2003

Montana's scoop

Anne F. Siess

The University of Montana

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MONTANA'S SCOOP

By

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B.S., St. Norbert College, 1996

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

The University of Montana

2003

Approved by:

[Signatures]

Date

May 23, 2003
Montana’s Scoop

Director: Carol Van Valkenburg

Aline Mosby was a Montana girl born and raised in Missoula. She earned a degree in journalism from the University of Montana and even until her death at age 76 spent nearly every summer at her cabin on Flathead Lake in western Montana.

But Mosby’s career never touched Montana. After receiving a bachelor’s degree, she worked in New York City, Seattle and Hollywood. Into her 30s and 40s, she landed reporting positions in Russia, China and France. Women from her era were not expected to have careers, yet Mosby silently broke the mold. She was not a proclaimed feminist, but her continued success and reputation paved the way for women to succeed in the male-dominated media industry.

Mosby lived and breathed journalism. She worked long hours and wrote fast, accurate and graceful stories full of detail. Throughout her career, Mosby covered several historic events and made countless high-profile contacts, but she did not flaunt her experiences. She was modest about her accomplishments except when she spoke of her roots. She loved her home state and her alma mater. And the University of Montana never overlooked her success. It invited her to teach courses in international reporting and awarded her an honorary doctorate degree. Mosby is listed as one of the University of Montana’s prominent alumni and her prominence is undoubtedly well earned.

The purpose of this thesis is to trace the life events of Aline Mosby and detail her contribution to the journalism profession.

Research for this project centered on the University of Montana School of Journalism Mosby student file, a box of Mosby’s reporting memoirs, Mosby’s book, “The View from No. 13 People’s Street,” memorial tributes and interviews with Mosby’s colleagues, friends and sister.

Appendices include samples of Mosby’s work and memorial tributes.
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INTRODUCTION

Upon her death in August 1998, a box of Aline Mosby’s memorabilia from her long and distinguished journalism career was donated to the University of Montana. The box was the size of a case of wine and contained a slew of newspaper clippings, tablets and photographs, as well as a copy of a favorite book, “Scoop” by Evelyn Waugh. The box was so dusty that I had to air out its contents in my spare bedroom. For a week in October 2001, I cracked the window to let the brisk Montana air circulate while I put together the pieces of Mosby’s professional life.

I started with the 49 tablets containing Mosby’s reporting notes. Many of the tablets had rusty ring binders and delicate, transparent paper with shorthand scribbles on both sides. The shorthand, almost an extinct practice in the 21st century, put me at an extreme disadvantage, but I paged through them all and managed to decipher a few notes from several unrelated stories.

Fur collars on tailor jackets. Sleeves down to waists, many slit up sides to waist. High waistlines made skirts look longer. Earrings like chandelier drops.

Mrs. Kennedy, smiling and radiant, arrived in Athens today to emotional welcome from Greeks went into seclusion at villa. American First Lady left her seaside villa for the first time on her vacation stay to drive 30 miles to the impressive Royal summer home atop a pine-covered mountain.


The Uzbek Communist Party Secretary said in 1963 that “nationalism” still exists in Uzbekistan and must be eliminated. Is this “nationalism” still a problem?

Only way to withstand communist aggression and stabilize would 1) Marshall Plan, 2) Aid to Greece and Turkey, 3) Organization of NATO.

The detailed notes rendered a picture of Mosby as a comprehensive journalist who asked all manner of questions from the most conspicuous to the most intriguing.
Next, I tackled a mound of newspaper clippings. The frail clippings were a musty yellow accompanied with a similar smell. Some were duplicate stories from different newspapers and all contained the Mosby byline.

Mrs. Hemingway Defends Her Husband’s Image, Paper name not available, 1966 June 19.

Digging deeper, I discovered flashcards and textbooks for learning the Chinese language, a magazine submission detailing her Hollywood reporting experience, and a load of photographs of Mosby posing with celebrities and dignitaries. The deeper I dug in the box and other sources, the more I realized the vast range of topics Mosby reported. She wrote about everything from Marilyn Monroe’s nude photographs to Lee Harvey Oswald’s United States defection to President Richard Nixon’s Kitchen Debate. Her numerous bylines portrayed her as a jack-of-all-trades. She could report on any topic with simplicity and grace.

The mention of Mosby in “The Moscow Correspondents” by Whitman Bassow and “Women of the World” by Julia Edwards shed light of the trials and tribulations Mosby encountered as a working woman of her era. But Mosby never seemed to complain or make an issue of gender prejudices. If there were obstacles, it did not stop Mosby from becoming a respected journalist and published author.

Mosby’s favorite book, “Scoop,” was the only book in her box of memorabilia, and I read it to see why Mosby liked it so much. I concluded that the story mimics Mosby’s life. The personality of the main character, William Boot, is unlike Mosby’s, for Mosby embraced new opportunities and adventure, while Boot did whatever he could to
maintain an uneventful existence. But Boot, like Mosby, went on a reporting adventure somewhat based on chance, timing and a series of unrelated prior events. Regardless of personal skill and desire, Boot found himself getting one scoop after another. I believe this is how Mosby viewed her professional and personal life. Although some skill and choice were involved, chance, timing and a series of unrelated prior events had Mosby chasing one scoop after another. She undoubtedly lived a life that many journalists only experience in their dreams. And she loved it.
Her last name could have been Johnson.

Aline Mosby’s grandparents were immigrants from Denmark when they came to the United States at the turn of the 20th century. They first settled in Minnesota, which was the gathering place of Swedish immigrants.

“The Swedes and Danes still don’t get along terribly well, but at that time they didn’t get along very well at all. So my grandparents changed their name to Johnson and passed themselves as Swedes, which is sad commentary on ethnic and religious differences in the world,” Mosby said.

After the birth of Mosby’s father, Arthur, her grandparents moved to Eureka, Montana, to open a small hotel. Once they settled, her grandfather changed his name back to Mosby.1

Aline Mosby, who was born July 27, 1922, had a relatively protected childhood. Her father moved to Kalispell to become an electrician after completing grammar school and a couple years of high school.2 In 1922, at the age of 33, Arthur moved his wife, Edna Mae, then pregnant with Mosby, and two-year-old daughter, Mary Jane, to Missoula to open Mosby’s Electric, an electrical supply shop. The Mosbys lived in a big, gray house at 319 University Avenue, two blocks from the University of Montana.3

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1 Aline Mosby, interview by William Knowles, School of Journalism, University of Montana, tape recording, 5 June 1992.
3 Aline Mosby, interview by William Knowles, School of Journalism, University of Montana, tape recording, 5 June 1992.
Arthur survived the great stock market crash of 1929 and kept his family above poverty during the Depression by trying to keep one step ahead of everybody else. In the late 1920s, he decided radio broadcasting reception was not consistent enough in the area to encourage the sale of the radio receiving sets he sold.⁴ To increase sales, Arthur sought to create a radio station by constructing a transmitter from a diagram and parts list in an amateur radio magazine.⁵ It worked. He obtained a license in 1930 and Missoula’s first radio station, KGVO Radio, took the air in January 1931 with the slogan, “The voice of the five great valleys...KGVO, Missoula.” The station identification remained on the airwaves long after Arthur sold his interests in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁶

KGVO Radio was one of the few Montana media enterprises not owned by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, which owned nearly all Montana newspapers and dominated Montana politics and business.⁷ The mining company was furious when Arthur opened the radio station since it could not control the news put out on the KGVO airwaves. In retribution, the Missoulian, the local newspaper owned by the mining company, would not mention the radio station, its hours or programs, or anything about Arthur or his family. Arthur apparently fought with the mining company most of his life.⁸

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Despite the hardships, Arthur expanded his media assets into television, founding KGVO-TV in 1954, as well as KANA radio in Anaconda. He was instrumental in bringing CBS Radio Network to Montana, which accepted his station in 1935,\(^9\) and one of his early employees was Paul Harvey.\(^{10}\)

With Arthur’s deep media connections, it would be easy to assume that he fostered his daughter’s journalism career. But the assumption could not be farther from the truth. Mosby was not close to her father and she was adamant that her career inspiration had nothing to do with him or his radio station.

Mosby’s problems with her father started the day she was born. Her father wanted a son. He was so unhappy and bitter with her gender that when she was a toddler, he called her Peter. It was not until his mother bawled him out on one of her visits that he started to call his daughter by her given name.\(^{11}\) Mosby said her father was tough on her as he felt children should not be pampered.

“I was a bit terrified by him,” she said.\(^{12}\)

Mosby also felt her father favored her sister over her because her sister was prettier and had “lovely bosoms.” Mosby believed her animosity toward her father was a main reason why she liked her Uncle Eck so much.\(^{13}\)

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\(^9\) Ibid., 2.
\(^{11}\) Aline Mosby, interview by William Knowles, School of Journalism, University of Montana, tape recording, 5 June 1992.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., 10.
Eck Mosby was a journalist for the San Francisco Chronicle in the 1930s. On his visits to Missoula, he would tell his niece about the stories he covered and wrote for the Chronicle.  

“I always liked him because he gave me nickels and dimes and was very affectionate, which my father wasn’t so much,” Mosby said.

When she was 8 years old, a year before the debut of KGVO, Mosby told her parents she wanted to be a newspaper reporter when she grew up. She wanted to be just like her Uncle Eck.

Her career news did not thrill her parents. Each had envisioned different career aspirations for their younger child. Arthur wanted Mosby to get married and run the radio station. Her mother wished her to be a concert pianist. Mosby began piano lessons when she was 5 years old, but found the piano boring and performing at concerts terrifying. She recalled only a few people at her last concert when she was a sophomore in college. The concert was in a huge auditorium at the University of Montana and Mosby, who was studying the electric organ, played Sibelius, “Finlandia.” The date was Dec. 7, 1941, the evening of the Pearl Harbor bombing.

Mosby’s career declaration probably did not surprise her parents. As a child, she was full of curiosity.

“When Aline was little, she was always running away,” said Mary Jane Bader, Mosby’s older sister.

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14 Ibid., 2.
15 Ibid., 125.
16 Ibid., 6–7.
“Mother used to tie her to the clothesline (with a string that looped around the clothes line so she could run back and forth). And once (at age 3 or 4), she escaped the clothesline and we found her in the alley.”

Mosby loved cats, read Nancy Drew books, was timid in playing sports, even though she learned how to swim and took tennis lessons, and had an unusually strong desire to read and write. As a youngster, Mosby was very envious that her sister knew how to read and write. When she was 4 years old, she made Mary Jane teach her the reading basics. This early education allowed Mosby to start grammar school a year earlier than her peers. The premature advancement was perhaps a hint of Mosby’s precociousness.

As a teenager during the Depression, she took her father seriously when he told her, “You have to make your own way.” At 15, she was hired as an usherette at Missoula’s Wilma Theatre. Her parents were shocked when they learned of her new job. Her father almost fainted. Mosby wasn’t sure if he was more surprised about her job or her Social Security card, which she lied about her age to obtain. It is unclear whether Mosby lied and said she was 16, because at 15 she needed to get her parents’ signature, or if Montana had additional child labor requirements. Social Security taxes were collected for the first time in January 1937, the same year Mosby turned 15.

Her parents let her keep the job despite their feelings that she was too young and that the position was neither cultured nor elegant for a female. Dressed in trousers and a

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17 Mary Jane Bader, phone interview by author, St. Helena, Calif., 24 Nov. 2002.
19 Ibid., 4.
20 Ibid., 7.
high-neck long sleeve shirt, Mosby ushered moviegoers to their seats with a flashlight for an entire summer.22

Mosby’s lie about her age also managed to kick-start her journalism career. As a junior at Missoula County High School, she entered a journalism contest and won.

“I was extremely overjoyed to discover I had won a scholarship to the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University for a summer session. The age limit was 16, but I lied beautifully (being only 15),” she wrote. “In Chicago, I enjoyed the rain, Chicago and the university but did nothing constructive in the classes, especially after learning the school paid 1/8 of the expenses and I paid the rest.”23

The scholarship was a big deal for Mosby and her family. For Mosby, it was her first trip out of Montana. For her family, it was pride over the fact a photograph of Mosby as well as the Mosby named was printed in the local newspaper, the Missoulian. Mosby said she thought it was the first time the paper printed anything about her family due to the bitter relationship her father had with the Anaconda Copper Mining Co., owner of the Missoulian.24

In high school, Mosby learned Gregg shorthand,25 worked on the Konah, the high school newspaper,26 and served as an assistant editor of the high school yearbook.27

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23 Aline Mosby. “Self Interview” 1942, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
25 Ibid., 93.
26 Barbara Kessler, phone interview by author, 1 April 2003.
She also hung out with a “secret club” called the QMC during her grade school and teenage years (the meaning of QMC remains a secret held by club members). The group consisted of 25 boys and girls and they would sometimes meet in the cottage behind the Mosby house.\textsuperscript{28}

When the time came to decide where to continue her education, Mosby looked no further than the University of Montana.\textsuperscript{29} She said she based her college decision on the high rating of the university’s journalism program, which she claimed ranked fourth in the United States (her claim could not be confirmed by a historic source). Yet her father probably had some influence in her higher education choice.\textsuperscript{30} He wanted her to marry someone to take over his radio station and was not thrilled with her career aspirations. But Mosby, who inherited her father’s determination and independence, stuck with her career goal and came to an agreement with her father on the university she would attend, since she needed his financial support.

“[He] would have never paid for a college out of state when there was a university two blocks away,” she said.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{28} Barbara Koessler, phone interview by author, 1 April 2003.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 12.
CHAPTER 2
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Everybody – students and professors – called her Loop. The nickname was presumably short for the radio term, loop antenna, which is a small receiving antenna usually designed for indoor use and tuning frequencies below 5 MHz. The name served her well even though she preferred print journalism to radio. And despite the dramas in her personal life and her country being at war, Mosby loved college.

In an autobiographical sketch for one of her classes, she detailed her personal likes and dislikes as a college student.

"Am sorry to say that upon entering college I came across the amazing discovery that if I stayed up late at night, which I love to do, I could accomplish eons of duties, but unfortunately this doesn’t quite fit with having an 8 o’clock every morning, however.

"(In addition to staying up late, I like) cats, October weather, poetry, good short stories, good music from the classics to boogie-woogie, dancing, hard work if it doesn’t require too much moving around, pretty clothes, excitement, chocolate milkshakes… .

"I don’t like breakfast, vague assignments, slow workers, hot weather, straight-laced people, clerks in stores… ."

Mosby also did not like the divorce of her parents. The news came during her junior year and she remembered it being a "terrible blow."34

33 DXing.com – Radio Terms and Abbreviations, 10 March 2002, http://www.dxing.com/radterms.htm#junkbox:
“[He was] full of all this energy and a bit of a flirt and a bounder,” she said of her father. “Looking back on it, I think he was probably having an affair or two with the secretary at the radio station. Eventually he wanted a divorce, so my mother was crushed by that and really never recovered. She went to Los Angeles to live. She just felt she couldn’t stay in Missoula.”

Devastated by the divorce, Mosby turned to religion for comfort.

“I was very sad and I started going back to church because I really felt very lonely,” she said. “By then my sister had married and moved away, so I felt quite alone.”

Mosby was born and raised in the Episcopal Church by her mother, but she announced that she was an atheist after learning about human reproduction in her early teens. At the time, she could not comprehend “how Christ could have been born (to) a virgin.”

Her return to religion during her parents divorce was short lived as she abandoned the practice soon after college. At about the same time her father remarried. His new wife, Ruth Greenough, was from an old Montana family that was prominent in the lumber and mining industries. Mosby called Greenough a “marvelous woman.”

Mosby did not let the emotional impact of the divorce remove her from social and school activities. She was one of the “fun loving, heavy-dating sorority gals” in Kappa Alpha Theta. She became a member in 1941 even though the sorority had its social privileges jerked for undisclosed reasons. In the 1941 Sentinel, the university yearbook, the sorority claimed to hold its rank as one of the top three sororities even without the

36 Ibid., 36.
37 Ibid., 6.
38 University of Montana Sentinel, 1941.
privileges. Mosby remained part of the sorority through her graduation and lived at the Theta house for the majority of her college career.

Mosby had one semi-serious college boyfriend named Jack Ferris. Mosby said he wanted to marry her, but she declined his proposition in lieu of a career and the fact that Ferris wasn’t intellectual enough for her. Ferris was a Marine and eventually died in World War II at Iwo Jima.

In line with her childhood career aspirations, Mosby was heavily involved in the Montana Kaimin, the college newspaper, and the Sentinel. The yearbook recorded her journalism activities throughout the years: Press Club, 1941; Kaimin Sports in Shorts, 1942; Kaimin editorial, 1943.

She put most of her journalism skills to work in the 1943 Sentinel as editor-in-chief and was best described on page 44 of the publication.

