

THOMAS BRUNNER

(continued from previous page)

In March Brunner and Heaphy started again: in August they were back in Nelson. They had fed mainly on potatoes, whitebait and dogfish, palm tree stems and an occasional woodhen.

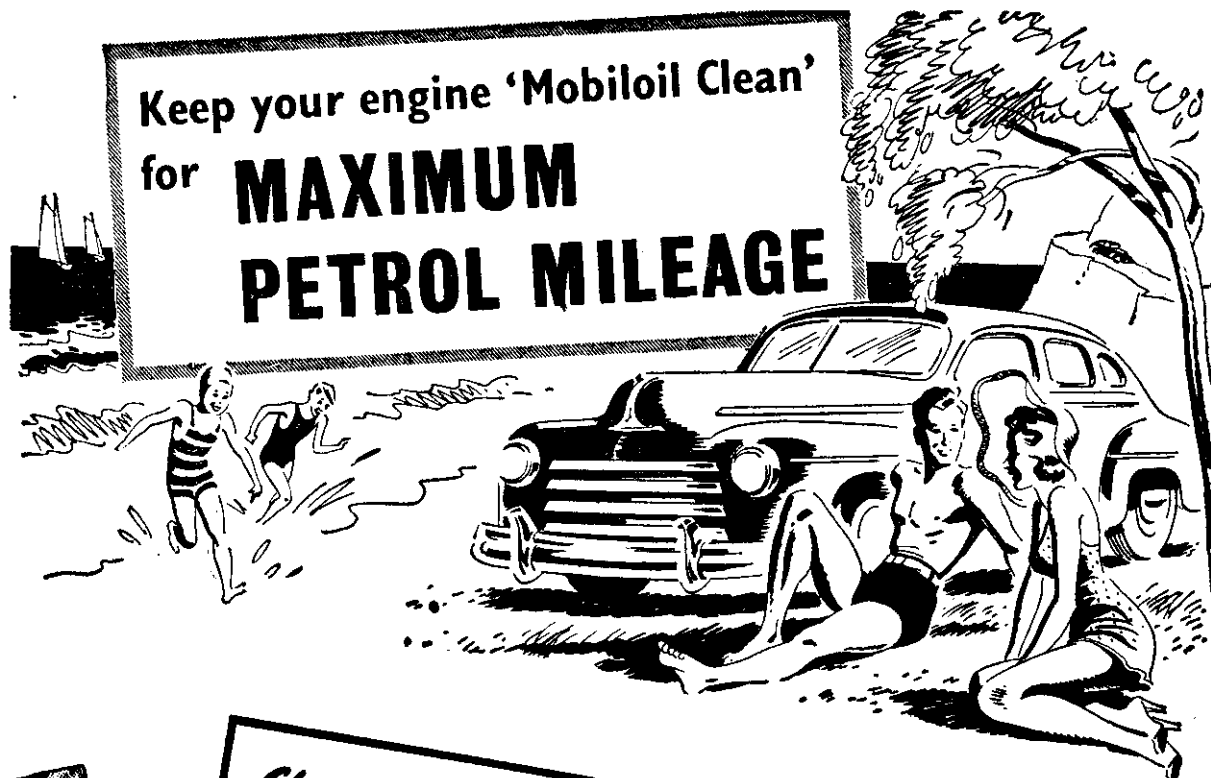
Brunner's Heroic Struggle

That same year (December, 1846), Brunner started on his epic journey with Kehu and Pikiwati and their wives. At the mouth of the Grey Brunner had to eat his dog. Sealers had robbed the potato fields. On past Arahura and Hokitika to Wanganui (October, 1847), then to Okarito (where they ate eels) and past the Franz Joseph without being aware of it. Brunner was now the primitive man—barefoot or with feet wrapped in flax sandals; able to live on fernroot; paralysed on one side by constant drenching; hearing no English except the gibberish words of Kehu. At Tititira Point he sprained his ankle and had to turn back. He had explored all Westland, traced the Grey, and discovered coal. On June 15, 1848, after 560 days in the wilderness, he regained the sheep station at Motueka from which he started. "The greatest piece of exploration in the history of New Zealand," W. G. McClymont says. And it cost Nelson £33/9/4.

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A certain speaker who contributes talks regularly to the BBC receives a large fanmail. Much of this fanmail is addressed to him at the BBC in London and the BBC sends it to his private address in the West of England. He complained that the BBC did not send on his "fan" letters directly they arrived. They preferred to keep them till a good batch had accumulated. He argued. The department of the BBC concerned stuck to its guns and said its method was more convenient. The speaker then wrapped up a dead mouse, put it in an envelope and posted it to himself "care of the BBC." Now all his fanmail is forwarded as fast as possible.

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