

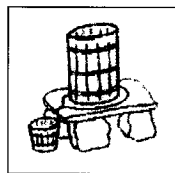
One wonders, if the wind was unfavourable, what the villagers must have thought about the wafts of rotting vegetation drifting across their homes. Or did they notice the smell over the tannery and the dung?



*Taking flax out of bog – spreading to dry – storing – beetling – breaking.*  
From J.R. Green, *The History of Britain*, Chapt. X, Vol. 4, 1892.

## Soap Making

Soap was a valuable item at that time, even though the idea of bathing was not popular; it was needed for washing linen. Soap was produced by boiling lye and fats together. Lye was made by soaking wood ash in soft water. Stale urine or pigeon dung was added to strengthen its cleaning properties. The fats were prepared by rendering them to remove impurities. Waste fats from butchering, or collected cooking grease, were boiled in water on an open fire. Soap making was an outdoor activity. The smell from rendering rancid fat was too strong to wish in anyone's house – even the



*Lye leaching apparatus.*