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The Old Picture

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The Old Picture

On this page we publish old pictures sent in by our SAG readers. If you have a picture you want to see on this page, either send a digital copy, scanned in at no less than 300 dpi and saved as a jpg or tiff file, or send a good paper copy to the editor at the address shown on the inside cover. Do not send any originals, as we can not accept responsibility for them. Neither can we promise to publish all pictures.



This picture, from about 1900, has been sent in by *Olle Andersson*, a member of the Nyed Local Heritage Association (*Nyeds Hembygdsförening*). Olle is very active in working with the association's collection of old pictures, which he scans and makes available on the web site of the association. <http://hembygd.nyed.se> (no English!).

Nyed is a parish in southern Värmland, mostly farming country but there was also iron manufacture in the old days.

The women in this picture are busy working with the many steps in con-

verting flax from the plant to linen yarn for weaving. At this stage they were "breaking" the flax.

As one American author writes "then comes that part of the work which only strong men can perform, called breaking the flax, to get from the center of the stalks the hard, wood-like "bun," which is of no value. This is done [125] with a machine made of wood, as if you were to set three or four broad knives on a bench, at a certain distance apart, with as many more on a lever to come from above, fitting; closely between the lower blades. The upper part of the

machine is pulled down with force upon the flax, so that every portion of it is broken." Evidently Swedish women were as strong as men in the old days, as the preparing of flax was women's work. When the work was done, the women often relaxed with a little party, and then the men were welcome.

A link to a web site on preparing flax is found on page 29.