On the second floor of the Student Union building is a small office. It has a linoleum floor, buff walls, a long table, a desk, a typewriter, a wastebasket, an ash tray – and a girl with red hair. It is she who created, such as it is, this book. Hers was not an easy task. This year’s budget was cut in half. The staff was reduced to a tiny handful of upperclassmen plus a galaxy of freshman who did little but clutter up the place. In spite of all this the courageous redhead, the third woman editor in Sentinel history, came through rather nobly. She lost weight and grade points in the process. But without the aid of the faithful few who stuck by her she would probably be quite dead by now. Among these was journalist Bob Sias, who wrote most of the copy and kept her supplied with cigarettes and morphine tablets during her darkest hours.

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39 University of Montana Sentinel, 1941 – 1943.
41 Ibid., 39.
42 University of Montana Sentinel, 1943: 44.
Mosby believed she got the position because the war called away a large majority of the university’s male students.43 She submitted a brief reflection on her tenure as editor-in-chief on the last page of the publication, which was titled “The Last Word.”

Most yearbooks are photographic masterpieces, cold tributes to the genius of their editors. But this book is not; it wasn’t meant to be. It’s a panorama of life on the Montana campus during these past months, the last in school for so many. If it preserves on paper the memories of your friends and your university, if it binds us all together with a love for Montana, then it’s a success. We didn’t have much to work with. A meager budget, a small staff, a rapidly changing school. There weren’t many of us, but to those that were, my sincere thanks....

Thanks to all of you for living through my anxious looks and tired temper, for plugging thru endless duties and for, perhaps, seeing your year’s work dragged through the mire of student opinion. That’s all. The last word.... Aline Mosby

A portion of her parents’ divorce agreement required her father to pay Mosby’s college and living expenses. In typical fashion, her father told her, “I'll give you the money, but you have to earn it.” In response, she worked at KGVO in her spare time doing secretarial work.45

When Mosby’s college days ended, her father’s radio station had an odd impact on her post-college job search. At the time, Anaconda Copper Mining Co.’s bitter relationship with her father made a Montana reporting job for Mosby highly doubtful. Later in life when asked why she never worked at a Montana newspaper, she said, “I'm sure they would have just dropped dead and wouldn't have hired anybody related to my father.”46

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44 University of Montana Sentinel, 1943: 192.
46 Ibid., 10.
But Mosby did not seem to mind leaving the state. During her senior year, she won a contest that landed her a position on Mademoiselle’s College Board. University of Montana Journalism Dean James L.C. Ford sent a letter to Mademoiselle inquiring about Mosby’s chances of getting a guest editorship at the magazine after graduation. He also wrote several copies of the following form letter to help Mosby find a job. The letters were sent to the Los Angeles Daily News, The San Francisco Examiner, San Francisco Call Bulletin, San Francisco News, Portland Oregonian, Portland Journal, Seattle Times, Seattle Star, and Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Dear [Publisher/Editor]:

Do you want a first-class girl reporter with pep, personality, and ideas? Aline Mosby, who graduates in a few weeks after four years of training in journalism, is ready for action on your paper and I can’t give her too enthusiastic a send-off.

She has high scholastic average, was editor of the university yearbook, a correspondent for Mademoiselle, has had fine radio newscasting experience (her father owns and operates the local radio station) and has a world of drive. In addition to that, she is very attractive.

Somebody is going to snap her up fast – and what a find they’ll have! Will it be you?

Cordially yours,

James L.C. Ford

Unfortunately, the form letters were unsuccessful. Most of the publications wanted someone with more experience. But Ford was persistent in helping Mosby find work. A different letter to Mademoiselle, in which he described Mosby as “one of the smartest girls that I ever laid my eyes on,” may have worked. The fashion magazine giant

47 James L.C. Ford to several newspapers, 8 May – 15 June 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
48 James L.C. Ford to Mademoiselle, 28 March 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
granted her a prestigious guest editorship spot. Mosby claimed she was first person west of the Mississippi, excluding California, to land the position.49

Upon graduation, Mosby packed her bags and headed east to the Big Apple. Throughout her life, she always commented on how valuable she found her journalism education.

"We were always preached at to be accurate and not let your feelings get in the way and don't use loaded words that are really editorializing, which you do see, even in some New York Times stories, and to be an observer, not a participant," she said.50

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50 Ibid., 28.
CHAPTER 3

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Mosby was 20 years old when she went to work in New York City.

“I had decided by then that I wanted to be a New York career woman and be on a
fashion magazine,” Mosby said. “Of course, then, in the back of my mind was always
meeting some glamorous man in New York and combining the two.”

Mosby detailed her New York experience in letters to University of Montana
Journalism Dean James L.C. Ford. After graduation, Mosby kept in contact with Ford
and her political science professor, Mike Mansfield. The University of Montana School
of Journalism kept all correspondence between Mosby and Ford. The letters reveal a
vivid detail of her career and Ford’s reactions. Mosby first wrote Ford after she arrived
in New York in June 1943.

First, I arrived on the scene – very hot and swelterly, and with shaking fingers dialed Mademoiselle to
announce my humble presence. It seems they had been waiting impatiently for me all week, but thank the
Lord I wasn’t the last to arrive....

Anyway, I trotted up to 1 East 57 and was ushered into the august presence of Mrs. Blackwell, editor-in-
chief. We chatted for a while and then I was thrown into a room to start trying on clothes in preparation for
Mademoiselle fashion clinic given for all the buyers by U.S. I was sitting in a corner feeling very meek
and not knowing which were professional models and which were college girls, and just feeling lost in
general, when Miss Zack, the college board editor, charged into the room and informed me that staff
positions of the college gals had been chosen and there was little Loop as editor-in-chief of the August
issue. No one was more amazed than 1.

At first I didn’t think N.Y. so terrifically different – I was quite disappointed. I guess I thought it was
going to do somersaults or something equally different. Now I can begin to see it has a style and character
quite different from everyplace else – I’m just beginning to feel the city, if you get what I mean. I’ve
discovered you pay twice as much here and get less or something. Most of the gals had never been here
before, either, and we have decided they can give Manhattan back to the Indians! A swell town to have fun
in, but Ye Gods I don’t see how people live! We’ve been to parties in apartments of people very high up in
their field, and honestly they have holes-in-the-wall and pay small fortunes for them. Horrible.

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52 Ibid., 8.
Mademoiselle doesn’t retain any coeds as far as I know, and besides, I’m not so sure I want to work here. One gal said, “If this trip has done nothing else, at least it’s taught us we don’t want to work on a magazine!”

Ten days later, Ford replied with fatherly advice. He reminded Mosby that the opportunity was incredibly rare despite its promotional stunt feel.

Don’t take too much for granted that Mademoiselle won’t be willing to keep some of you on its staff regularly. You’re getting a grand chance to see all the inside workings right there in [Blackwell’s] office and it may be all just a grand tryout to see what you can do. If you really show that you have got something on the ball – with openings such as you have developed by the guest editor – they’ll say to themselves, “here’s a girl that we just can’t afford to let go.”

Ford was right. By mid-July, Mademoiselle offered Mosby a permanent job that she declined. She felt the job was routine and she was tired of the fashion magazine industry.

Her next letter to Ford detailed her new adventure, which was at Time, Life, Fortune, Inc.

It seems that Time, Life, etc. have a training squad of 9 gals gleaned from eastern colleges. They spend a few days on each floor of the Time & Life building interviewing all the workers and learning what the general score is. Then they work a month on Time, one on Life and one on Fortune. I talked with a former guest ed who was on the squad last year and it seems she was always tearing down to Washington, etc. with a writer on a story. It sounded like a good deal, so I talked them into taking a 10th on the squad, meaning me. [The College Girl Office Girl, CGOG, was supposed to do errands and apprentice work in every department of the magazine.]

I looked around first, though. Newspapers – still the same story of $16 a week copy girl jobs. Press associations – must have newspaper experience. NBC and CBS had nice offers and Vogue even came through. Also Newsweek. But Time & Life looked far better to me. The only tempting one was an offer from a tank town about 20 miles from N.Y. to edit the woman’s page of their daily. I almost took that, but decided I might as well stick it out here for the duration of the training period (6 mo.).

Ford was amazed.

You certainly have hit the jackpot on jobs and offers from all those different places must have made your head swell. I think you were pretty smart in going with Time, Life, Fortune although they do have a tendency to stick girls on routine jobs and keep them there. You should keep that fact in mind. However, I am sure you can do more than a satisfactory piece of work.

You have got a lot on the ball, gal, and keep on proving it. But by the same token remember that New York is a place that you can go down a hell of a lot faster than you go up. Show what you can do and strut your stuff by all means, but people will like you a lot quicker and a lot longer if you don’t get too cocky.

53 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 18 June 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
54 James L.C. Ford to Aline Mosby, 28 June 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
56 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 14 July 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
about it. Don’t forget too many cocktails and too much hell raising at night just don’t mix with a good
day’s work the next day. This is grandpa speaking… 57

By August, Mosby set a personal record of being the farthest away from Montana for
the longest period of time. She showed signs of homesickness and frustration.

No, I wasn’t much impressed by all the offers I got. Most of them were because I had had secretarial
experience, and the ones I wanted, such as newspapers, just weren’t to be had. [Time & Life] was the best
of the lot, but I still can’t decide if it’s what I really want. The job I’m headed for after this training period
isn’t exactly routine; it’s research work on one of the three magazines, which at times just involves digging
up stuff in the morgue, but at times also takes you out of N.Y. to practically any town in the U.S. I had
hoped it would work into writing, but I think that chance is quite slim. Most of the other gals on the squad
just took liberal arts courses in college, which was rather disappointing to me.

I still would like to get newspaper reporting experience, so I may be back in September. If I do decide to
wait until the end of the training period, I may come back around Xmas. I like the organization; they’re
swell people and nice to work for. But I still have that printer’s ink bug, and besides, I would rather be in
the West near my folks and friends for awhile. I am crazy about N.Y. and am quite enjoying myself, but I
think I may be sort of wasting my time here.

Happened to be on Life when the Mussolini story broke and they nearly went mad as it came about their
closing date and they had to get the story in. 58

On September 1, Ford shot off a letter full of encouragement and concern. He knew
the war had a lot to do with Mosby’s good fortune and he wanted her to stick with it.

I hope you, Loop, haven’t done anything drastic as you indicated you might about leaving Time. I was
somewhat disappointed when you failed to take advantage of the Mademoiselle opportunity to stay. That’s
one that comes once in a lifetime and you’ll have a hard time, I think, making that grade again. But the
Time job is just about on a par and please don’t forget that either one of the opportunities you have had is
very unusual. As soon as the war is over, I don’t care how much newspaper experience you could take into
N.Y. with you, you still would be very unlikely to get a chance to crack the top magazines the way you
have now. Furthermore, I have had the idea all along that your chief interest was in the magazine field and
so am unable to understand why you want to try the newspaper angle again. I also think your talents are
rather inclined in the magazine direction.

I can’t by any possible consideration in the world think of you as wasting your time on your present job.

There are plenty of newspaper openings without any question both in this state and elsewhere, but my
own advice is to stick on the job. Don’t jump around so fast – employers don’t like the looks of that on
your record – and furthermore it won’t give you any real experience yourself. If there were a very valid
and practical reason for your returning west and into the newspaper game, that would be a different matter.
However, you gave me the impression all along that magazine work was your first and only love.

57 James L.C. Ford to Aline Mosby, 29 July 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
58 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 9 Aug. 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
Loop, you have a lot on the ball but don’t fritter it away by too much fooling around right now. This is the time of all times when you can get in your best licks and really get something solid so by the time the war ends, you’ll have established yourself. Please don’t take any sudden step without giving me a chance to check with you again about it. Good luck. 59

But Mosby did not check with Ford before making her next career move.

“[To get to the New York job,] I took the subway up to Rockefeller Center,” she said. “You never even went outside, because you were just underneath the ground and came up inside the building, you know. I seldom saw the sky. And I didn't know many people. To make a long story short, I got homesick. I just couldn't stand it. The whole thing just terrified me. When the girl in the room next to me committed suicide at the Catherine House and they took the body out, I just couldn't stand it.” 60

It’s also probable that moving from one apartment to another got the best of Mosby. Within three months she sublet an apartment in Tudor City, lived with a friend on 42nd Street and rented a room at a women’s club in Greenwich Village. 61

Before she headed home, she called her parents for advice. Her mother said she should stay as everything was temporary and things would get better. But her father, pleased that she thought to call him, encouraged her to come back to Montana. As a client of the United Press, he managed to find his daughter a job with the wire service in Seattle. 62

59 James L.C. Ford to Aline Mosby, 1 Sept. 1943, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
61 Mosby’s 14 July, 9 Aug. 1943 letters indicated that she had moved.
The next thing Mosby knew, she was on a train back to Missoula. She remembered being on the train thinking, 'I'm probably doing this wrong.' But it was a decision that would define the remainder of her life.

63 Ibid.
For a while, Mosby wallowed in self-pity and regret about not staying in New York. She believed that if she had stayed, she could have gotten a good job at Time magazine and found some interesting man to marry. Mosby spent some time in Missoula before moving to Seattle to start her United Press job.

“I remember I just clung to my old schoolmates there,” she said.

She remembered it being a horrible period of her life. For a 21-year-old, she was very hard on herself. At one point she thought she should just get married since she could not tough it out in the big city.  

Out of embarrassment or humility, she even dodged seeing her journalism dean, James L.C. Ford. After settling in Seattle, she finally broke her career news to him, six months after his last letter to her.

Maybe I better throw my hat in the door first! Not that you would be heartbroken cuz I didn’t see you before I left Missoula, but because I am sincerely sorry my bad manners got the better of me, as I would have like to have talked to you before I left.

To be truthful, Jim, I was afraid to tell you what I had planned to do before I left because I knew I wasn’t doing a wise thing and I was afraid and ashamed to see you, as I figured you wouldn’t approve.

You were certainly right regarding all the aspects of the job, and at least once a week I wish I were back in New York....

But, paradoxically, even though this set-up reasonably is inferior, and though I regularly toss sack cloth and ashes on my pink head for not returning to the Big City, I like this job better than any I have ever held, and although I have been working here for almost four months now, not once have I been bored.

I just love the work and it sure beats pulling out clippings at Time, Inc.

I am officially night bureau manager, which means I arrive about five in the afternoon and work my tail off until about one in the morning. I have been sent out on interviews, etc., a couple of times in the afternoon, but most of the time I stay right in the office. I have three news splits and two radio splits to

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handle for the northwest and one for the coast. We are on a trunk wire to New York so I sent a lot of "thru" stories east. Seattle is a pretty good news town, and lots of opportunity for good yarns every so often.

I am the only gal in the bureau, and everyone who works here is just swell. . . .

Last week I was one excited kid. Henry Wallace65 and Wendell Willkie66 were both in town, and I got in on their press conferences. The Acme photographer up here snapped me with Mr. [Willkie], which I hope will be in the May issue of Mademoiselle with their spread of what ex-guest eds are doing. The picture isn't especially good, but is my pride and joy. I have the negative and am considering making up hundreds to send to everyone I can think of. (I'm no Republican either.) . . .

I'm constantly raging at persons who sweetly inquire if there is a Jay school at Montana. I certainly do think my alma mater beats anything - especially this dump out at the Univ. of Washington. I've been out there a few times on stories, and oh what a hole. The only thing their Jay school produces that is any good is "Columns," a monthly magazine sort of like the Annapolis "Log." Their courses in the Jay school cannot compare with your set-up. . . .

I'm hoping this week to start working on the sports staff of the Star as well (don't laff!). They asked me to edit wire copy and write heads and help put out the sports page at night when I am up here. It will be good experience, I think. . . .

Well, I am a little confused as to whether I should stay with United Press next year, try to get into radio writing with UP or switch to a paper or try to get on a magazine again. You see, I haven't progressed much since I saw you! . . .67

Mosby rented a mouse-infested house near the University of Washington for $50 a month with five other girls, some former classmates from the University of Montana.

They all slept on bunk beds and Mosby claimed one of the top bunks. Working the night shift, her schedule was opposite of most of her roommates'.

When she worked late, she would occasionally take a taxi home, but otherwise rode the bus. As a young female, she was never afraid of traveling alone at the wee hours of the morning.

"It never occurred to anybody there was anything wrong with that," she said.

65 Henry Wallace was Vice President of the United States under U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
66 Wendell Willkie was a Republican presidential candidate in 1940.
67 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 13 Feb. 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
The tiny Seattle United Press bureau was located in the building of the Seattle Star, a tiny rival of the Post-Intelligencer and The Seattle Times. The bureau consisted of two small rooms with a couple of desks and typewriters, and a row of teletypes.

Mosby did a little bit of everything as night bureau chief: wrote news summaries and miscellaneous stories, shipped the work of columnists that came over the wire to various newspapers, took dictation over the phone, placed stories on the wire.68

But par for the course, Mosby got antsy. In May 1944, she again sought the wise thoughts of her old professor.

