

## **Domestic Work in the Nineteenth Century** <sup>[1]</sup>

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Women's work on a farm didn't change much in the late nineteenth century. Basic tasks such as preparing food, cleaning, and washing clothes were time consuming and required a great deal of labor. In these videos, participants in the Junior Reenactor program and staff of Duke Homestead State Historic Site in Durham, North Carolina, demonstrate some of the work involved in maintaining a household in the 1870s.

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### **Watch and Listen:**

An open fire is the oldest means of cooking! In the video above, reenactors make hoe cakes — small corn cakes small enough to be baked on the back of a farmer's hoe, as they originally were. Click [here](#) <sup>[11]</sup> for a video transcript.

The cast-iron cookstove was fairly new technology in the 1870s. In the video above, reenactors show how it worked. Click [here](#) <sup>[12]</sup> for a video transcript.

Washing a family's clothes and linens was an all-day job — and ironing was another. In the video above, reenactors demonstrate washing clothes using lye soap and bluing balls. Click [here](#) <sup>[13]</sup> for a video transcript.

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