

The Ridley Stripper Story

When John Ridley was born in England in 1806, no one believed that he would travel half-way around the world and invent a machine that would change Australia's wheat harvesting forever.

In 1839, John took his wife and two daughters, and set sail for Port Adelaide on the *Warrior*. Upon arrival, he began to farm, but soon found that, due to the recent discovery of gold in Victoria, there was no one to help harvest all the crops. It is said that one day, while walking through their nearly ripe crop with her husband, John's wife dropped her comb. John picked it up, and in doing so, stripped the head off a head of wheat. That gave him the idea to make an enormous comb and attach it to revolving wooden beaters. This would enable the wheat to be harvested and winnowed in one machine with only one worker. This plan worked better than even John had expected! He was able to harvest one acre in 1 ½ hours.

Soon after this, John and his family returned to England. It was as if God had brought John out to South Australia for a specific purpose, then took him back once he had done his job.