At this writing, I still like my job, which amazes me to no end, as there certainly are lottsa reasons why I shouldn’t. Sometimes I get that old pain and wish I were back in New York; especially today when the May Mademoiselle came out and there was your old pupil on page 165.

As for the present, I chew my nails to the elbow worrying that I am not doing enough. To date I have only had two bylines in Red Letter (one on a handout from Boeing aircraft and the other which I dug up myself at the fleet post office) and two on the coast-to-coast wire (one interview with Jack Benny69 – that was loads of fun; I even had my picture taken with him – and the other one an interview with some gal who will be the first woman law clerk in the U.S.). I was scheduled to write a radio column about farming for the radio wire, but the schedule didn’t work out right so the dayshift is working on it. Most of the time I feel quite useless!

As for the future, I was toying with the idea of asking for a transfer to the United Press bureau in San Fran or Los Angeles. I would like to get to the Chicago bureau or even N.Y. but I think that would be a little difficult to swing. I like the work enough to stay in it for a few more years, but I am beginning to see your point about getting a job that some man won’t snatch from me after the war, such as on a woman’s magazine. By the way, this is all fyi and strictly off the record, even to my dad. ...

I was going to take the City Hall beat for the Star but I couldn’t quite find the time to sleep so I gave it up. I sure would like the experience, though. I also decided not to take the sports job on the Star as it also means too much. ...

I am still living with all the Montana gals and we have quite a time. Last week the sewer pipe in our basement broke and the health department was threatening to evict us! ...

I’d like to hear your opinion on this transfer business...
Your advice and ideas mean a lot, believe me.70

69 Jack Benny was a film comedian in the 1930s and 1940s.
70 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 9 May 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
In June, Ford responded that he had seen Mosby in Mademoiselle and was “duly proud.” The issue featured Mosby and three other past guest editors in the “Ex-Guest-Editors on the Job” section. A picture of Mosby interviewing Wendell Willkie was accompanied by Mosby’s current job description:

The first woman to be employed by the Seattle United Press Bureau, I report on life from the Boeing bomber plants to the shipyards, from the wharves to the U. of Washington. Biggest assignment was sitting in at a press conference (my first) with Wendell Willkie.71

Ford was glad she liked her job and reminded her that liking a job was “one of the main things in life.”

It doesn’t sound to me as if you aren’t doing enough – actually, it sounds as if you are pretty darn busy.

The idea of a transfer to another United Press Bureau sounds fine to me only for a little bit farther in the future, but right now, you’ll get a lot more chance for experience and variety of press association work by staying in the smaller bureau. In the larger bureaus, they stick you at some job and you are very apt to stick there for a considerable length of time. Once more to offer my advice, which may be futile, I would stay with the UP in Seattle until at least this fall through the election before asking for a transfer. ...

It is good to hear from you, Glamour Girl, and keep on keeping in touch with us.72

Mosby was still in Seattle when November rolled around, but the United Press had given her a task outside print journalism. She was excited to tell Ford of her new adventure.

I was given the job of writing a twice-weekly, five minute radio column on farming, of all things, for the radio wire. Don’t laugh, but I really can tell you anything you want to know about keeping your victory garden in good shape. Did you ever think you’d see the day? The column really is fun to write and gives me two bylines a week, anyway.

[I] spent most of my summer preparing for my vacation, taking it, and then recuperating. I went down to Los Angeles with a Montana ’44 graduate (Virginia Morrison) and we hit every UP bureau on the way – JO, SX and HC...

... In HC, Bill Tyree, fresh in from war correspondent-ing in the South Pacific, and Dan Boerman, of SX (know any of ‘em) took Virginia and myself to the Brown Derby one afternoon where we met a galaxy of war correspondents. ... A good example of “in the newspaper business you meet such interesting people and they’re all newspaper people.”

72 James L.C. Ford to Aline Mosby, 27 June 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
The political year brought many newspaper men from the east to Seattle. That really kept us busy — entertaining all the visiting firemen from the special trains. ... Didn't get to any of the Roosevelt shindigs, but did take in Dewey, Truman and Bricker conferences. By the time the election was over, I felt like an old hand at this! The election, by the way, was one hectic madhouse. After punching the special state wire from 7p to 2a without stopping, I never want to see another politician again! ... 

Ford loved the thought of Mosby doing a radio column.

I could howl at the thought of your weekly radio column but it goes to show that you never can tell in school just what sort of journalistic work you'll get handed to you when you get out. It's all good writing experience and I'm sure that you'll benefit from it in the long run. I'll admit though that it does sort of strike me as humorous to think of the smooth, sophisticated, and blasé Loop pounding out an over all piece on the right manure and when you ought to plant carrots.74

In late 1944, Mosby was getting tired of working nights. She did not mind the hours, but she felt she was missing a lot of social life such as sorority alumni meetings and Press Club receptions. She asked Ford about the news radio bureau and expressed an interest in having a change of scenery before the first of the year.75

Ford responded that he knew of someone in charge of radio for United Press and offered to drop him a line for Mosby. He also mentioned that in the prior spring “there were about twenty girls working in that division and so apparently they have no feminine prejudices.”76

But it's hard to say if his contacts came of anything. On Dec. 26, 1944, he sent Mosby a letter informing her of his leave of absence to pursue a Ph.D. degree at the University of Minnesota. During his absence, Andy Cogswell served as acting dean. Mosby wrote briefly to Cogswell in April 1945. She was still in Seattle and had picked up a side job working on window displays for the Bon Marche department store a couple

73 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 10 Nov. 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
74 James L.C. Ford to Aline Mosby, 9 Dec. 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
75 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 10 Nov. 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
76 James L.C. Ford to Aline Mosby, 9 Dec. 1944, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
of hours in the afternoon. She said the job was a way to supplement her income because in her day job she was “making peanuts.”

I’m still with the UP here; it’s hard to get away from this wonderful town! And my job is still fun, haven’t had a dull day yet. Also work part time for the Star, putting out syndicated columns, and also for the display advertising dept. at the Bon Marche. So I’m pretty busy. ...

Am trying to get out to the Pacific as a war correspondent but so far, no soap.

Cogswell’s reply not only contained good wishes, but offered a hint of his confidence in women in journalism.

I hope your efforts to get out into the Pacific as a war correspondent bear fruit. It’s hard to say where you girls will get to these days. Joe Howard insists that women have virtually taken over the newspaper business. If he is right, I wonder if it isn’t in pretty good hands. ...

It is debatable as to what happened with Mosby’s Pacific war correspondent venture.

In her letter to Cogswell, she indicated that she pursued the opportunity, but years later, she claimed a position was offered to her and she decided against it, which she regretted.

In 1945, Mosby was sent to San Francisco to help cover the organization of the United Nations. She liked San Francisco and asked for a transfer to its United Press bureau.

United Press did not have an opening in San Francisco, but did have a radio wire position available in Los Angeles. Mosby’s mother lived in Los Angeles at the time so she packed her bags and moved south.

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78 Aline Mosby to Andy Cogswell, 24 April 1945, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
79 Joseph Kinsey Howard was a Montana journalist-historian. In the mid-1940s he wrote Montana-based articles for various national periodicals and wrote several important Western history books.
80 Andy Cogswell to Aline Mosby, 28 April 1945, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
Mosby always kicked herself for leaving New York City, but things seemed to work out for the best. Seattle was her first job with the United Press\textsuperscript{82} and there would be many more positions with United Press to come.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 15.
Illustration 1: Aline Mosby
Illustration 2: Aline Mosby Sitting Pose
Once settled in Los Angeles, Mosby wrote to her college dean, James L.C. Ford.

I was in Missoula before taking off for California to decide if I would accept a job in the bureau here [Los Angeles]. This has been my mecca for quite a while, as I think it’s the best feature writing bureau in United Press, but unfortunately the job offered me was reprocessing for radio. I fear that seems to be where my talent (alleged) lies. Anyway, I took it on the hopes that once I got down here, something better might break.

The job takes all my time, but is so easy I feel ashamed for accepting money for it. This bureau is really tops as far as efficiency and good writers go, and it’s really a relief after the cozy but precarious life in Seattle. It’s fun just to sit in a corner and watch the parade of humanity stream by – great assortment of press agents, screwballs, etc. The bureau personnel also are a great bunch of characters – dunno which is the more interesting – so I’m quite satisfied with life. Might even take on a radio script writing deal on the side, if my original plan of doing extra features for the newsside doesn’t work out. Dug up a few already, and found it’s a lot harder than getting them in Seattle!

I’m living with a former U of M grad, Virginia Morrison. We have a little house, with lemon and orange trees in the front yard, an icebox on the front porch and a shrine over the radiator in the living room. Ah, it’s home and we’re lucky to have it with the terrific housing shortage. No bus service, so you should see Loop the timid hitchhiking to work at the crack of dawn.

Mosby ended her letter seeking Ford’s opinion about her new job. She added that she hoped that she would “get a toe in the door of this feature-writing biz and then go back to magazines in about three years.” Within weeks, she heard from the dean.

I feel that you should be happy that you got the break to go down there into that L.A. bureau. While the prospects for radio may seem somewhat dull at times, it certainly is an important and coming part of news service work. Any experience you can have in it will certainly repay you and furthermore you can count on it being valuable for any future writing you do. Although the job may be easy, you can make it as tough as you want by giving yourself lots of extra assignments. That’s what pays off as far as advancement in a service is concerned and it also makes for very valuable training for your own personal career. I don’t doubt that there are a bunch of characters and screwballs around there – probably L.A. and Hollywood have more per capita of that kind of people than any other section of the world. The movies are largely responsible, but the climate has something to do with it. In any case, any time you want to start a side show of freaks, your best bet for recruiting them is right there at Hollywood and Vine.

Your life with Virginia Morrison sounds idyllic and I certainly agree you are lucky to have a place to live now. The housing shortage seems to be terrific everywhere, not the least of all in Missoula.

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84 Unless otherwise noted, all contents from this chapter are from this autobiographical magazine article.
I’d certainly stick with that job until you have about a couple years more experience. Then you can begin thinking of magazines or of going into radio. I think the latter is something to really consider –

Give my regards to any of the School of Journalism kids you may see and I think it’s swell the way you’re going to town there in the big city.85

The bulk of Mosby’s job was to take stories off the news wire and rewrite them for the United Press wire in radio style, a simple yet conversational format with odd words or foreign names broken into phonics. Mosby remembered the pressure of watching the wire for important news and getting a bulletin out on the United Press wire as fast as she could. She didn’t mind the job, but she wished she were in San Francisco.86

“As I sat writing the weather and Los Angeles egg market reports, I had visions of interviewing scientists and little old ladies who sold apples,” Mosby wrote. “But as stories with a Hollywood dateline are welcomed all over the world, this office specialized in show business yarns. When the then Hollywood columnist for United Press came down with pregnancy, I was dispatched to the Hollywood wars.”

Mosby said she worked on the radio wire for a couple of years,87 but her byline appeared on a Feb. 1, 1947, Hollywood story “Even Music in Duel Film Called Spicy.” She likely started reporting after spending a year on the radio wire desk. The new glamorous beat was not easy for her to master. In the beginning, she found the Hollywood mega-stars intimidating and had to tour the movie studios by bus because she was too poor to buy a car.

85 James Ford to Aline Mosby, 1 Dec. 1945, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
87 Ibid.
She recalls an interview with actor Humphrey Bogart, where she sat timidly a half a room away.

“Lissen kid,” she wrote Bogie told her. “Actors are just like people. Look ‘em in the eye and bark back.”

She took Bogie’s advice and had a whirl of reporting adventures. As time progressed, she got the hang of the Hollywood beat.

**Errol Flynn**

Errol Flynn was a perfect gentleman when I interviewed him, and even invited me to a party at his home. I’d heard plenty about Flynn and his record of showing young girls the portholes on his yacht. I expected wine to flow from the faucets and dancing girls to spring from the beef stroganoff. But you know what the high point of the evening was? White mice races!

**Charles Chaplin**

Charles Chaplin is another Hollywood figure who conjures up memories of mink coats and etchings. In his last years in Hollywood Chaplin felt he had been persecuted by the press during his bouts with the law on morals charges. So when he began making what may be his last Hollywood movie, “Limelight,” he barred the press from the set. Finally a friend of the comedian talked him into seeing some of us.

Chaplin, a small and rather nervous man, seemed not wolfish but wary when I approached him between scenes. In fact, he did little but smile until I told him I’d just bought the original poster of his movie, “The Circus,” at an auction of Grauman Chinese Theater relics. Then he warmed up and related fascinating tales about the making of “Limelight.”

**Howard Hughes**

Hughes blew his top once when I wrote about his various girl friends, and he wanted to deny the story to me in person. I’d heard of his weird habits in keeping appointments with people under street lamps at 4 a.m., and he didn’t disappoint me.

First I was told to wait at La Rue restaurant. After three hours of eating on his charge account I finally was summoned by telephone to one of the many hotel suites he keeps around Los Angeles. I had suspected the legends of Hughes’ attire were exaggerated, but one look told me they weren’t. Sure enough, there were the tennis shoes, the 8 o’clock shadow, the rumpled sport jacket and tieless sport shirt.

His first remarks were to complain, with uncanny memory, about a United Press story revealing bad preview reaction to his ill-fated Ingrid Bergman movie, “Stromboli.” He claimed the [United Press] yarn cost him a million dollar loss at the box office. Then he further complained that my story about his love life could hurt his dealings in big business.

I was recovering from the shock of hearing my stories were of concern to this multi-millionaire when Hughes suddenly announced he had doubled-parked his airplane at the Santa Monica airport and had to move it. I expected to find at least a Rolls-Royce waiting outside the hotel, but his car matches his clothes – an ancient, cheap, two-door sedan. We sped to the field, parked under the wing of his plane and talked – in shouts. He had neglected to wear his hearing aid. Later I heard he forgets it on purpose and takes reporters to his plane to discourage them from long conversations. I got home with nary a scratch and a lesson in the eccentric behavior of rich men.
James Dean

The late Jimmy Dean was reluctant to be interviewed from the minute he arrived in Hollywood. I was allowed on the set where he was working in “Rebel Without a Cause” because I promised to do a serious interview. He stood with head bowed, occasionally peeking up at me like a wistful puppy dog who would like to be friends but doesn’t know how. While I was floundering for words to warm him up, Dean fortunately spotted my MG sports car parked outside the studio. Jimmy, then at the peak of his racing career, hopped into the driver’s seat and immediately became talkative. We tore around the curves of a nearby park at 70 miles an hour while I tried to scribble his quotes in my notebook. Unfortunately the notes were undecipherable. But later he agreed to chat — in unmovable chairs over lunch.

Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis

One Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis interview was utter chaos. They tied a rope around me, stuffed sugar cubes between my teeth and left me sitting while they had a battle with water pistols. Another trick of theirs during restaurant interviews is to make a sling-shot out of a napkin and pelt the other patrons with pats of butter.

Oscar Levant

Oscar Levant related on his Los Angeles show about how I visited him shortly after he had had his stomach pumped out from a dose of sleeping pills. Oscar unburdened his various problems to me. At the time I felt as if I should have been taking my notes at the head of a psychoanalyst’s couch with Oscar stretched out on the same. Between confessions he gave me a concert on his piano. I was a little embarrassed by the intimacy of the scene — but also deeply moved. It was the first time I realized that the fame and fans don’t always bring happiness to the citizens of Hollywood.

June Haver & Fred MacMurray

When June Haver and Fred MacMurray stepped off an airplane after a courtship whirl around Mexico, I walked behind them, nose to notebook. Suddenly I found myself in the customs office — technically outside the United States. To get back in you have to have that smallpox certificate that tourists carry. The long arm of the law pushed me before a government doctor who vaccinated me on the spot. My arm was swollen the size of a football captain’s from wrist to neck.

Even as an experienced celebrity reporter, Mosby wondered how she survived life in Hollywood. She wrote of being tongue-tied in the presence of Clark Gable, and not knowing Arlene Dahl from Rhonda Fleming. During interviews, she recalled actor John Carroll insisting that his head be in her lap, and actor Rod Steiger murmuring, “Your eyes keep saying ‘Please!’” In retrospect, she said her eyes ached for sleep rather than a Steiger rendezvous.

In addition to putting up with the likes of Carroll and Steiger, she learned to deal with the more subtle celebrity quirks. She found it a challenge to understand the sophisticated
silence of Marlene Dietrich and a need to talk about clothes to get information out of Jennifer Jones and Grace Kelly. Mosby found the “uninhibited, frankly-speaking stars” to be “wonderfully easy interviews.” Humphrey Bogart, for example, would growl away for hours, and Zsa Zsa Gabor would peer over notes and inquire, “Aren’t you taking down my funnies, darlink?”

