

Aboriginal Mother's Dream Comes True

A dream came true for an aboriginal woman and her three children recently.

The woman, Mrs. Alma Ridgeway, 43, with John, 18, Caviil, 16, and Stewart, 11, left an aboriginal station on the North Coast and came to Sydney to live.

With the help of a long-term loan from the N.S.W. Aborigines' Welfare Board, Mrs. Ridgeway recently became the owner of a £2,000 three-bedroom weather-board cottage at Rozelle.

Secretary of the board, Mr. J. R. Mullins, said that Mrs. Ridgeway and her family were the first aborigines to be settled in Sydney with the board's help.

"Moving aborigines into towns is part of the board's long-term policy of assimilation," Mr. Mullins said.

"We have been especially pleased to help Mrs. Ridgeway as she is such a good mother and a deserving case.

"She is of very good character and has always worked hard to keep her independence."

"The Director of Aboriginal Welfare, Mr. H. Saxby, approved, and one day I got a telephone call, asking me to go to Sydney right away.

"I looked at this house with an official of the board next morning, and we took it on the spot."

Saved Money.

Mrs. Ridgeway said she had worked as a school cleaner at Burnt Bridge to save money for the house.

It had taken her four years to save £200 for the deposit and to buy furniture.

Her children had helped.

"We miss the quietness of the bush," she said. "The air here has a tight feeling . . . and the soot and noise from the power-house nearby is going to take some getting used to.

"But we believe the opportunities in Sydney should make up for that.



The Ridgeway Family.

"Shy, Attractive."

At her Rozelle home, Mrs. Ridgeway, a shy, attractive woman, said she had come to Sydney to "give my family a chance."

"Burnt Bridge aboriginal station has only about 200 people, and there is very little work for the young people" she said.

"About 18 months ago I approached the manager of the station, Mr. Halkatt, and asked if the board would help and advise me in buying a house.

"John has had experience in garage work and hopes to get a job in that line.

"Caviil will probably look for work in a factory.

"Stewart will go to the Rozelle Technical School."

Garden Planted.

Mrs. Ridgeway had been only a few days in her house when we called, but already it showed signs of her industry.

Garden beds had been dug and planted with vegetables and flowers, and the house was as neat as a new pin.