

**My Pioneer Mattress-
Gathering Cat-Tales for Beds
By Sarah Simmons Berry(from Lehi-age 70)**

When October comes and the early frost is in the air, we go gathering Cat-tails. Cat-tails grow in swampy places where they can have their food in water most of the summer. It is from the heads of the Cat-tail plants we gather the material for beds.

This material is packed tight into the top of the big smooth stalk, or stem, and looks like a roly polly pincushion, covered with nice brown velvet. This is in size about 3 to 8 inches long and about as large around as a broom handle.

You take your bed ticks and other ticks (heavy factory will do for ticks) with you. When you got to the Cat-tails, you are in a hurry to work. Each person must have a 50 lb. flour sack, or something like that, and some strong string with him. You take hold of the top of the sack, then gather it about 1/2 way across the top. Then holding the gathered part, tie it tight with your string and leave the other part of the top open. If you are right-handed, tie the string to a belt at your waist having the sack hang at your left hip. If you do not wear a belt tie the string around your waist. Then you are ready to go near the Cat-tail stalk. Take hold of the stem a few inches below the head, and hold tight while you pull the stalk out of the sack, leaving the fluffiness inside. Then you go on until your sack is full. Then you empty it into your bed tick, fill your ticks as full as you would want your feather bed to be.

There are a few other things to say that might be helpful. Place the tick in a dry place in the sunshine for a few days. Shake and fluff it up frequently. You will be delighted with it. All lumps will have fluffed out and you will be able to sink deep into warmth and comfort such as real feather do not have.

Cat-tail beds do not last longer than a year, then they grow soggy and are

ready to be thrown away and the ticks are made ready for new fillings. To put them out in the sun a few times during the summer prolongs their softness.

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