“Robert Mitchum is so uninhibited that most of what he says, unfortunately, is unprintable,” Mosby wrote. “I remember when I interviewed him once in his dressing room he was wearing a red leather cap and drinking a split of champagne at 11 a.m.”

But sometimes Mosby found interviews dull.

“I tried to get Van Heflin to talk about his toupee once but he preferred to discuss his stage work,” she wrote. “Elizabeth Taylor is so beautiful it hurts, but she seldom opens up to a reporter.”

Mosby’s descriptive writing flourished on the Hollywood beat. Montana native Chet Huntley, then a broadcast journalist for the CBS Pacific Network in Los Angeles, noted Mosby’s writing style in a Dec. 4, 1948 memo.

If you want a chuckle you might read the various reports of yesterday’s marriage of L.B. Mayer and Mrs. Lorena Danker. The bizarre features of the attempt of Mayer to shake off the press photographers are well described by Missoula, Montana’s gift to United Press, Miss Aline Mosby. With characteristic candor Miss Mosby tells of Mayer giving his bride a “business-like buss on the cheek.” She calls the wedding headquarters in Yuma a “motel.” Louella Parsons calls it a “fashionable motor hotel.” Hedda Hopper calls it a “motor court.”

Miss Mosby works in a “one-time junk dealer” in reference to Mayer; and an “ex-chorus girl” for the new Mrs. Mayer. Louella Parsons says: “L.B. and his lovely bride will be given a big welcome on their return home.”

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88 Chet Huntley Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc. memo, 5 Dec. 1948, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
Mosby learned to get ideas for her six 450-word weekly interview columns by reading the gossip columns and magazines and keeping an ear open for news. Her open ears landed her the story, “Marilyn Monroe Admits She’s Nude Blonde of Calendar,” which briefly received national attention.

Mosby uncovered the story by chatting with the beautiful blonde about her controversial tight dresses.

“She wound up the discussion by showing me how she tucks a fresh flower in her plunging neckline,” Mosby wrote. “Then I put my pencil away and asked about that nude calendar the Hollywood grapevine whispered she had posed for. Marilyn, erroneously thinking she no longer was talking for print, confessed all in her wonderful breathless voice. Later she told me that after the first horrified gulp she was glad the story finally was officially printed because ‘some people thought the calendar was bad or something.’”

After Monroe scoop, Mosby worked on several assignments that required skimpy clothing. The first was to see what it was like to be Maureen O’Hara as Lady Godiva. Mosby crawled into O’Hara’s bikini, put on her 10-pound, floor-length red wig and rode the legendary white horse. After two painful attempts to get on the horse, Mosby rode sidesaddle down the Universal-International studio back lot. Afterwards she decided to leave the 11th century costumes to Maureen O’Hara.

The undressing theme continued with Mosby posing in a bikini for a cheesecake photographer to describe what it felt like.

“While Daddy nearly grew gray over that story,” she recalled, “he almost flew down to haul me home when I eliminated the bikini.”
Mosby was referring to her story about a nudist convention held outside Los Angeles. She wrote matter-of-factly that her boss lamented that no female reporter had ever reported on a nudist camp in native attire – and she was “ordered to the front.” She did not seem the least bit hesitant about the assignment, but she did detail the repercussions of the experience.

First, she wrote of getting sunburned in all the wrong places and then bumping into a Los Angeles Times columnist, Art Ryon, and several photographer colleagues – all in their birthday suits.

“And I had thought the rest of the press had covered the convention days before!” Mosby wrote. “We all laughed weakly, taking care to keep our eyes skyward.”

Adorned with nothing but a pencil and notebook, Mosby eventually discovered that a nudist camp had no sex appeal.

“There is nothing alluring about hundreds of people – most of them middle-aged, bald, over-weight or underweight, perspiring and swatting flies. Most people look much better in clothes,” she wrote.

Her story sparked interest from many. Marilyn Monroe wanted to know all about the flies, and John Wayne hung a sign over his dressing room that read, “Wayne’s Nudist Camp,” when Mosby came to talk about his new movie. She also received 4,587 inquires about her story.89 Several sailors requested her photograph and one even proposed. A Swedish nudist magazine asked for a nude, full-length photo, and a Brooklyn woman

89 Aline Mosby, interview by Suzanne MacDonald, School of Journalism, University of Montana, written, 7 June 1977: 1.
denounced her as a shameless hussy. Newsweek published two letters from readers of
Mosby’s article.

I am a weekly reader of your Newsweek, and in the Aug. 24 issue I enjoyed the story “Uncovered
Coverage” but I think it important that you inform Miss Aline Mosby that the nude picture from the waist
up indicates she has a spinal curvature and should have a chiropractor’s attention. This may save her from
much disease late in life.


...Last October, Miss Mosby was stranded here in Guatemala and stayed with my wife and me at our
home for a few days. We enjoyed her company a great deal and were sorry to see her off on the way back
to the States. Being about our same age, we were able to do a lot together and visit here. Too bad though,
that neither of us had any idea as to her interest in nudism, as we would have enjoyed playing a bit of strip
poker in place of canasta.

H.G. Hartgerink, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Mosby even received an award for the story, Fearless Reporting Certificate of Merit
from the Los Angeles Optimists’ Club, during National Newspaper Week.

Mosby’s father did not disown her over the bare-naked story or haul her back to
Montana. He even managed to visit his baby during her California tenure. At the time,
Mosby lived in the western section of Hollywood where the houses and apartments were
built on the hills. The housing landscape inspired her father to build houses on
Missoula’s south hills. Mosby said people in Missoula thought his development ideas
were crazy. Many claimed the houses would slide down the hill. But her father
persevered and started a development called Mosby’s Leisure Highlands, which forever
changed Missoula’s housing community. Homes on the South Hills now number in the
thousands.

“He was a pioneer,” Mosby said of her father. “I would say I learned perseverance
from him.”

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90 1953. “Letters – Covering a Story.” Newsweek, 21 April, 12, 16.
Shortly after the nudist camp article saw print, Mosby again wrote to her alma mater dean.

I’m still writing the Hollywood column for United Press and having a great experience. Jim, when I look back on the days when I knocked myself out to get to New York to be a fashion editor and then was so disappointed when it didn’t work out, I laugh. Everything works out for the best, I couldn’t have hit a luckier break than getting this job. I have to pinch myself every so often to believe it’s really me. I’m sorry my column doesn’t break in a Missoula paper. I’d like to hear what you thought of my writing now, whether it’s improved etc.92

While her writing progressed, Mosby began to form opinions about the entertainment industry and public privacy.

“Many reluctant interviewees aren’t particularly shy, but followers of the theory that the press invades privacy,” Mosby wrote.

“These actors—often from the Actor’s Studio in New York—have accepted the philosophy of ‘I’ll talk about my work but not my personal life.’ At first this awed me. But later I decided they should stay out of show business if they don’t want the public, which gives them their living, to know about them. How many actors beg us reporters to write about them when they are beginners—but when star billing arrives they shut the door in our faces!”

Her high expectations occasionally put her in hot water with a few stars. And a mad actor, she wrote, is “worse than eyeing those grizzly bears in Montana.” One memorable encounter was with Frank Sinatra.

“I dutifully trotted behind the irritated Sinatra and asked him the Forbidden Question – was he going to marry Ava Gardner?” she wrote. “His fist stayed in his pocket but he leaped into his chrome-trimmed, fin-tailed horseless carriage and charged into us .”

92 Aline Mosby to James L.C. Ford, 27 Sept. 1953 or 1954, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
reporters, scattering us like pencil-holding chickens. I nearly had a souvenir imprint of Frankie’s fender to remember that story by.”

Another angry actress was Yvonne de Carlo. Mosby quoted a young police officer as saying de Carlo was too old for him. De Carlo refused to speak to Mosby after the story ran.

Mosby also hit a nerve with actress Bette Davis. She claimed Mosby misquoted her in a story and sought retribution by refusing Mosby’s attendance at a party. Mosby said Davis’ complaint is common among celebrities and it typically translates into, “I wish I hadn’t said that.”

The scariest incident happened after her first Hollywood story for United Press, a party at the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas.

“The casino manager who chatted with the press was Benjamin Siegel, a dapper escort of film beauties and man-about-town,” Mosby wrote. “I wrote what the office files said—that he also was Bugsy Siegel, one-time head of Murder, Inc., and notorious gangster. I discovered later Bugsy had a couple of hoods shadow me for three days with the possibility of roughing me up. I didn’t stop shivering for a week.”

Occasionally Mosby was able to veer off the beaten report-every-move-of-a-celebrity path. She wrote serious stories about Hollywood business and the people behind the movie screen.

“I realize that stars don’t mean as much as fans think to a success of a movie,” Mosby wrote. “It’s the directors and writers you learn to respect. My favorites in movies are directors rather than stars – John Huston, Orson Wells, George Stevens. And many of my favorite films aren’t even talkies, but German and Russian silents of the ‘20s.”
Mosby’s Hollywood reporting also hit a few low points. At Suzan Ball’s wedding she couldn’t stop crying as the bride walked down the aisle. Ball was wearing a new artificial leg to replace one that been amputated.

“Everybody else at the ceremony – from the reporters to the bridegroom – knew she would soon die from cancer,” Mosby wrote.

Another sad tale made Mosby realize that the truth can hurt.

“Once I heard that Frankie Bailey, the ex-Ziegfeld beauty, was living in Hollywood. I found her in an old frame rooming house off Hollywood Boulevard.

“Frankie, once called the beauty with the million dollar legs, had retired from the stage with the 1917 edition of the Ziegfeld Follies. Her fortune, two husbands and fans had dwindled. She was 90, nearly blind and lame. But she still had her hourglass figure.”

Mosby wrote that the actress clutched her hand and said, “I wish I were dead! What is left for me?”

After the story went to print, the actress was livid.

“She was so upset she walked with her cane a half mile to the newspaper that had printed my story to complain,” Mosby wrote. “I was distressed. I decided sometimes it is more gentle to not tell all the truth.”

Mosby also sat through a number of funerals including those of Al Jolson, Carole Landis and Lionel Barrymore. Even though she rarely knew the deceased, she wrote that it was hard not to feel sad.

“In the movies a reporter gives such interviews a business-like eye and never flinches at the tragedies he covers in trench coat and snap-brim hat,” Mosby wrote. “But you would have to be of stone not to be touched by the heartbreaks of show business.”
She added that publicists do not help the situation.

“It’s always a shock to go behind those beautiful flowers at a Hollywood funeral to find the telephones, mimeographed press releases and cases of soda pop that mortuary publicists leave for the press,” she wrote.

After admitting that press agents can give a reporter story leads, she noted that there is more hate than love in the press agent–reporter relationship.

“They’re on my phone, trying to get me to talk to their clients, all day long, nights, Sundays, when I’m in the shower or on a desperate deadline,” Mosby wrote.

“They bombard us reporters with gifts, give cocktail parties, haul us off to movie previews and nightclub openings and leave us crawling, limp and with circles beneath our eyes to the typewriter.”

Mosby thought most columnists would write the same stories without the presents. In her tenure, she unwrapped mink-trimmed whisky jiggers, live pigeons with publicity items clamped to their legs, and 43 ceramic ashtrays, all inscribed with her name so she couldn’t give them away.

Mosby claimed press agents were responsible for another hazard: cocktail parties. One week she was invited to 19 parties – ranging from a breakfast for J. Fred Muggs, the monkey that was a star on the original Today Show in New York, to a gathering to honor visiting celebrities.

“I rushed from work to a swank restaurant, back to work and then to another restaurant, a hotel, a home and another restaurant.

“The week was a dizzy round of cheese-filled celery and chopped liver. I got so groggy that by Saturday night I had nightmares of floating on a sea of marinated herring
and sour cream (and I’d never even heard of herring or sour cream until I left Montana),” she wrote.

Eventually, Mosby, who enjoyed good food and wine, only accepted invitations based on the caterer. The wildest party she attended was bandleader Ray Anthony’s soiree on his lawn for Marilyn Monroe.

“In the midst of a drum solo by Mickey Rooney, some of the press arrived by helicopter for a better view of Marilyn’s plunging neckline,” she wrote. “Patio umbrellas tipped over and drinks whooshed out of glasses when the helicopter decided to land on the lawn.

“The crowning touch came when one fully-clothed guest jumped into the swimming pool, drink in hand. He did a neat Australian crawl among floating gardenias that spelled ‘Marilyn’ in the pool.”

Mosby figured she’d seen everything after that bash, but the movie previews she covered continually amazed her. One unforgettable preview was the movie “Underwater” starring Jane Russell. At the height of the event, Mosby and fellow reporters were handed swimsuits, oxygen tanks, breathing tubes, rubber caps, foot fins, goggles, ballpoint pens and “waterproof popcorn” to watch the movie underwater.

“Turtles and catfish swam over to investigate,” she wrote. “I laughed so much into the breathing tube it filled with water and I nearly choked before I plowed my way through schools of human “fish” to the surface.”

A frantic press agent also made the preview memorable for Mosby. The publicist begged Mosby to look after a new blonde beauty of his because she didn’t know anybody and he (apparently) could not accompany her. Mosby wondered how she’d entertain the
girl, but as soon as the plane landed in Silver Springs, Florida, the blonde jumped into a bikini and wowed photographers. Mosby wrote that the exposure brought her a Warner studio contract and a part on Broadway. Her name? Jayne Mansfield.

Mosby despised Hollywood’s “climbers and name-droppers and the sick striving for money,” but near the end of her Hollywood reporting days she said she didn’t mind the beat. She liked the “inbred, company-town life with its eternal shop talk; the palm trees and searchlights, buildings that look like pasteboard movie sets.”

There are plenty of adventures for a small town girl in Hollywood without even leaving the house. I live in one of those glass-and-stucco California apartment houses with a swimming pool. The tenants have included a genuine playboy who never worked, a movie star, assorted starlets, a beautiful female real estate agent who drives a $12,000 white Jaguar trimmed with gold and a film company executive who drinks champagne as if it were celery tonic and throws the empty bottles into the pool.

One of my favorite pastimes is walking from my apartment one block up the hill to Sunset Blvd. to sit in a sidewalk café that would make Parisians pale. It’s called Hamburger Hamlet and, in fact, would make Shakespeare pale. Scenes from Shakespeare plays hang solemnly on the wall and the menu features such high-tone items as a hamburger with imported cheese and Russian dressing at 85 cents.

At Hamburger Hamlet I sit and watch the Hollywoodites go by. One day it might be Mae Murray, the famed silent star of “The Merry Widow,” her lips as bee-stung as ever. Another day it will be a modern glamour girl, Debra Paget, in her Cadillac with phony jewels glued all over it. Once Debra showed me the car and confessed she’d glued on those thousands of “gems” herself. No other small town girl in the world can make that statement.

By now Hollywood doesn’t seem to me quite the perilous and frightening place it did when I started covering the Hollywood beat 10 years ago. Most of the perils I’ve conquered. But just when I settle down to a calm routine, the telephone will ring as it did the day I’m writing this.

“We’re making a bullfight picture in Tijuana,” a press agent enthused. “How would you like to put on a matador outfit and be a bullfighter? Of course, the bull will be a little one…”

Later in life, Mosby reminisced about her Hollywood days with a bit of cynicism. She said the work wasn’t particularly interesting and she didn’t really enjoy it. Mosby found it hard to write objectively with press agents stretching the truth and actors only saying something to further their careers. Ultimately, she felt the stories about actors and films were not world events, but mainly free publicity.

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“There are few people in the film industry who would be regarded as worthwhile, contributing something to the arts, but most of them not. A writer would be a more interesting person, really, to interview,” she said.94

Mosby said she worked in the Los Angeles bureau until she “didn’t like it anymore.”95 She said Tom Brady, a film industry reporter for the New York Times, inspired her to seek employment abroad. When he would visit Los Angeles, he would ask her, “What are you wasting your time here for? This is something ridiculous. There are so many more interesting stories abroad.”96

Mosby said she quit UPI and fled to Europe, but her memory may have been selective when recalling the end of her California career.97 Former United Press Vice President and Sales Manager Warren Sargent provided a different account of Mosby’s last days as a United Press Hollywood columnist in an interview with Dick Harnett, a retired United Press San Francisco bureau manager.

She and lots of Hollywood reporters in Los Angeles were getting paid under the counter by Confidential Magazine. They took cash from the publisher of that magazine. Aline took checks. She took checks. Confidential Magazine was hauled up by the Justice Department on charges of circulating pornography through the U.S. mails, which was illegal. The publisher of that magazine, when he was on trial, said, "I'm a legitimate magazine and I have legitimate people working for me." Like who? He said so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so. They all denied it. Aline couldn't deny it because he had the canceled checks.

