

Tamar Stone

Taking to Bed

(sickness adult doll bed) © 2007

Spec Sheet

Hand and machine sewn bed coverings. Machine embroidered text.

Antique wood doll bed with chicken wire mattress support: 12" (W) x 21" (L) x 13" (H)

Pillow Case (*vintage white with pink trim cotton pillowcase*): 8 1/2" (W) x 5" (L)

Pillow (*vintage stripped cotton ticking, hand stuffed with cotton batting*): 7 1/2" (W) x 4 1/2" (L)

Quilt (*Front side: antique quilt, Back side: vintage cotton sack cloth, hand tied*): 23" (W) x 21 1/2" (L)

Blanket on bed (*vintage off-white cotton blanket*): 26" (W) x 30" (L)

Blanket folded over metal end rail of bed (*vintage off-white, blue, rose plaid cotton blanket*):
18" (W) x 23" (L)

Top Sheet (*vintage pink cotton sack cloth with blue/white flowers*): 19" (W) x 27" (L)

Bottom sheet (*vintage cotton sheet*): 21 1/2" (W) x 29" (L)

Mattress: (*vintage cotton ticking, stuffed with cotton batting, hand tied*): 11 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 2" (H)

“Taking To Bed” (Sickness 1 – adult doll bed)

Pillowcase front:

The subject of
weakness,

Pillowcase back:

so common to
American females.

Pillow front:

Taking to Bed

Pillow back

Tamar Stone
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Folded Blanket (end of bed over metal rod)

It is only those
who thus suffer,
who can be acquainted with
their utter inability to stand,
walk, and even to sit up
a long at a time.

Those in this condition,
without any other sign
of ill-health, are sometimes
even thought to keep
to their beds from the mere
love of it,
or
an indolent habit.

Folded Blanket *back side*

...it is often brought on suddenly,
and from
over-exertion, when the condition
is one of extreme weakness,
or there is a relaxed and
debilitated state of the
stomach, bowels and
internal organs.

At all times pains
should be taken by all females
in health to go through some
motion daily,
that will give strength to those parts
of the physical frame,
especially if the habits
and business
are sedentary.

Mrs. L.G. Abell, 1851

“Taking To Bed” (Sickness 1 – adult doll bed)

Quilt top side:

In those days
a new disease
had
dawned
on the
medical horizon.

It
was called
“Nervous
Prostration.”

Quilt back side:

No one knew
much about it,
and
there were many
who openly scoffed,
saying
it was only
a name
for
laziness.

Charlotte Perkins Gillman
1860

Blanket top side

To be *recognizable ill*
one must be confined to one’s bed,
and preferably in pain.

That a heretofore markedly
vigorous young woman,
with every comfort about her,
should collapse in this lamentable
manner was inexplicable.

“*You should use your will,*”
said earnest friends.

I had used it, hard and long,
perhaps too hard
and too long;
at any rate it wouldn’t work now.

“*Force some happiness into your life,*”
said one sympathizer.

“*Take an agreeable book to bed with you,
occupy your mind with pleasant things.*”

She did not realize that
I was unable to read,
and that my mind was exclusively
occupied with unpleasant things.

Blanket back side

This disorder involved a
growing melancholia, and that,
as those know who have tasted it,
consists of every painful mental
sensation, shame, fear, remorse,
a blind oppressive confusion,
utter weakness, a steady brain-ache
that fills the conscious mind
with crowding images of distress.

The misery is doubtless as
physical as a toothache, but a brain,
of its own nature,
grotes for reasons for its misery.

Feeling the sensation of fear,
the mind suggests every
possible calamity’ the
sensation shame – remorse –
and one remembers every mistake
and misdeeds of a lifetime,
and grovels to the earth
in abasement...

“Taking To Bed” (Sickness 1 – adult doll bed)

Top sheet *top side*

*“If you would get up and
do something you would feel better,”
said my mother.*

I rose drearily, and essayed to brush
up the floor a little, with a dustpan
and small whiskbroom,
but soon dropped those implements
exhausted, and wept again
in the helpless shame.

I, the ceaselessly industrious,
could do no work of any kind.

I was so weak that the knife
and fork sank my hands – too tired to eat.
I could not read nor write nor paint nor sew
nor talk nor listen to talking,
nor anything.

I lay on the lounge and wept all day.
The tears ran down into my ears
on either side.

I went to bed crying,
woke in the night crying,
sat on the edge of the bed
in the morning and cried –
from sheer continuous pain.

Not physical, the doctors examined me
and found nothing the matter.

Top sheet *back side*

The only physical pain I ever knew,
besides dentistry and one sore finger,
was having the baby, and
I would rather had had a baby every week
than suffer as I suffered in my mind.
A constant dragging weariness miles below zero.
Absolute in capacity. Absolute misery.

To the spirit it was as if one were
an armless, leg-less, eyeless, voiceless cripple.
Prominent among the tumbling suggestions
of a suffering brain was the thought,
*“You did it yourself! You did it yourself!
You had health and strength and hope
and glorious work before you –
and you threw it all away.
You were called to serve humanity,
and you cannot serve yourself.
No good as a wife, no good as a mother,
no good at anything.
And you did it yourself!”*

**Charlotte Perkins Gillman
1860**

“Taking To Bed” (Sickness 1 – adult doll bed)

Bottom sheet *top side*

The horizontal position
is the best,
and the sooner she yields
to the necessity,
the better for her...

When one feels symptoms
of this complaint,
of a peculiar sinking, and
weakness of the body,
attended at first with
peculiar pain,
she should refrain
from all exercise
of walking,
riding, or even
standing or sitting.

Mrs. L.G. Abell, 1851

Bottom sheet *back side*

When they are bidden
to stay in bed a month,
and neither to read, write,
nor sew, and have one nurse –
who is not a relative –
then rest becomes
for some women
a rather bitter medicine,
and they are glad enough
to accept the order
to rise and go about
when the doctor
issues a mandate
which has become
pleasantly welcome
and
eagerly
looked from.

*Mr. S. Weir Mitchell¹ on
“Neurasthenia in Women”, 1877*

¹ Doctor of Charlotte Perkin Gillman’s. She took his cure – almost went mad and eventually wrote *The Yellow Wallpaper*.

“Taking To Bed” (Sickness 1 – adult doll bed)

Mattress top side

To place the feet
against the foot-board, and
imitate walking, running,
riding and then to move
the body, back, limbs, and
give a gently motion to the
bowels often,
without fatigue, and
do nothing that will impair
digestion, and keep up the
general health by air, diet,
and friction, or bathing, and
at first using
the *supporter, till strong,*
and taking exercise
on the feet, cautiously,
will produce a very
marked change, and in time
will give decided relief.

Mattress back side

Taking
the ideas from
the use of
motion to give strength
every lady sufferer
can become her own physician,
and take all kinds of exercise
in her bed, until she can
bear it otherwise.

Any motion that gives
action to the bowels,
back, stomach, lungs, etc.,
will impart
local strength!

I cannot but think
it may be a *cure!*

Mrs. L.G. Abell, 1851