

What's the Process? – Explanations (1 of 2)**Scutching (a strick of flax)**

This involves knocking off the woody parts with a long wooden blade. Breaking and scutching produce a lot of fine dust, known as pouce. The workers breathed in the pouce and it caused breathing problems and hoarseness.

Breaking

The dried beets then go through breaking. They are beaten with a wooden mallet to break up the woody parts. A bundle of broken flax was known as a strick.

Hackling (combing)

The scutched fibres are passed through a big metal comb to untangle them and remove any remaining pieces of woody stem.

Retting

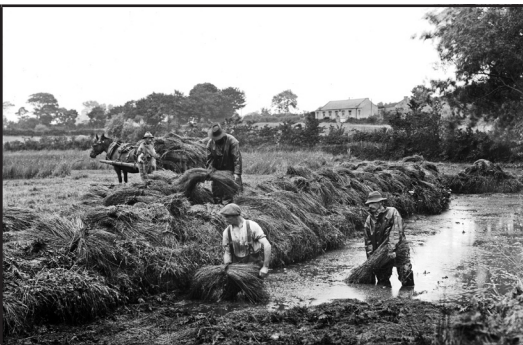
(soaking in water – ‘rotting’)
The bundles are retted for up to 14 days in a lint dam to rot the hard woody material in the stalks that later has to be stripped out.

Drying

The flax is laid out and dried in the open air, but in Ireland this often had to be done using a hot kiln – a type of big oven.

What's the Process? – Answers (2 of 2)**1. Retting**

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**2. Drying**

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**3. Breaking**

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**4. Scutching (a strick of flax)**

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