What had she provided him [Confidential Magazine]? I'll tell you what I think she provided him, and a beautiful story it was. She was sent down to Palm Springs at the request of the Paris Match, one of our big clients in Europe, a magazine like Life. They wanted "a week with Frank Sinatra." They wanted move by move, everything the guy did. He was hot stuff.

Aline slept in her car. She went down there and what she saw was Frank go into his house and he had three little starlets with him, all cute little things. They went in the house and they just stayed there, and just stayed there and just stayed there. They didn't come out, and she wrote the piece for Paris Match. Then she told Confidential Magazine that Frank was shacked up with three cutie pies in Palm Springs, had been in there for three days. Confidential Magazine wrote a wonderful piece called "Breakfast of Champions." The

94 Ibid., 27.
95 Ibid., 21.
96 Ibid., 29.
97 Ibid., 21, 29.
theme of the piece was, and this was always a technique with that magazine, half truth and half lie and the subject can't deny the half lie because he has then got to reveal the half truth. They wrote a piece. How could Frank Sinatra have three girls all day and all night for three days? How did he keep his energy up? How did he manage to be virile enough to do it.

The answer was that Frank would go out to the kitchen and have a bowl of Wheaties, the "breakfast of champions." The Wheaties would restore his vigor and then he'd go back to the girls. Then he'd go have another bowl of Wheaties and then go back to another one. They reasoned that Frank could not object, and he did not file suit, because they had a witness that he was with the three girls for three days. He didn't deny that and what the hell difference does it make whether he denied the corn flakes and the Wheaties? So the magazine got away with the piece and it was really fun to read. But Aline was caught with the checks so Hank Rieger had to fire her but he and UPI got her a job with the World's Fair in Brussels, and that's where she went.98

Regardless of the reason, Mosby said she left Los Angeles in 1958 after 13 years of writing more than 1,800 stories about the movie industry and its personalities.99 She boarded a plane for Europe and she paid for her own plane ticket.100

99 Charles E. Hood to Richard A. Solberg, 17 May 1984, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
Illustration 3: Aline Mosby Nude Portrait
Illustration 4: Aline Mosby Director Chair
Illustration 5: Aline Mosby interviewing Jayne Mansfield.
Illustration 6: Aline Mosby with Jane Russell at “Underwater” preview.
Illustration 7: Aline Mosby with Mickey Rooney.
Illustration 8: Aline Mosby preparing for an interview.
Illustration 9: Aline Mosby with Robert Mitchum.
Illustration 10: Aline Mosby pinning a boutonniere on Elmo Lincoln.
Illustration 11: Aline Mosby with Dean Martin.
Illustration 12: Aline Mosby interviewing Jerry Lewis.
Illustration 13: Aline Mosby with Ava Gardner.
Illustration 14: Aline Mosby on the set of "The Babe Ruth Story."
Illustration 15: Aline Mosby posing with a Hollywood group.
Illustration 16: Aline Mosby on a jet plane.
"Pounding out stories on Warsaw Pact meeting and dogs and men whirring around the earth is more glamorous to me than all the interviews I've had with stars like Elvis Presley and Debbie Reynolds put together."

- Aline Mosby, "The View From No. 13 People's Street"  

When Mosby went to Brussels in the summer of 1958, she worked as a publicist for the World’s Fair. Her departure from the United Press did not last long as Tom Curran, then vice president of the United Press European division, found her a position at the London bureau. By the end of the summer, Mosby was reading books on Soviet affairs and taking intense Russian lessons from an elderly woman. She soon aspired to become a Moscow correspondent to see if the land was as “mysterious [and] paradoxical as it sounded.”

The 37-year-old didn’t have to wait long. Before the end of 1958, United Press, which merged with International News Service in May to become United Press International, gave Mosby a temporary position in the Moscow bureau, which would make her one of the few, if not the only, foreign female correspondents in the communist capital.  

“At the time I went to Russia, the Western news bureaus were only allowed two correspondents,” Mosby said.

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101 Mosby, Aline. 1962. The View From No. 13 People’s Street. New York: Random House, Inc. Unless otherwise noted, all contents from this chapter are from this book.


As the third correspondent, which eventually set precedent across the foreign bureaus, Mosby was assigned to get a women’s view of the Russians as well as cover the regular news.

“Don’t worry too much about writing politics,” the head of the UPI European division told her. “What we want to find out about is what the people are like, what they eat for breakfast, how they live and so forth.”

In December, her visa finally arrived. Around the same time, she received a letter from her boss-to-be, UPI Moscow Bureau Chief Henry Shapiro, asking her to bring a half dozen solid toilet deodorizers, one pair of black kid gloves without stitching, size 6 ¼, and four pairs of white double-bed sheets.

“When my friends squeezed me into my little white MGA sports car, it was so loaded with western fripperies it looked like Macy’s,” Mosby wrote.

With Shapiro’s advice, Mosby packed woolen underwear, fur-lined boots, fur-lined gloves, a fur-lined coat, and a trench coat, because she felt a foreign correspondent really should have a trench coat. She also bought a supply of car parts. Mosby was determined to take her British MGA sports car to Moscow. She owned an MG TD in the United States and bought an MGA when she moved to Europe. Many people, including the Soviet embassy in London, told her it would be impossible to bring the car without prior permission on her visa, but she ignored the warnings. Eventually she proved everybody wrong.

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106 Ibid., 28–30.
107 Ibid., 30.
Mosby drove to Berlin. She said the trip was a nightmare.

"I had to stop at three checkpoints, manned by East Germans, apparently designed to discourage West Germans from traveling to Berlin and Berliners and East Germans from going the other way," she wrote.

"At each stop, loudspeakers blared "invitations" to come to East Germany to live. Tables were stacked with Communist propaganda leaflets in the hope of influencing travelers from both directions."

Mosby had to go through a series of formalities at the checkpoints, which included standing in long lines to buy permits. It was dark by the time she was allowed to depart from the second checkpoint and venture onto the icy Autobahn.

"I was told I was not to stop on the highway for any reason," she wrote. "If I did, I might become just another American detained by East Germans. The cottony fog shrouded the edge of the road and forest beyond. Not a service station, not a light. For miles I hugged the back of a truck, groping along at 10 miles an hour. I kept thinking, Please don’t skid, little car, I’ll never make it to Moscow..."

In East Berlin, she was told that she could not drive to Russia during the winter, and the Polish, East German and Soviet consulates all gave her the same line about needing visa permission to ship the car.

"But the bureaucrats underestimated the persistence of a woman," she wrote. "Why not ship it as a piece of baggage?"

The East Berlin shipping clerk approved Mosby’s package. The fact that the package was a car and going to Moscow wasn’t even an issue.
Mosby traveled by train the rest of the way to Moscow. Shapiro managed to send her another telegram before her arrival. This time he asked for antihistamine pills, green eye shadow and six picture books.

The first night on the train, Mosby felt like she was the subject in an Alfred Hitchcock movie thriller.

“Three times I was awakened by frightening pounding at the door; first the East Germans, twice the Poles appeared, requesting passports, counting money, poking into luggage, and disappearing into the night,” she wrote. “The East Germans argued I did not have the right currency documents. I turned my handbag inside out, a staggering job for any female, until at last, as the train was pulling out, the officials threw up their hands and hurried away.”

In a separate check, a customs man approached Mosby’s compartment asking if she carried hashish, opium or foreign literature.

“In my suitcase was not only “Inside Russia” but “Doctor Zhivago” – and, even worse, several anti-communist books in Russian, such as “The New Class”,” she wrote. She said no to all of his questions and feared she’d be evicted from the Soviet Union before she reached Moscow. Luckily he made a swift check and left.

She remembered that many of the passengers walked past her compartment and stared at her and her American magazines. In the dining car of the train, she sat with a Russian couple. Her Russian wasn’t very good, but she understood when they asked her, “Why do Americans want war?”

“I realized then that I had crossed deep into alien territory, into the thick of what we know as the cold war,” she wrote.
Shapiro picked her up at the train station and immediately caught her staring at the people.

"They look like ordinary people," he told her. "Yes, they don't have horns." 108

"I somehow expected to see them as you see in the propaganda movies, you know, all sort of very young and vigorous and marching onward to communism, and people bustling around, looking very busy," Mosby said.

"But I saw these babushkas109 and everybody with very heavy, stolid, dull clothes, sort of plodding along."

The communist country was worse than she expected. 110 Instead of "people lock-stepping to work, fierce and bushy browed," she found the Russians amiable and disorganized.

The thick smells of sweet cigarettes and heavy perfume, and the newsstands full of communist newspapers and magazines put her in culture shock.

Mosby’s arrival in Moscow was a big event for the journalism community. Everyone welcomed her, including the rival Associated Press. Mosby soon learned that the arrival of anyone from the outside world was a huge deal, regardless of competition.

Shapiro immediately filled Mosby in on her living arrangement, which was the office. She would work and sleep at work. Shapiro said Moscow real estate was scarce and many correspondents lived at the office. He sugarcoated the arrangement by telling her she could handle important stories that might break during the night.

109 Russian colloquial term for an old woman. Babushkas means grandmothers.
Her new home was in a nine-story apartment house on 13 People’s Street in the Proletarian District. Russians occupied the majority of the building, but Mosby rarely saw them. Her apartment was part of the foreigners’ wing that included diplomats from Israel, Britain, France, Holland and Thailand. Their wing was completely cut off from the native dwellings. To come in and out of the building, the Russians used the elevator and the foreigners used the back door.

The two-room office had a hallway that led to Mosby’s living quarters. The first door off the long corridor was a darkroom for developing and printing photographs, followed by Mosby’s kitchen. The kitchen was a large room with two Russian cabinets for dishes, a broom closet, table, old American refrigerator and a Russian stove. It is presumed Mosby’s bathroom, living room and bedroom were at the end of the hallway.

“My bedroom and living room were spacious, with high ceilings, and were furnished by one of my predecessors with modern pieces shipped from West Berlin,” Mosby wrote.

Mosby found two setbacks with the bathroom. The bathroom sink did not have a hot water tap and the toilet was in a separate room with no window. The request for deodorizers on Shapiro’s shopping list quickly made sense.

The living arrangements also included cockroaches, bed bugs, photographers occasionally developing photos in the kitchen sink, and noise from the Tass teletypes, the Soviet news service. The teletypes were kept in a wooden box to cut down the racket, but the boxes had to be kept partly open or the machines could become hot and catch fire.

There was also an issue with mice.

“During my first winter in Moscow little fat brown mice moved into my warm kitchen,” Mosby wrote. “Henry Shapiro decided a cat would be cheaper than calling in
the exterminator every week. So he issued an *ukase*, an order, that the office-apartment could acquire a cat.”

Mosby named the cat Natasha, after the heroine in “War and Peace.” The cat usually earned her keep in the middle of the night and liked to deposit her prey on Mosby’s pillow as a present.

Despite the less than par living conditions, Mosby found living at the office better than the alternative, a hotel room.

For the first six months, almost every day was an adventure for Mosby.

“I could hardly wait to tumble out of bed and get outside to make fresh discoveries,” she wrote.

One of the first issues Mosby probed was the reason behind the foreign misconception of the Soviet Union. Shapiro reminded her that the Russians themselves made it difficult, if not impossible, for outsiders to report about everyday life in their country. Sometimes hard news or regular news was the most difficult to obtain.

If anybody knew how the media worked in the Soviet Union, it was Shapiro. He originally came to the Soviet Union as a lawyer, but he was very interested in Soviet affairs and fell into journalism.

“So he still had the academic mind, which I think is good for journalists,” Mosby said. “I think now they do it that way. If they want to be a correspondent in Eastern European countries, they not only, in university, specialize in learning the language, but specialize
in the affairs of that country and its history, write down all the fine points. I think that’s the way it should be.”

Mosby also described Shapiro as “very dignified and very correct, but nonetheless, [he] had a twinkle in his eye and would make amusing remarks.” Shapiro was not only a tough reporter and a stern bureau chief, but he was also fluent in Russian, married to a Russian native and had countless Soviet contacts. At embassy receptions, Mosby said it was common for the Russian leader, Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, to collaborate with Shapiro to see how issues or propositions would play out in the West. Shapiro gave UPI the competitive edge in Moscow.

Mosby continued to take Russian lessons in Moscow. Eventually she was able to read the Russian news wire, understand Russian radio and television broadcasts and conduct simple interviews without a translator. The use of a translator always involved some risk since it was common for translators to make mistakes under pressure and occasionally withhold bits of information. Mosby admitted that she would have done better as a reporter had she been fluent.

“It’s one thing that made Henry unique,” she said.

Shapiro accompanied Mosby on her first visit to the Central Telegraph Office, the censorship system.

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112 Ibid., 31, 131.
113 Ibid., 53, 131–132.
114 Ibid., 54.
115 Ibid., 132.
Mosby remembered thinking: “Here I am, believe it or not, eating caviar sandwiches at the Central Telegraph Office in Moscow with the famous Henry Shapiro.”

He introduced Mosby to the women who handled the telephone lines and who brought the copy behind a green curtain where the censors worked in secret. The censors’ job was to kill anything that conflicted with the ideals of the Soviet Union. Mosby said the censors used to sit at a desk where journalists could sit with them and argue over copy. But as more and more journalists came to Moscow, the censors grew tired of getting yelled at and sought seclusion.116

Mosby soon discovered the Central Telegraph Office lacked glamour; and censorship meant a lot of wasted time and work. For every story, Mosby had to hand in three copies to the censors: one for the censors’ file, one to cable, one for her to check for any “corrections” that were made by the censors.

After submitting a story, journalists had to wait for hours to days for the copy to emerge from “the oven,” a pseudo name the press corps used for the entourage behind the green curtain. After a story was approved, a reporter could transmit the copy by telegraph or telephone, but all communication to outside media offices had to be made at the telegraph office. Journalists could not use telephones in their personal offices to transmit copy.117

Writing with the censor’s eye over her shoulder was the most unusual condition of her new job. Not a day passed when she didn’t think about hidden microphones, bugged telephones, and the tight travel restrictions. No foreign correspondent could travel

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116 Ibid., 46.
117 Ibid.
beyond a 40-kilometer radius (approximately 25 miles) of Moscow without prior permission. Correspondents also needed permission from the foreign ministry to conduct interviews. Mosby said it was common for the office to take weeks to grant a request. With luck the office would eventually set an interview time, date and place. When the interview took place, there would be someone from the ministry observing. Mosby found out how common the observations occurred when at a reception a Soviet Foreign Ministry official told her in detail all her movements in the Soviet Union.

Mosby was quick to learn the tricks of the censorship trade from co-workers and fellow Russians.

“If the volume of your phone drops and it’s hard to hear, they’ve turned on the recording machine,” a Russian acquaintance told her.

A couple of times Mosby slipped in a couple of uncensored phrases to a reporter taking dictation in London. If the person on the other line ever yelled, “What was that?” she said her stomach would tightened with fear that the line would soon go dead.

When the story broke of the Russians decision to import British consumer goods, Mosby got her copy back from the censor before her competition.

“I snared a telephone line to London,” she wrote. “But my triumph was brief. An hour later Vincent Buist, then Reuters bureau chief, said, ‘The funniest thing – when I called my office in London they asked who was the girl who called from Moscow and dictated the story…’ ”

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118 Ibid., 70.

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“The telegraph girls had got their wires crossed. I had dictated my story to a competitor, Reuters, in London. Everybody had a good laugh. Except me.”

When covering Khrushchev, Mosby said the competition was often pushed to the side. The leader was known to frequent daily receptions at foreign embassies to talk to diplomats and the press. Mosby said the Western reporters, a group of about 16, would often meet in the Central Telegraph Office prior to the events.

“He would have been invited to all of them,” she said. “So one would cover a reception at the British Embassy, and somebody else at the Hungarian Embassy and somebody else at the Peruvian Embassy. Then you would just hang around with your eye on the door, waiting for him or even another important Soviet to show up.

“When Khrushchev would come, he would talk to the diplomats first while the journalists casually and politely would sort of be behind him or in a circle around him, and then finally he would start talking to the journalists. Usually we would get a story. All the journalists would rush to the Central Telegraph Office, where journalists who were not at those receptions would be waiting, and we would pool the information. It wasn’t very competitive, but there was really no other way to cover the story. Then everybody would go and write their own story and give it to the censor.”120

On March 22, 1961, censorship ended.

“On thirty minutes’ notice, foreign correspondents were summoned to the Foreign Ministry to be told direct Soviet censorship had been abolished (but we still can lose visas for writing stories the Soviet regards as incorrect),” Mosby wrote. “It was

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considered a sign of confidence of the Bolshevik regime. It was also a sign that after 44 years they deemed censorship ineffective. Stories which had been suppressed, such as Khrushchev’s famous anti-Stalin speech in 1956, eventually got out anyway.”

Abolishing censorship reminded Mosby of the movie Alice in Wonderland.  

