

VACANT HOUSE SEIZED FOR FAMILY

Furniture Passed Through Window

Last night a group of ex-service-men, styling themselves "The Vigilantes," assisted in moving a family of four into a vacant house in Bell St, Hawthorn, near Glenferrie station.

The family provided with the home were Bill Wagglan (a discharged soldier, wounded in New Guinea), his wife, their daughter Betty, 6½, and son Bill, 5½. They had been told to quit the single room they had been sharing in Inkerman st, St Kilda, and could find no other living quarters. The house the "Vigilantes" have found for them has been empty for three years, and is rented by an 80-year-old man for sentimental reasons. Attempts made to acquire the home legally were unsuccessful.

Last night's "house grab" passed off without incident. The family and their furniture arrived piled up on a van at 8.15pm. "Vigilantes" opened up the house from the back, but as the key they had would not open the front door, family and furniture all passed through the front window, in the bright glare of newspaper photographers' flash-bulbs. After she had climbed into her new house, Mrs Wagglan looked back through the window and cried out: "This is the biggest thrill of my life. It's the first time we've had a house to ourselves for four years."

The only incident of official intervention was when a passing policeman climbed off his bicycle and stood leaning ominously on the handlebars.

"What's going on here?" he asked. "Just some people moving into a house," he was told.

"Oh, is that all!" said the policeman. "Thought there was something doing!" and he rode on.

(Pictures on Page 13)