

The Radio Explorer



The Rescue of John Guard.

DISCOVERIES—ANCIENT AND MODERN

SOME of the discoveries of the radio explorer are startling. Most of us in the cities lead snug, rather narrow, existences. If we see any further than our noses it is only as far as the tram or bus or train that is going to take us in to our day's work.

Sometimes we go to a film and see pictures of Tibet or Alaska, and we think how strange these places are and how interesting they would be to go to if they were not thousands of miles away.

We don't realise that there are things just as strange on our back doorsteps. I freely admit that I had not realised it until I had talked with the radio explorer. He told me some of the latest things he had discovered.

HE had just been to Motueka and Takaka, and there really did not seem to be a great deal of discovering to be done there. At least, so one imagined.

It was the place where Clouston had been born and the place—or as nearly as possible the place—to which he had flown back in one of Britain's fastest civil planes over half the world.

But while Clouston was flying back to that district there dwelt there, 20 miles in from Takaka in the Never-Never of the New Zealand bush, a man and his wife who had lived there in solitude 20 years beside an asbestos field about 150 acres in area.

THEY lived such a lonely life in their solitary cottage that they have a notice on the track that leads in from civilisation. It says:

Visitors Are Requested to Call Out to Give Us Warning.

THE two people who live there, away from the world, have such lonely lives that the sudden oncome of a stranger without warning is upsetting.

It is not often these days when aeroplanes and radio have laid bare nearly all the secrets of the lonely places in the world that one runs across an explorer.

But, last week, I found one in Wellington. He explores modern New Zealand, as well as old New Zealand. In his own way he is in the direct line from Tasman and Cook and Baron Thierry.

He is a radio explorer.

—By "EMILE."

This is difficult at first to imagine. We who live in the towns and the cities are so used to one another. The sight of strangers means nothing to us.

But it would not mean nothing if we had lived in the Never-Never of New Zealand for 20 years with only a radio set to give us contact with the outside world, and all around us the bush.

ing if we had lived in the Never-Never of New Zealand for 20 years with only a radio set to give us contact with the outside world, and all around us the bush.

SO the radio explorer called out his warning as he came riding up the track to the cottage by Nelson's asbestos field. The man and his wife who lived there made him welcome.

They unsaddled his horse and gave him tea in the hospitality of their cottage, that stood on the edge of unsurveyed country.

"TALK about atmosphere!" said the radio explorer. "It was just like going into some old half-lit English manor house. At one end of the room was the vast open fireplace, hung with billies and kettles on wire.

"The walls, brown with age and softened by smoke, were covered with photographs of famous New Zealanders who at one time or another had been interested in the asbestos field. On the floor were half a dozen deerskin, shot on the place, and out of the window one could see mile upon mile of mountains covered with bush.

"The cottage was 3000 feet above sea level. The elderly couple had lived there for 20 years or more."

That was one thing that the radio explorer found when he set out to discover Nelson's asbestos field.

"Asbestos?" he said. "You'd have thought it a dull enough matter for a radio talk, wouldn't you? It became straight away human and fascinating."

HE had gone exploring in that district, the radio man told me, to find out all he could of the hops and tobacco and apple growing in Nelson and Motueka, to dig up early