“As Alice in Wonderland said, It gets curioser and curioser!” she wrote.

Journalists saved “hours of time every week and much wear and tear on the disposition” by bypassing the censors. Despite the hardships, Mosby felt censorship gave the foreign journalists a unique sense of camaraderie. The hours spent waiting for copy allowed the correspondents to “chat and swap stories,” and oddly enough, censorship had a positive impact on Mosby’s writing.

“In a way it was good, because one learned very quickly not to use adjectives that are really editorializing,” she said. “I already had been taught that in the years I’d been with UPI, that you must keep your copy strictly neutral and not take one side or the other. But still, qualifying adjectives can slip in and a point of view could get into a story, especially in a case like this when the Cold War was at its height. We were patriotic Americans looking at the country through American eyes. So I learned not to let politics of the Cold War get in the way, but just try to report as neutrally as possible what was happening.”

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123 Ibid., 129.
For news, the UPI Moscow bureau carefully watched the Tass teletypes and Moscow radio and television stations. Every day they waded through 11 daily morning newspapers, two evening editions, 10 tri- and bi-weekly sheets and a mailboxful of out-of-town newspapers and magazines.

Mosby did most of her reporting with UPI sidekick Robert (Bud) Korengold, who arrived in Moscow shortly after Mosby. The duo worked well with Shapiro. Both of them were in awe of their boss and privately agreed not to compete with him.

"We were both very happy to sit at his feet and do what he wanted to do," Mosby said.

Korengold also had a lot of respect for Mosby. He saw her as a big sister.124

"She took me in and fed me and offered warmth and friendship and professional advice when I first arrived in the Soviet capital as a much younger and very inexperienced, very fledging journalist," Korengold wrote.

He remembered Mosby "as the lithe and stunning red head whipping around Moscow in the Soviet’s capital’s only white [MGA] sports car and blocking traffic at every corner while Russians gathered around to ask her to raise the hood so they could see the motor."125

Next to Lenin’s tomb, Mosby felt her car was the biggest attraction in Moscow. She even wrote an article about her auto fame.

124 Ibid., 45.
“If admission could be charged,” she wrote. “I’d be rich from the sidewalk spectators who have laughed at, ogled, patted, stared into and under and even jokingly tried to lift my little machine.”\textsuperscript{126}

At first she worried that her car might cause resentment, especially when a Russian friend told her she should not have brought the car because people would see something they could not yet have. But her car seemed to ease some cultural misconceptions. Once when Mosby climbed out of the car with another correspondent, a Russian car admirer was surprised to find out they were Americans.

“Why, we thought you were Czech or Polish,” he said to Mosby. “You look like ordinary nice people.”

It is possible the MGA brought Mosby more hardships in Russia than help. She said getting a Russian drivers’ license was a “seven-year plan.” One test involved taking the engine apart and Mosby failed the exam on at least one occasion. The “150 driving rules” also gave Mosby a hard time. The policemen threatened to take away her license if her car was dusty\textsuperscript{127} and she disputed traffic violations with them on several occasions. Mosby also had to do most repairs and oil changes on the auto. Few Russians had automobiles, and mechanics were hard to find.

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.
Because the car consistently attracted a mob of admirers, it was common for Mosby to use other forms of transportation to chase stories around Moscow. Part of her beat was to drop in at the American Embassy to find out if anything was going on such as an American scheduled to visit Moscow whom UPI could interview. In one random visit, an acquaintance in the visa passport department handed Mosby a scoop that would permanently put her name in the American history books.

“Somebody I knew there said that this American had come in and turned in his passport and said he didn’t want it anymore, he was going to stay in the Soviet Union,” she said.

“I said, ‘My God! This has never happened before.’ They gave me his name and they said that he was staying at the Metropole Hotel.”

The American dissident was Lee Harvey Oswald, who later would be accused of assassinating U.S. President John F. Kennedy.

Mosby called Oswald and asked to talk to him. At first, Oswald would not meet with anybody. He refused to meet with Korengold, but eventually agreed to meet with Mosby. 128

“When I got to his hotel room, he said he wanted to become a Soviet citizen because his mother had been exploited by the system of capitalism,” Mosby said. “He obviously had some sort of complicated relationship with his mother.

“He was very arrogant and said that the government was undoubtedly going to give

him a very top job. He was waiting to hear its decision and he expected to be given a very plush apartment in Moscow.

"But the government sent him to Minsk to work in a radio factory. It’s understandable why because he was a very shallow person and not very well educated. He mouthed a few phrases from Pravda, but he really didn’t know anything about communism and the ideology. He had a little knowledge in electronics but nothing the Soviet Union would want to make use of."

Ultimately, Mosby had a strong impression that Oswald was not very intelligent, was emotionally imbalanced and wanted to be a big shot. He struck her as somebody the Soviet Union wouldn’t have much interest in. After Mosby filed her story, the competition caught wind of her news and sought interviews with Oswald. It’s suspected that Oswald felt Mosby’s article belittled his motivation for defecting because he called her to complain about the article. He told Mosby that he let her come see him because she was a woman and he thought she would be more understanding of his situation. Afterwards, Mosby felt sorry for him.

At the time, the Oswald story was just a sidebar compared to the continual headline news happening in Russia.

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129 Minsk is the capital of Belarus, a country west of Moscow. The country was under Soviet control during Mosby’s Russia tour.
130 Pravda is a pro-communist Russian newspaper.
131 Aline Mosby, interview by Suzanne MacDonald, School of Journalism, University of Montana, written, 7 June 1977: 2.
“[We] reported together a lot of history – the first Soviet man – and women – in space; the Nixon-Khrushchev kitchen debate at the 1959 American exhibition in Moscow; the destalinization campaign; the ouster of Stalin from his tomb in Red Square; the Moscow trial of U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers…,” Korengold wrote.

The story of the two-headed dog was probably the most strange story Mosby covered in Moscow. A German shepherd had the head and two front legs of a puppy grafted onto it by joining major blood vessels. The puppy head lived for 30 days. Before it died, Mosby took the dog(s) for a walk.

“I felt slightly ill,” she wrote. “When interviewing two-headed dogs, it’s better not to have lunch first.”

But the most exciting story she covered was the first Soviet man in space.

The first tip about the real Columbus of the cosmos came on Saturday, April 7 [1961]. I learned that eastern European communists correspondents had been alerted to listen to the radio. But all was quiet. Sunday, nothing.

Then Monday afternoon into the Central Telegraph Office marched some Soviet television cameramen. They set up their gear, just as they habitually do to film “bourgeois” journalists sending news of a Soviet rocket achievement around the world.

“What’s up?” CBS’s Marvin Kalb asked one of the Russians.

The cameraman pointed to the sky.

We at UPI reasoned that the Soviet TV crews operate under most carefully considered instructions. They would not be ready to photograph reactions to a launching unless an announcement of one was planned.

Usually secretive Soviets seldom give tips to “bourgeois” reporters, but suddenly all over Moscow foreign correspondents got friendly hints from communist sources to listen to Moscow Radio.

When nothing happened that night or Tuesday, our Soviet translators shook their heads doubtfully at these “crazy” western journalists. At midnight the drama grew wilder when some Soviet sources said the cosmonaut had been launched and returned in “ill health.”

I went to bed at 1:00 a.m. At 2:00 a.m. another source telephoned with the rumor that the ill cosmonaut might be Vladimir Ilyushin, son of a well-known Soviet aircraft designer. I got out of bed, padded into the UPI office in my bedroom slippers, and sat down at the desk. I began to dig out piles of ancient files, trying to find photographs and stories on Ilyushin – just in case Tass said he was the cosmonaut.

Fifteen hours later, I was still sitting in my nightgown and slippers with our male staff bustling around me. I hadn’t once been out of the chair.

The announcement had come at 10:00 a.m. We had been alerted four hours beforehand by Tass in London – another almost unprecedented occurrence in Soviet journalism.

“Vnimanie…Vnimanie… (Attention…Attention…)” boomed forth the announcer’s voice in deep tones over Moscow Radio. It was one of the great moments in the history of man’s life on earth. And there I sat, clutching the telephone, still with cold cream on my face and my hair up in curlers.
Shapiro dictated over one telephone to London. I dictated to Frankfurt over another. Korengold raced around Moscow, getting comments from scientists and quotes from exuberant citizens. Our rival, the AP, sent out the flash that the cosmonaut had gone up and come down, as Tass erroneously reported to all agencies in London. But our story was saved when Shapiro cried to our London office, "No, no! He's still in orbit!" [Shapiro had checked with some of his Russian sources and confirmed it hadn't crashed.]

Not anyone, not even eager Soviet journalists who were tipping off western correspondents, dreamed the Soviets would announce the launching while the cosmonaut was said to be still in outer space.

And his name wasn't Ilyushin but Yuri Gagarin!

We worked with no sleep and little food through the next hectic days: the airport welcome for Gagarin, cool and poised as if he had coasted around the block on a bicycle instead of whirring around the world in 89 minutes. The Kremlin reception. The demonstration on Red Square with Russians surging to break through the police lines, women ill and fainting. Never had we seen Moscow so jubilant. That week a meat shortage plagued the city and housewives had to trudge to several stores before finding any. The milk bottles arrived at my door with bits of white paper stuffed in the top. The dairy apparently ran out of tinfoil caps.

But the genuine joy on Russians' faces! All the shortages, the sacrifices, the consumers' good and gadgets they gave up so that their country could have a man in space – the Russians we saw thronging through Red Square glowed as if it was all worth it. Strangers kissed one another, old women did jigs, young people cheered, students walked out of their classes.

Mosby covered several momentous stories in Moscow. Many of the stories came out of embassy receptions since the Foreign Ministry did not hold regular conferences or briefings.

"These parties are in some ways like Hollywood cocktail parties I used to cover for UPI, only much more exciting and worthwhile," she wrote.

"In Moscow, too, they are "shop talk" parties. But instead of discussing Zsa Zsa Gabor's latest husband the party-goers talk about whether First Deputy Premier Anastas I. Mikoyan is moving up, down or sideways, or what the last two words in the second paragraph of the day's Pravda signify. Instead of meeting press agents and starlets we share the canapé table with Premier Khrushchev, an assortment of Soviet generals and ambassadors conversing in a dozen languages."

It was at these events that Mosby learned what diplomat sources were.

“Correspondents tell diplomats who tell other diplomats who tell the correspondents,” she wrote.

At Mosby’s first embassy black-tie dinner party, she found that her gender put her at a slight disadvantage. After dinner, the diplomats convened to talk about current events. She assumed she could join the conversation, but the hostess firmly led her to the location of the diplomats’ wives. The custom was for the diplomats to exchange news minus the wives after dinner. Apparently, gender ranked higher in the custom than marital status.

Her female status also put her in an uncomfortable situation at a reception with Alexei Adzhubei, editor of Izvestia, at the House of Journalists.

“Adzhubei after a few vodkas began to twit me about the decadent West,” Mosby wrote. “Then he reached over and slowly and deliberately proceeded to wipe off my eye make-up and lipstick with his thumb. If I’d been in another country, I’d have slapped his face, but this is Russia, and the face in this case belonged to Khrushchev’s son-in-law. I was so hurt and astonished that I just stood there like an awkward idiot. The Russians around us looked embarrassed. Finally I shakily pulled out my lipstick and put some back on, and turned away.”

One of Mosby’s more pleasant events was the opening of the American Exhibition in Russia in the summer and fall of 1959. She said it started when she heard the song Oklahoma! in Russian playing over Radio Moscow.

“American correspondents all over Moscow rushed up to their typewriters to chronicle the noteworthy event,” she wrote. “Up till then, the usual Moscow radio fare had

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136 Izvestia was the government newspaper, a general political daily published by the Petrograd Soviet (Bolsheviks).
included few western songs, and only an occasional American tune such as a Gershwin melody or Negro spirituals.”

The Great Invasion, as Mosby labeled it, marked the entrance of “swarms of Western tourists,” and the presentation of western theatre and films from the United States, England, West Germany, France and other countries of the “capitalist camp.”

UPI had the Moscow bureau “writing stories with one hand and taking pictures with another” to get the reactions of Russian natives as well as American visitors. Mosby covered the masses that toured Russia including American governors, a group of Indiana farmers and Mrs. Richard Nixon, wife of then U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon.

Mosby did encounter some frightening times in Russia. Her apartment was broken into in the middle of the night while she was sleeping. She was followed by Russian secret police after she purchased a forbidden “underground” painting from Oskar Rabin. And a rock nearly hit her in the head at the demonstration over Cuba counterrevolution outside the American embassy in 1961. The rock incident occurred when Mosby stepped onto the embassy balcony to photograph the 2,000 demonstrators. The rock whizzed past her and shattered the window behind her.

All these incidents were frightening, but none were as scary as Mosby’s encounter with the KGB. The story starts at the British fair in Moscow. Mosby was covering the event and noticed two men following her. Because it was hard to engage Russians in conversation, she decided to talk to them.

The duo invited her to lunch. They set a date, but Mosby got cold feet. She had the suspicions that they were associated with the KGB so she stood them up. The next day they called her to complain. They told her they waited for hours and brought her flowers.

After talking it over with Shapiro and Korengold, Mosby agreed to set another lunch date. The bureau felt a restaurant was a safe, public place. Plus, they came up with a plan if something should go wrong. If Mosby did not come back in a few hours, Korengold would call the police.

Mosby met with the two men and the minute she sat down they tried to get her to toast with a glass of cognac. She refused.

“I don’t drink cognac, and certainly not before eating,” she said.

The lunch consisted of a few pieces of lettuce, which made her mad.

“I was furious, because I love to eat,” she said.

Eventually they got Mosby to drink some champagne. Once the bubbly was served, they showed her some black market icons. When she looked back at her champagne, she noticed the glass had a different golden color. She accused them of pouring cognac in her champagne, which she said is a French 75—a lethal drink. She was upset with them but they kept egging her on and she eventually took a sip.

Then she got out her Russian dictionary to tell them she thought they were despicable hoodlums. But as she looked at the dictionary, she could not read the letters. The text blurred into a solid dark line.

“I thought, ‘My God, they poisoned me,’” she said. “I looked up and the room began to swim. They were sitting there watching me, you know, and I grabbed my handbag and got up.”
Mosby staggered out of the restaurant and collapsed on the windowsill outside where a photographer was waiting to take her picture. The next thing she knew a police officer appeared. He called her a drunk and hauled her off to a drunk tank.

The police called the American Embassy who notified the UPI bureau.

Mosby suspected the KGB had slipped her a mickey. The Izvestia published her photo on the front page and tried to make her look like a “drunken idiot and discredit me in the eyes of the Russian people.”

Shapiro immediately went into damage control mode. The incident was reported to President John F. Kennedy, and U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Llewellyn E. Thompson made an oral protest to the Soviet government. Foreign Ministry officials unofficially told Shapiro they regretted the incident. And at the request of UPI, American correspondents did not file a story about the episode. Some concluded that UPI was more interested in protecting Shapiro from expulsion than Mosby. It was perceived that any bad press about the incident could prompt the Russians to expel the entire Moscow UPI staff, including Shapiro, UPI's Soviet expert.

Shapiro gave Mosby the option to leave after the mickey incident. Mosby told him, “No, I knew when I came here that this is sort of an enemy country. You just can’t expect to be treated very well. It’s not going to influence anything I write. I’ll write objectively and I’m not going to start writing nasty things about them.”

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It turns out the Izvestia story was not the end of Mosby. Korengold said the ploy failed. “Alina’s [Korengold’s name for Mosby] Russian friends who had seen the photo all called up to say they had never seen her looking so beautiful and Alina stuck to her guns and stuck around for another year and a half much to the Soviet dismay…”

The Cold War joke told to Mosby by foreigners and Russians held true: No Izvestia in Pravda and no Pravda in Izvestia. In Russian, Pravda means truth, and Izvestia means news.

Even though Mosby persevered through the more frightening portions of her job, she had a tough time dealing with the emotional aspects. Mosby had aching lonely feelings at times and longed for companionship. She found it easier to develop a Russian friend or source for a story outside the country than inside. Many were paranoid and thought foreigners were spies. They thought they would be followed or watched if they befriended an American.

Once on a date, Mosby’s Russian friend made her walk a block behind him. Sometimes she had to sit in separate seats from her companion at the theatre. Her attempts to acquire male companionship were futile. After one date, she noted that there was no place for them to go.

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142 Ibid., 130.
“After dinner, we stood awkwardly on the sidewalk,” she wrote. “I was wondering where couples go in Moscow if they want to be alone. My apartment with a translator inside and a policeman outside? His hotel with room clerks on every floor? He took me to a taxi and I went home.”

Mosby found it tough to be a single woman journalist. When her male co-workers had wives to cook and clean, she had to do it all: cook, clean, shop and work.

