



To celebrate 80 years of *The Redemptorist Record / Reality Magazine*, we are delving into our archives to bring you some hidden gems from throughout the years. Reviewed by Paul Copeland

# SHIPWRECKED!

## FATHERS MALONEY AND FOX SHIPWRECKED . . .

FOR many anxious weeks after the departure of Fathers Maloney and Fox, C.S.S.R., for India, there was no news of them. Owing to war-time circumstances there could indeed be no news of them. Then at length there came a cable announcing that they had landed safely—at Montevideo, in Uruguay, South America!

How they reached there was a mystery, but a mystery that is now explained in the following letter from Father Maloney to Very Rev. Father Provincial, C.S.S.R.

It is an interesting letter describing, as it does, the sinking of their vessel, the long journey across the Atlantic, their adventures in Montevideo, their crossing over to Buenos Aires and the prospects of their journey to India.

Redemptorist  
Monastery,  
Buenos Aires,  
16th April, '41.

Dear Rev. Father,  
I had to dash off my last letter so hurriedly that I cannot remember now just how much detail I gave you, so I had better begin at the beginning. Twelve days out of Liverpool on the 25th March we ran into a raider. Fr. Fox was just finishing Mass and I was going to begin mine when the row started. We thought we could get away, but very soon found that the raider was catching up fast. A couple of shells wrecked the wireless and put our one and only gun out of action, so we pulled down the flag and capitulated. No one was killed as far as I know, but a

young fellow about five yards from me got a chunk of shrapnel in the groin which made a horrible wound. We got time to get the boats away but no time to collect any of our goods and chattels. As soon as we were well away our friend sailed in and put the finishing touches to our old ship. In twenty minutes she was gone and we were left with the pleasant prospect of a yachting trip before us, and no clear idea of where we were. We guessed we were about 250 miles south of the Cape Verde Islands, so we headed north. After three days we had knocked up 190 miles. We had an early lunch each day consisting of half a biscuit and about three c.c. of water, and a late dinner of a whole biscuit and another equally long drink. We were 57 in a boat meant

to hold 48 so we had to emulate the horse, and sleep standing. We envied the sardines in their tins! On the third morning we sighted smoke on the horizon, waved our shirts in the approved style of shipwrecked mariners, and eventually were hauled aboard a cargo ship bound for the River Plate. She was of the good old type whose engines are tied together with string and driven more by bad language than coal. Lucky for us, because she was about 24 hours late owing to the string having broken and the Chief Engineer having sworn himself too hoarse to swear any more. Were it not for that breakdown she would never have crossed our track and we would probably have finished up on an iceberg in the



Fathers A. Maloney, C.S.S.R. (standing)  
and M. Fox, C.S.S.R.

Little did Fr Arthur Maloney and Fr Michael Fox realise when they set sail in March 1941 for the new mission in India that their ship would be shelled and sunk by a German warship, and they would end up in Uruguay! Their account of how they finished up 9,000 miles from their intended destination, and the good and bad fortune

they encountered along the way, is fascinating. They stuck to their orders to get to India where they eventually arrived, via Argentina, the United States and the Pacific, five months after leaving Ireland. Both lived to a good age. Fr Maloney was Provincial in the 1960s and Fr Fox was a parish missionary.

Arctic Circle. We were told that instead of being headed for the Cape Verdes we were blithely sailing about fifty miles west of them.

No one could have been kinder than the officers and crew of this cargo ship. They handed over their bunks to us and slept themselves on settees. They shared their clothes and everything else they had. We were ten days aboard her, and on coming near land were ordered into Montevideo by wireless. There was great difficulty in getting permission to land at Montevideo, and when we did get it, it was granted only when the English Consul had given his word that we would be sent out of the country at the first available opportunity. I can't explain by letter why all this was so but there were reasons. As it was Holy Week all the officials were away so we could do nothing till Monday. On Monday we had only a few hours in which to work, because there was a homeward bound boat due that day and we were to embark at noon. We two wanted permission to come over here to the Argentine. By doing so we would leave Uruguay and so save the Consul's promise from being broken, and we would have time to communicate with you, and look around for a neutral ship direct to India.

An Irish Salesian, Fr. Grant, took us round all the offices and pulled miles of strings, but all the responsible men were still away, and when noon came we had to go on board the ship with the prospect of going back home again. We slept aboard that night. The ship was due to sail about ten the next day. At 7.30 a.m. our own Redemptorist Rector (Montevideo) burst in on us with an avalanche of Spanish and told us that Fr. Grant had fixed things up and would shortly be along to liberate us. He came, and did so. It appears that he spent the evening at the phone, got the Presidents of both Republics out of their beds at 11 p.m. and made them sign all sorts of documents. The result is that we were allowed to stay on a few days longer in Montevideo, and this afternoon crossed over here with a Tourist Visa on our passports allowing us to stay in the Argentine for 3 months. I forgot to say that when we got back from the ship with Fr. Grant, we found your cable telling us not to come home by sea. Fr. Grant is a great man. Were it not for him we should be heading for the Cape Verdes again.

We may possibly be able to get a Japanese boat across by Cape of Good Hope and on to Colombo (if the *Admiral Scheer* does not

get us in the Indian Ocean). Or, as we are advised here, we might cross over to Chile and up the coast a bit and there get on an American boat going the other way. But of course we are awaiting your letter of instructions before we make any move. There is a Bostonian Redemptorist in this Community who has charge of the Irish and English elements in Buenos Aires. He has taken us under his wing and is looking after us well.

We saved our Cooks Vouchers but they are no use to us here. The British Consul fitted us all out with clothes and put us up in a hotel and gave us £10 each. We could not go to the Redemptorist house here for a few days for reasons which you may guess.

Both of us are well. We suffered no ill-effects from our adventures. I sincerely hope we shall succeed in reaching India. We had no Mass from 25th of March till Easter Sunday and no Breviary till we managed to secure one *Pars Verna*, date 1914, between us.

I hope all the Fathers and Brothers are well. Our best wishes to them all, and to all our friends.

The writer of this breezy letter and his companion have still—at the time these pages go to Press—a long journey and many difficulties before them. The prayers of our readers are earnestly asked that God may bring them safely to their journey's end.

The Redemptorist Fathers working in India sorely need the assistance of more missionaries for the vast enterprise which they have undertaken. Many Indians are showing keen appreciation of the work already done in their midst by the priests from Ireland. They are particularly pleased at the prospect of having a college erected for the training of native Indian students destined for the missionary life. The importance of this project has also indeed been realized in Ireland where kind friends have already made sacrifices to give it practical support. Such good deeds are surely according to the Heart of Him who asks us to pray that God's Kingdom might come on earth; such good deeds surely bring a blessing on the homeland—particularly the blessing of a greater faith and a greater love. There is striking truth in the saying

"The light that shines farthest  
Shines brightest at home."

—EDITOR.