to my brother Rich. Haynes for carrying 2 loads of old timber from Tho. Paxton's to Mareway ground to rebuild Robt. Brashead's barne that was blown down there	4	0	
299	Paid to Willm. Knight and Willm. Toms for Carpenter's worke about Brashead's barne aforesaid 4 daies apeece	9	4	
82—304	Paid to Wm. Knight for carpenter's worke about Brashead's barne—3 daies	3	0	
83—324	Paid to Wm. Knight for 2½ daies carpenter's worke about Brashead's barne	2	6	
84—339	Paid to Wm. Knight and Willm. Toms for Carpenter's worke about Brashead's barne aforesaid, 5 days apeece	10	0	
345	Paid for 2,000 lath nails for Robt. Brashead's barne aforesaid	3	8	
85—354	Paid to Willm. Knight and Willm. Toms for 5 daies a peece Carpenter's worke about Robt. Brashead's barne aforesaid	10	0	
355	Paid to Willm. Berry for watling at the said barne—3 daies	2	0	

⁸ These notes are being written in a house where the wattle and daub has lasted over three centuries, and still acts as an admirable non-conductor of heat; the oblivion into which the process has fallen is much to be deplored.

363	Paid to Willm. Toms for carpenter's worke 6 daies, 6s., and to Willm. Knight for the like 5 daies, 5s., about Brashead's barne aforesaid, in all	11	0
87—386	Paid to Elnathan Wootton and Willm. Stephens for 4 loads of straw and the carriage to Brashead's barne	1	19 0
88—402	Paid to John Hill for thatching at Robt. Brashead's barne—4½ daies	4	6
403	Paid to Francis Long for serving the thatcher there 4½ daies	3	0
404	Paid to Joane Bray for drawing ^a straw there 4½ daies	1	6
405	Paid to Goodwife Hill for the like 4½ daies	1	6
91—453	Paid to James Hayes for 500 setts to sett about Robt. Brashead's homestall in Mareway	1	3
135—261	Paid to John Hobbs for watling up the walls of Robt. Brashead, jun., his barne in Mareway, 4 daies	2	8
		<u>£5</u>	<u>8 11</u>

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

^a This is the same process as is elsewhere called "yelming."