“Between dashing off to the Central Telegraph office to file stories or covering Khrushchev press conferences, I had to order food from Copenhagen, paint the kitchen cupboards, and hire exterminators to wrestle with the cockroaches and bed bugs,” she wrote.

“The male correspondents did not have to bother with getting diplomatic friends to bring lipsticks and night cream to Moscow. Neither did Henry Shapiro, Bob Korengold or Marvin Kalb, or the other boys then in Moscow have to stand in line at the only good Soviet hairdresser’s for an East German permanent or an Italian beehive coiffure.”

But because she had to encounter the domestic side of Russia more than most journalists, she learned the true aspects of Russian living. She considered living abroad a special advantage for a woman since “a woman is more likely to eat and live at home than on the town, and the best way to know a country is to face the markets, shops, and local plumber.”

She vouched for the hardships of communist living, and was quick to notice the subtle changes in Russian life such as the birth of evening gowns, short skirts, pointed shoes,

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144 Ibid.
and makeup, as well as pin-up posters and public affection. She also took note of the realities of Russian life: the lack of statistics on abortion, illegitimate births and prostitution; the absence of fan or scandal magazines with gossip columns; the fact that journalists could not uncover a documented case of racial discrimination; and the public denial of beggars and woman smokers and drunks.

Korengold recalled comparing notes endlessly with Mosby, “not just about Soviet politics but about the even more interesting story of how the lives of ordinary Soviet citizens were changing as the terror and repression of the Stalin era slowly receded.

“We grumbled together about our stern but very wise and experienced bureau chief Henry Shapiro and we shared countless evenings downing vodka with Soviet acquaintances who gave us guarded but intensely valuable insights into how Soviet society really worked.”

In 1962, Mosby requested a transfer from the Moscow UPI bureau. “The tensions of a seven-day forever-exciting work week burned me out,” she wrote.

Mosby also felt her peace of mind was wearing with the Soviet propaganda and she was tired of feeling fortunate to get one meal a day. She knew it was time for her to leave when she started to answer the phone “United States” instead of “United Press International.”

Mosby kept a diary of her adventures as a single, female reporter in Moscow. She transformed her notes into a book that she named after her Moscow mailing address, “The View From No. 13 People’s Street.”


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Forward, “The View from No. 13 People’s Street.”

This is not a book on Soviet politics, nor a definitive study of the people of the U.S.S.R. Many books have been written on those subjects. Studying the Soviet Union is a serious business, as I know after helping cover top political stories in Moscow for nearly three years as a UPI correspondent.

I have chosen instead to tell my experiences as a woman reporter in Moscow, to give glimpses of the human and personal side of the Soviet people, and of how foreign correspondents work and live and play in the Soviet capital.

Everything I have written happened. Everything attributed to Soviets was said by them. Only their names have been changed, to spare any difficulties.

In the April 23, 1962 issue of Newsweek, Mosby said she hoped her book would shine light on the Russian people. She claimed there was a barrier between Westerners and Soviets, and the book was an attempt to get over that barrier. The article also contained a quote from an unnamed American with a recollection of Mosby’s reporting techniques in Russia.

“She was always trying things...like calling people directly instead of going through channels. When it worked, she’d have a story.”146

Korengold also had a recollection of Mosby’s journalistic abilities. He wrote of the profound faith he had in Mosby in Moscow.

People kept running into UPI office saying, figuratively, that AP had 20 people on the story and Reuters had 30 and Agence France Presse had 50. I asked simply if Alina was there. Yes she is, came the answer. And I remember saying – well, then don’t worry about it. We’ll be covered and okay.147

Illustration 17: Mosby the Ballerina.
Illustration 18: Aline Mosby in Moscow with Frank Tresuaine and Robert Korengold.
CHAPTER 7
PARIS AND BEYOND

The next eight years of Mosby’s life consisted of a whirlwind of assignments.
Immediately after Moscow, UPI sent Mosby to the Paris bureau where she was “stuck
doing fashion stories” so the wire service could fire its freelance fashion reporter. But
the bureau didn’t necessarily overload her with assignments about scarves and skirt
lengths. Bill Landrey, then UPI foreign editor in New York, claimed Mosby did “a
helluva lot more than cover fashion shows, in fact, she covered everything.”

Mosby’s byline was found on hard news such as the North Atlantic Treaty
Organization (NATO) and United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization (UNESCO) meetings, as well as press conferences of President of France
Charles de Gaulle.

One of her more memorable assignments was trailing United States First Lady
Jacqueline Kennedy on a cruise in Greece with Aristotle Onassis.

“I remember when we covered her arrival in Athens, she wasn't very pleased to see the
press waiting,” she said.

149 Wilbur Landrey, Memorial tribute of Aline Mosby, 5 Nov. 1998, Anglo-American Press Association:
Paris.
Mosby was part of the press corps following Kennedy, which primarily consisted of NBC, CBS, AP and UPI. Without a personal yacht and the Kennedy travel itinerary, the group had to be imaginative and cooperative in the quest for news.\textsuperscript{151}

My competition was AP’s Frances Lewin, who came from Washington with Jackie and who is one woman reporter I’ve met to whom I bow low in admiration. Jackie did not want to be followed by the press, but we stuck by her despite rainstorms, transportation difficulties, and the ruses of her Secret Service protectors.

Those who cover riots haven’t known mob action until they’ve tried to elbow their way through hundreds of yelling, exuberant Turks — including an army of Istanbul photographers built like football players — trailing Jackie from museums to mosques in Istanbul. We had to rent river boats in a hurry to follow the then-President’s wife up the Bosporus (the UPI-NBC boat beat the AP boat in a race on the way back).

When Jackie tried to elude us by steaming to Aristotle Onassis’ private island south of Corfu, we reporters managed to track her down by racing there in taxis and a ferry boat. It was a hair-raising, 14-hour dash through rainstorms on slippery, narrow mountain roads. Our driver was a high-spirited young man who kept getting lost on the unmarked rutty roads, all the while shouting, “Tharos!” meaning “courage.”

The last hurdle before our island destination was a ferryboat that was closed when we skidded to a stop around midnight. We woke up to the proprietor — two old ladies — who got out of bed and, pumping up and down like marionettes, maneuvered the barge across the rough water to the island near Jackie’s hideaway.\textsuperscript{152}

By the end of the voyage, all competition ceased. When they finally got within eyesight of Onassis’ private island, it was dawn.

“We had been driving all night long. We had no sleep. They [Kennedy and Onassis party] weren’t up yet,” Mosby said.

When Onassis woke and got wind of the press camping outside his island, Mosby said he made the press leave and told the other fishermen not to rent the press any more boats.\textsuperscript{153}

Afterwards, Mosby said the story possibly shaved 10 years off her life, but gained her enough adventure to last a lifetime.\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., 86-88.
\textsuperscript{152} Mosby, Aline. 1965. “Where Are the New Nelly Blys?” Dateline, Volume IX, Number 1.
On Nov. 22, 1963, Mosby went to the Louvre Museum in Paris with friends from Hollywood, Len and Betty Slater. Upon leaving, the doorman informed them that President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated.

Mosby rushed to the UPI Paris office where an urgent message from New York was waiting for her. The accused assassin was Lee Harvey Oswald and UPI discovered the article Mosby had written on Oswald, along with a photo she had taken of him.

"I wasn't terribly surprised that he had done something like that," Mosby said. "I still feel, after all these years, that I see no evidence that Oswald ever had anybody working with him at all, that there was anybody else involved in the assassination. If they would ever come up with solid evidence such as somebody's deathbed confession or another gun or something, fine, I would accept it, but I've never seen any solid evidence to show that there was anybody else involved."

A day or so after the assassination, Mosby dug up her notes of her Oswald interview and wrote a story about it. She also discussed her contact with Oswald on radio programs and at least one French television news program.

The Warren Commission contacted Mosby by phone and mail to record her contact with Oswald. It detailed Mosby's interview with Oswald in Appendix 13: Biography of Lee Harvey Oswald.

...Probably on November 13, Aline Mosby succeeded in interviewing Oswald. A reporter for United Press International, she had called him on the telephone and was told to come right over, Oswald's explanation being that he thought she might "understand and be friendly" because she was a woman. She was the first person who was not a Soviet citizen to whom he granted an interview since his meeting with Snyder at the Embassy on October 31. Miss Mosby found him polite but stiff; she said that he seemed full

155 Betty Slater, phone interview by author, 10 March 2003.
157 Betty Slater, phone interview by author, 10 March 2003.
Lucy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 25 April 2003.
of confidence, often showing a "small smile, more like a smirk," and that he talked almost "non-stop." Oswald said to her that he had been told that he could remain in the Soviet Union and that job possibilities were being explored; they thought it probably would be best, he said, to continue his education. He admitted that his Russian was bad but was confident that it would improve rapidly. He based his dislike for the United States on his observations of racial prejudice and the contrast between "the luxuries of Park Avenue and workers' lives on the East Side," and mentioned his mother's poverty; he said that if he had remained in the United States he too would have become either a capitalist or a worker. "One way or another." he said, "I'd lose in the United States. In my own mind, even if I'd be exploiting other workers. That's why I chose Marxist ideology."

Oswald told his interviewer that he had been interested in Communist theory since he was 15, when "an old lady" in New York handed him "a pamphlet about saving the Rosenbergs." But when Mosby asked if he were a member of the Communist Party he said that he had never met a Communist and that he "might bare seen" one only once, when he saw that "old lady." He told her that while he was in the Marine Corps he had seen American imperialism in action, and had saved $1,500 in secret preparation for his defection to Russia. His only apparent regrets concerned his family: his mother, whom he had not told of his plans, and his brother, who might lose his job as a result of the publicity.

The interview lasted for about 2 hours. According to Oswald's own account, he exacted a promise from Miss Mosby that she would show him the story before publication but she broke the promise; he found the published story to contain distortions of his words. Miss Mosby's notes indicate that he called her to complain of the distortions, saying in particular that his family had not been "poverty-stricken" and that his defection was not prompted by personal hardship but that was "a matter only of ideology."158

After the historic event, Mosby did not talk a lot about her Oswald interview. It could be that she did not think her role was of significance, but it could also be that she did not want to dwell on her reporting mistakes.

Oswald told Mosby that he saved $1,500 from his Marine Corp's salary to move to Russia, but she reported $1,600. This misreporting was mentioned twice in the Warren Commission: the Investigation of Possible Conspiracy chapter and the Speculations and Rumors appendix.159

And although it is not noted in the Warren Commission, several conspiracy theorists of the Kennedy assassination have dwelled on the story Mosby wrote immediately after the assassination where she reported that Oswald lived in North Dakota. One particular theorist contemplating over whether there were two Lee Harvey Oswald's wrote:

159 Ibid., 256–257, 656
Mosby’s article is evidence that an “Oswald” was in North Dakota when the Warren Commission put Lee Oswald in New Orleans. Unfortunately, a little research showed the “North Dakota” reference to be a typographical error, apparently the result of a handwritten “NO” looking very much like “ND.”

Before and after the JFK assassination, Mosby found herself in the Middle East. It is unclear as to the prime reason she was sent to the area. An Oct. 19, 1963, article had her reporting on the Moroccan war with Algeria, and a month and a half later she wrote a feature on a temple tourist attraction near the Nile River in Abu Simbel, Egypt.

She was in Morocco when the fighting broke out with Algeria. Against the preference of UPI, Mosby climbed aboard when the Moroccan government decided to take the press to the “front.”

“On five minutes notice, off we went with no time even to visit a powder room or grab a toothbrush,” she wrote. “The last day’s travel was in those Moroccan arm trucks over burning sand dunes right out of a scene from a Rudolph Valentino sizzler. We would lurch up the side of one dune and plunge down the center. I never asked for special treatment, and I am against women reporters expecting the same. But I was admittedly grateful when the Moroccan soldiers insisted I ride in the cab up front with the driver, leaving the male correspondents to be rattled to a pulp in the back.”

Her personal account of the voyage was classic.

Flies stuck to my eyelids and mouth and now and then one would try to crawl inside. It had been a 12-hour, all-night ride up from Marrakech to this Moroccan army post, and the trucks that were to bounce us American correspondents over blazing sand to the front in the 1963 Algerian-Moroccan border “war” promised no food or water.

We had slept a few hours in the car. I had left Marrakech in such a hurry that I had nothing in my handbag for a morning toilette except a lipstick. The army post outdoor latrine was horrifying. I searched for a palm tree. And it was lucky I washed my face and hands under the open pump before I noticed a dead rat floating, whiskers and pink belly up, in the pool below.


The story about Egypt temples took her on another interesting journey. Mosby went with a group of American tourists, “traveled four days by boat [on the Nile River], slept two nights on the beach here with the wild dogs and scarabs and lived on green watermelons in order to see the ruins.”

Mosby’s Paris beat lasted less than three years. In 1964, Mosby won a Ford Foundation fellowship to study Sino-Soviet affairs and the Chinese language as part of a master’s program at Columbia University. UPI granted her a year’s leave of absence to study at Columbia, but plans quickly fell apart.

“...when [Lyndon B.] Johnson upped the war in Vietnam, the State Department told the three of us who were studying Chinese and Chinese history that we wouldn't be able to get visas to get in, so forget it,” she said.

UPI had a plan B in mind for Mosby. It wanted her to fill in for Henry Shapiro in Moscow while he went on a six-month leave of absence. Mosby was reluctant to return to the communist country, but agreed since Shapiro hadn’t had a vacation in years.

Mosby recalled her second trip to Moscow being not as “easy going” as her first trip, because Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev was in power instead of Khrushchev. Despite the stringent atmosphere, Mosby was able to be in the right place at the right time for another historic event. UPI correspondent Dick Longworth detailed the incident that Mosby called her “Toothbrush Story” on Jan. 6, 1966.

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163 H.L. Stevenson, UPI Reporter memo, 22 Dec. 1979, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
165 Ibid., 101.
India and Pakistan were fighting a war at the time and the Soviets offered to mediate. A peace conference was held in Tashkent and Aline went to cover it. The Indian delegation was led by the country's prime minister, Lal Shastri. The conference succeeded, a deal was reached, everybody congratulated each other and called it a night. Aline was brushing her teeth before bed in her hotel when she heard shouting and wailing in the corridor outside. She went to investigate and found Indian journalists who had just heard that Shastri, only hours after his triumph, had dropped dead. Aline got a call through to Henry Shapiro, the Moscow bureau chief. Henry called me, since I lived closer to the bureau. I ran over, fielded another call from Aline and put it on the wire. All the other reporters were long since in bed and callbacks didn't travel as fast then as they do now. UPI got a three-hour beat on the death of the premier of the world's biggest democracy.  

Mosby went to New York City after Moscow. UPI sent her all over the United States to write long articles such as a “four-part feature on how television was shaping up and this, that, and the other.” She eventually found New York “absolutely dull and uninteresting.”

“There was just very little to write about,” she said.

Mosby asked for a transfer to the United Nations bureau in New York. Her request was granted and Mosby lived near Lincoln Center in New York City’s West Side with her cats. She arrived in New York with Natasha, the cat from Moscow (it's assumed she brought Natasha with her after her second Moscow tour). While in New York, Mosby’s mother died and she inherited the old Burmese cat that she left her mother (likely when she left her Hollywood post). The Burmese cat and Natasha did not get along so Mosby gave Natasha to a friend.

At the U.N. bureau, she covered the “run of the mill news” and studied Chinese through the free U.N. classes.

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167 Ibid., 74–75.
In 1968, the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia and UPI sent Mosby to the Vienna bureau. Mosby said the European division was “screaming” for her arrival and she and her Burmese cat had to pack and leave within a week. This was before the movers could retrieve her belongings so Mosby asked a friend to stay with her stuff until the movers arrived. Apparently, the friend got bored and left so it was unclear as to how the shipping instructions were misinterpreted. Mosby was not reunited with her belongings until a year later at the Vienna customs. And by then many of her items were missing.168

In Vienna, she was bureau manager and handled the copy from Prague. It was her job to edit and send copy, and inform the UPI correspondents in Prague what AP was filing. While in Vienna, Mosby made contact with some Czechoslovakian journalists. She remembered being in one of the journalist’s offices when somebody ran by announcing Alexander Dubcek, the President of Czechoslovakia, had fallen out of power. Mosby rushed back to the UPI office and filed the story.

“I was just lucky I happened to be there,” she said.169

Mosby briefly went to Prague to work as a correspondent. While she was there, she and a Swedish journalist traveled to Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic. They were about to leave the city when they stopped at an official ceremony in a little square. As they observed the small ceremony, Mosby remembered a passer-by telling them, “Oh, this is nothing. You should see what’s happening up on the [main] square.”

168 Ibid.
169 Ibid., 76.
At the main square, the duo saw thousands of people silently putting flowers and pictures on the spot where a statue of a non-Communist Czechoslovak hero used to stand. Mosby said the people were anti-Russian and their demonstration was “an incredible gesture following the big upheavals that had taken place in Prague.”

