Laundry and ironing by hand

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Washing a family's clothes and linens was an all-day job -- and ironing was another.

Video: 📄 Laundry and Ironing by hand
Duration: 2:41
Transcript:

Video Transcript

Girl (00:08)
I am washing laundry, and I am using lye soap, which was made over in this ash hopper, and basically they would wash once a month. And then they would take it over to the fire.

Girl 2 (01:03)
Now I'm boiling the clothes to get all the grease stains out of them.

Woman (01:23)
And our final rinsing pot we have to take these bluing balls, and they're cakes of compressed indigo. We put it in our pot here to rinse. The bluing agent works to counterbalance the yellow, from all the lye soap, it makes our whites very yellow, so we put blue in here to get our really white whites to balance out. Alright, now we'll just wring it out, and go hang it on the fence to dry.

Girl 1 (02:11)
They would get a hot stove and put the iron on the stove, and wait until it got hot, and then they would take it off, and they would put beeswax on the bottom of it to use as a starch which would keep the clothes from scalding. And before they would do that they would put water on it.

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