

Granddad Brady and the Old Yellow High Chair

by Fran Moore #1288

Oh no, it wasn't always yellow, it has been many colors and has served many children within our families.

It all started back in 1938 with my Great Grandfather, Thomas Brady, who built a high chair for the expected child, me. At the time we lived with my Grandfather Stenseth, north of Valleyview, or with my grandparents Ben and Lutie Bodeker, east of Valleyview. We did not have our own homestead yet.

Grandad Brady, Granny Lutie's father, lived with them first at Sturgeon Lake and then when they moved to Valleyview. At each location (at Sturgeon Lake, the Waller place north of Valleyview or the place east on the hill overlooking the settlement) they provided him with his own cabin. (The cabin at Sturgeon Lake was a converted N.W.M.P. building as my Dad remembers when they were fixing it up for Granddad, having to take out the "cell" in the building. He said that the cell was constructed of wooden poles and painted grey to look like steel.)

Grandad Brady had many talents and they included art sketches and woodwork. I still have some of his artwork and the yellow high chair. The artwork was done with pencil sketches and with pastels, and was mostly copies of pictures that he liked. I prize these pieces; especially the ones that are all flyspecked from hanging on the cupboard door of his little cabin. They decorated his walls.

Another piece of his work is a prized possession of Nita Clough at Valleyview. It is a rocking chair that Granddad Brady made for Sandy Ford, who then gave it to Nita.

In 1940, when sister Phyl was a small baby we moved to our own homestead south and west of Valleyview. Dad had built a two-room home in a clearing on the west side of the quarter. It was a short walk through the trees, past the outhouse to our garden and our pastures.

By then Grannie and Grandpa Bodeker had moved away so Granddad Brady came to live on our homestead in a little log cabin. Phyl and I spent quite a bit of time with him when our Dad was away working and Mom had to do the farm chores. He taught us much about "behaving and manners". Phyl remembers him teaching her how to hold her fork, and she had to do it right. Being as I was the oldest I was away to school first so Phyl spent even more time with Granddad

Brady. I remember him as being a small man and very stern and strict.

In his little cabin, I remember him having a cupboard and table, a bed and a stove and other possessions stacked in the corner. Outside was a good-sized woodpile, which we remember, was one of his major activities, besides babysitting us girls – splitting wood. Also, to the west of his cabin was the root cellar, next to our big garden spot. This was a wonderful structure that kept our vegetables fresh all year round.

Granddad Brady died of cancer in the summer of 1948, at the age of 88 years, when I was 10 years old.

The old yellow high chair was used by my sister Phyl and myself and then it went north of town to be used by my cousins. Uncle Tony and Aunt June used the high chair for their younger children until our sister Beverly came along in 1950, when it came back to our house.

It was used by Bev and then brother Gilbert in his short life. Gilbert was born in 1954 and had nerve (spinal or brain) injuries that gave him convulsions that became increasingly strong as he got older. He died when he was only two years old, and is buried in Valleyview cemetery along with Granddad Brady.

Then in 1959 I got married and we began our family. The "old yellow high chair" came to our house. Here Kerry, Lonny and Bernice enjoyed the use of this old chair, and it has stayed in our home ever since.

The chair isn't much to look at and Dad says that it was just made of scraps of material that Granddad had left from building some of his finer pieces, like the rocking chairs. It had serving trays attached a few times but since we've had it it is just pushed up to the table for the young ones. If we scraped down the paint we are liable to

find many colors – but we won't bother it now, it is just fine in yellow.

When our children grew up and became parents they would come home and their children have enjoyed the use of this chair. We now have seven grandchildren (Tyler, Dallas, Brady, Jordan, April, Melissa and Steven).

Today the little "old yellow high chair" has a special corner in our dining room and a special place in all our memories. At Christmas 1999, Steven, who is four says, "I want to sit in my chair", to the delight of his Great Grandparents Graham and Eunice Bodeker and his Grandparents, Marv and Fran Moore.

We will care for the "old yellow high chair" and we are sure that many more little folk will call it theirs for a time to come.

Could it touch another six generations?