In time, some of the young demonstrators got restless and started to run around making noise. The police arrived with fire hoses and proceeded to break up the demonstration. Mosby knew a story had broken.

“There was a public phone up the street, and I went running up there,” she said. “The Swedish correspondent was running up there, too. He was phoning his office and I was phoning mine, and, of course, we weren't going through the Czech authorities. I thought, ‘This is probably going to be my undoing, but to hell with it. It's a story and I have to report it.’ The AP wasn't there, so we did have a scoop on that, because it really was a big riot.”

By the time Mosby and the Swede got back to Prague, the foreign ministry was waiting for them. Mosby wasn’t sure how the ministry found out that they filed the stories, since stories didn’t need to be handed in, like in Russia, but she suspects somebody was either monitoring the phones or the ministry saw the bulletin the Vienna bureau sent out. In the end, the ministry expelled them from Czechoslovakia for one year.

“That wasn’t too bad,” Mosby said.

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170 Ibid., 76. Mosby did not remember the hero’s name.
171 Ibid., 76-77.
Mosby’s co-worker, Dick Longworth, provided another account of Mosby in Czechoslovakia. It is unclear if it is the same incident that Mosby described.

She was in Czechoslovakia, after her Soviet invasion, and did a story from Pilsen on the anniversary of its liberation from the Nazis by American troops. Pilsen had been one of the few Czech cities liberated by the Yanks and the normal pro-Americanism there had been multiplied by the current anti-Soviet hostility. Aline’s story reflected all of this. The Russians hit the roof and the police summoned Aline for an interview. She panicked and, instead of appearing, jumped in her car to drive back to Vienna. But she took a wrong turn, drove north and was all the way to the Polish frontier before she realized her mistake and had to drive back.172

Upon expulsion, Mosby and her cat went back to Vienna where she was given instructions to go to Bucharest for six months. UPI wanted to see if it was worthwhile to have a correspondent in the country to use up some of its frozen money. The Romanian news agency compensated UPI for providing service, but the Romanian currency was non-convertible.173

As one of two correspondents in the city, Mosby lived in a posh hotel, had a huge expense account and found it very easy to get interviews. Living in journalism luxury, it only took her a few days to receive a summons from the foreign ministry.

“I remember I did a story, just sort of a sights and sounds story, about what Bucharest was like after I’d been there a few days,” she said. “One thing I’d noticed in this area around the hotel, there were these beautiful old mansions like the old mansions you see in Paris, you know, in the Champs d’Elysées area, that are now turned into something.

“There are these beautiful old mansions that were turned into government ministries or
something, but they all had gardens. Around the Athenee Palace, it was gardens, and you
didn't have the feeling you were in a big city. I rather liked that. I wrote that at night it
was so unlike a bustling, noisy, polluted city, that you could hear cats calling.”

The ministry was “very, very sensitive.” They felt Mosby was making fun of them for
having cats. She had to convince them that she loved cats and even had one in her hotel
room.

The foreign ministry also had issues when Mosby decided to do a story about the
Romanian site that Bram Stoker wrote about in his book, “Dracula.”

“The foreign ministry was, again, nearly in hysterics over this, trying to figure out how
I was going to write something anti-Soviet out of that,” she said.

Without the help of a translator, Mosby tracked down the area where Dracula allegedly
lived. She loved doing the story because it was an exclusive and, “just the whole thing of
Dracula.” Mosby’s Dracula story and others that followed spurred the Romanian’s to
make the Dracula site a tourist spot.174

Mosby also recalled that the Romanian Secret Police followed her everywhere. The
policeman who usually followed her wore a “hat and a very cheap trench coat, which he
must have seen in an American movie or something.”

She remembered meeting with a dissident artist in the lobby of a hotel and the Secret
Service man would lean back in a nearby chair to listen to what they were saying.

“It was so obvious, it was funny,” she said.175

174 Ibid., 77-79.
175 Ibid., 79-80.
When Mosby’s six months were over, UPI decided it was best to have someone from Vienna occasionally cover Bucharest, versus a fulltime Bucharest correspondent.¹⁷⁶ Mosby went back to Vienna for a couple months.

She had many fond memories of Vienna. She loved that it was “so off the beaten track and so different from the rest of Western Europe.” She remembered an evening at the bar next door to her favorite inn, the Sacher Hotel, with snow falling outside and someone playing the violin in the bar.

“I was sitting there with an American, rather large, I remember, had horned-rimmed glasses and sort of reddish blonde hair, a very friendly guy, and his wife,” she said.

“He said they had just come up from Athens to go Christmas shopping for their child. Well, I said, ‘What do you do?’ He said, ‘I'm a freelance writer.’”

Mosby thought about the man’s response over a glass of wine. She remembered thinking: freelance writers don't make a great deal of money – particularly when he has a wife and child; why would they come into Austria when Italy would have been closer? After a couple glasses of wine, she concluded that the man was a “undoubtedly” a CIA operative, because Vienna was just full of spies from many countries of the world.

“What could be more romantic than sitting with a CIA operative in this bar with the snowflakes and the violin? Oh, what fun,” she said.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 78.
¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 81-82.
Near the end of 1970, the activity in Prague had calmed and UPI decided too many Americans were in the Viennese bureau. It sent one correspondent to Frankfurt, another to London, and Mosby back to Paris because it needed somebody to do “those damn fashion shows.”

Mosby commonly claimed that UPI was always “frantic” to get her to her next post, but her co-worker, Dick Longworth, said Mosby had a tendency to “dither.” According to Longworth, getting Mosby out of town on an assignment usually involved the entire bureau in a round of packing, visa-arranging, passport-finding and ticket-buying. He claimed the Austrians in the Vienna bureau resented her anyway, “on grounds that women had no business doing anything but suckling children and cooking knodls.” He remembered Aline just laughed and sent them hustling around town on her last-minute errands.

Back in Paris with her cat, Mosby spent two months searching for an apartment. She finally purchased a place on the Rue de Bievre near the Notre Dame Cathedral with the money she inherited from her father. Her father died on Nov. 26, 1970 and he left Mosby one third of his $1 million estate.

In the office, Mosby once again wrote fashion stories.

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178 Ibid., 80.
“She knew everything there was to know about fashion and fashion houses,” said Bridgid Janssen, former UPI-Paris bureau manager.

“And she loved to cover the shows wearing designer clothes that she’d bought with the labels clipped out from back-street discount boutiques. Since she was even more petite than most French women she got some great deals on the worn-once-by-models creations, and she was usually more chuffed at the deal she’d cut than the cut of the clothing.”

Janssen also found Mosby’s French to be with a pure Montana accent.

“Her regular opening line, on phone calls to the stringer in Chad or over to her friend Pierre Berge at Yves Saint Laurent, was “EEESSSEEE Aline MOSEBEEE. Je vous ecoute tres mal!” French grammar wasn’t her forte, but French style was,” Janssen said.182

Around this time, Mosby realized that she had gone for years without a raise.

“For years I was too timid to ask for one,” she said laughing. “I kept thinking they should give it to me. Finally, I wrote a letter asking for one, but the London headquarters said, “Well, we can't afford it this year.” But I never really was interested in money or I wouldn't have been in the newspaper business, and I certainly never would have worked for UPI.”183

Mosby likely saw her unique and historic experiences as partial payment for her job.

One of her more priceless reporting assignments occurred when then U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was in Paris negotiating the peace settlement for the Vietnam War.

Kissinger tried to elude the press in Paris. He managed to lose them the first day, but that was all. People are very stupid when they try to elude the press because the press can always catch up with them.

The news agencies and some of the Paris newspapers just put their photographers on motorcycles to follow Kissinger when he came out of the ambassador’s residence to speed off to his secret negotiating place. Although you can lose a car very easily in traffic, you can’t lose a motorcycle. So everybody immediately found where he was.

While they were inside all day we had to sit outside to try to catch them when they came out to get photographs and to ask Kissinger what had gone on. We had to stake it out.

Everybody learned quickly that there was a village about half-mile away that had a delicatessen and grocery store. Everybody would go over and load up on food, then bring it back. Out of our cars we would take great French pate, bread, cheeses, fruit and a bottle of wine. We would spread all our goodies out and then everyone would sit on the lawn in front of the house and have a picnic. We would drink wine and lie in the sun on the grass.

It was great fun. That was one of the nicest assignments I ever had.”

Mosby detailed another fun European reporting escapade in the 1973 UPI International Log.

Drug officials who remembered UPI’s interview with the Marseille narcotics squad chief asked its authoress – me – if we wanted a tip on a drug seizure announcement. Sure, said I. Arriving at drug office, [an] official related facts and figures. When were they arrested? Oh, they haven’t been picked up yet, they’re holed up in the Hotel de Rome and have a heroin-loaded car and we’re watching them. Can I watch too, I asked. Certainly, said a detective, come with me.


Notes Gerry Loughran: “Release of the story was a nerve-wracking business since it had to coincide with local police announcement. After a couple of false alarms the already-written story was released. Result: a shutout.”

Yet one of the more moving stories Mosby wrote for UPI was an interview with an 80 year-old women who was the daughter of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a French army officer convicted twice and later found innocent of passing secrets to the Germans in 1894.

From a French newspaper, Mosby discovered the woman was attending a private

184 Aline Mosby, interview by Suzanne MacDonald, School of Journalism, University of Montana, written, 7 June 1977: 6-7.
showing of a film about her father that highlighted the deep divisions in the French society such as anti-Semitism, conflicts of authority between the army and civilian officials and old issues about the separation of church and state.

“I was able to get her phone number and address,” Mosby said. “She had never been interviewed before. At first she didn’t want to be, but I talked her into it.

“The marvelous little old lady remembered the trial and how she suffered taunts from her schoolmates during it. It was just very touching and it was a moment of history.”

In April 1974, Dick Longworth covered the funeral of French President Georges Pompidou with Mosby.

Once the story was phoned in, we repaired to a restaurant on the Rue de Faubourg St. Honore for a lunch of white asparagus and Sancerre. The front of the restaurant was open to the street and suddenly Richard Nixon, then battling Watergate, walked past in a crowd of gawking Frenchmen and security guards, en route from the Bristol to the Elysee to pay his respects to Giscard d’Estaing. Aline told the waiter to protect our table and we walked out, got a couple of inane quotes from Nixon, saw him safely to the Elysee, phoned it in and returned to our asparagus.

“Covering a story with Aline always had a touch of grace to it,” Longworth said.

Over the years, Mosby witnessed the effects of war and struggle in Europe and she became defensive of her new homeland.

“Americans don’t really know what it’s like to really suffer from a war,” she said. “I realized that when I began to live in Europe. I feel sort of protective now of Europeans when Americans start to complain about what they do. Americans just don’t know what

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186 Aline Mosby, interview by Suzanne MacDonald, School of Journalism, University of Montana, written, 7 June 1977: 4.
it’s like to have your cities bombed and so many people killed and your whole
government and everything disrupted. Americans have been very lucky.”

In 1979, Mosby found an apartment building under restoration one street over from her
first Paris apartment on the Rue de Bievre. The new pad also had a view of Notre Dame
and Mosby was allowed to design the apartment to her liking. It was from then on her
permanent home base.

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189 Ibid., 82.
Illustration 19: Aline Mosby interviewing Mike Mansfield, U.S. Senate Majority Leader.
CHAPTER 8
OPERATION PROFESSOR

In the summer of 1974, Mosby applied to be a guest instructor at the University of Montana. She wrote to the Dean of the School of Journalism, Warren J. Brier, that she would like to contribute her knowledge to journalism, her alma mater and her home state. The letter may have been a formality as Charles Hood, former professor and dean emeritus of the University of Montana School of Journalism, wrote that the University "talked her into" extending her annual spring visits to her country home on Flathead Lake in order to teach. Regardless, the idea of sharing her journalism experiences inspired her to formulate a one quarter course covering the following objectives.\textsuperscript{190}

1. The work of a foreign correspondent
2. Covering politics abroad
3. Covering economics abroad and other specialized subjects such as for Dow Jones, McGraw Hill
4. Feature stories abroad on people – the most meaningful way to explain a country
5. Editing foreign copy on a U.S. copy desk
6. Wire service work in general

In fall of 1974, the University of Montana hired Mosby to be a visiting lecturer to teach the International Communications course for the 1975 spring quarter.\textsuperscript{191} Mosby quickly went to work on her new assignment, which she called "Operation Professor." Two

\textsuperscript{190} Aline Mosby to Warren J. Brier, 5 June 1974, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
\textsuperscript{191} Warren J. Brier to Aline Mosby, 25 Nov. 1974, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
months before the start of the course, she sent Brier a laundry list of what she wanted to incorporate in her class.


She went on to ask if the University had a UPI or AP teletype, a 16-millimeter film machine, a subscription to the International Herald, and European editions of Time and Newsweek. She also inquired about the possibility of bringing a State Department official or some foreign official to the class for students to interview. Brier’s response to Mosby’s request was not documented.

Taking a leave of absence from her UPI post in Paris, Mosby put Operation Professor into action. She managed to arrange for Henry Shapiro, her former boss at the UP Moscow bureau, and Yaacov Keinan, Consulate General of Israel, to guest lecture.

Upon her return, H.L. Stevenson, UPI editor-in-chief, wrote an inter-office memo about Mosby’s teaching experience. Mosby must have written Stevenson a summary of her sabbatical.

One of her impressions after the last of her 21 lectures was the cynicism that prevailed among her students.

“One student paper examined foreign news coverage by U.S. media and concluded that ‘in a free world nation the press is either the unwitting or knowing accessory to the crime of propagandizing,’” Miss Mosby wrote.

“He questioned why President Ford met with Pope Paul on his recent European trip and, even more, why the U.S. press gave the meeting front page play. The student concluded that ‘the whole event seems like something cooked up by a second-rate public relations man.’

“His reaction to what he called ‘the subtle stench of news management’ by the White House as typical of my class. Hardened by Watergate and Vietnam, the students appeared cynical and suspicious of any government arm from the local mayor’s office to the CIA. Many were adamant in their belief that the CIA or another group conspired to assassinate President Kennedy.”

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192 William L. Schirer’s book is actually titled “The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich”
193 Aline Mosby to Warren Brier, 10 Feb., 1975, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
Yacccov Keinan to Dean Brier, 9 June 1975, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
"The required reading list for my course included "Scoop" by Evelyn Waugh, "Berlin Diary" by William L. Shirer, "Moscow Journal" by Harrison E. Salisbury and other books about reporting abroad. These books are not dull; they are lively and absorbing. Yet few of my students read them. Most were not hung up on the joy of reading. Even though they are journalism students many seldom read newspapers but get most of their news from television. Their spelling was a disaster."  

Mosby was unable to teach the same class in 1976. UPI insisted that she cover the April fashion shows in Paris. Mosby wrote to Brier that the UPI Paris bureau was struggling with the recession and was "squeaking by" with three staffers. However, she managed to teach a five-week course for the latter half of the spring quarter and arranged for her students to personally interview Yevgeny "Eugene" Bazhanov, deputy consul of the new Soviet Consulate in San Francisco.

That spring the majority of her class were students of senior status taking the class as an elective. Her grading reflected a classic bell curve as she handed out 9 As, 17 Bs, 6 Cs, 2 Ds and one F. In the student reviews, many found the class worthwhile and her personal experiences "extremely interesting." Like most class evaluations, negative and positive responses emerged, but several found Mosby disorganized and hesitant to speak in front of a large group. One student thoughtfully wrote, "I suggest for her lecture style, that if she has a class that is overly talkative, she should ask whoever is talking to kindly shut up."

196 Aline Mosby to Warren J. Brier, 3 Jan & 26 Jan. 1976, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
198 Mosby class grades and evaluations, University of Montana.
The spring fashions shows were early in 1977 and Mosby was able to teach a regular semester course that spring, her last in the classroom.\textsuperscript{199} Brier wrote to Mosby in December 1977 informing her that the Montana Legislature mandated the reduction of 60 staff jobs and 52 faculty positions. In short, the journalism school lost most of its visiting lecture funds.\textsuperscript{200}

Mosby tried to arrange a faculty position in the spring of 1979, but her efforts ceased when UPI offered her an opportunity to fulfill her last professional goal – to work in China.\textsuperscript{201}

In the summer of 1985, Mosby returned to the University of Montana campus to receive an honorary doctor of letters degree. A University publication showed Mosby beaming in cap and gown with fellow honorees Missoula native choreographer Michael Smuin and Grizzly alumnus as well as renowned actor-writer-director Carroll O’Connor.\textsuperscript{202}

Ten years later, Mosby brought her close friend and fellow journalist Flora Lewis on her yearly Montana voyage. Mosby met Lewis in Paris through a mutual friend when Lewis landed the New York Times Paris bureau manager position in 1972. Mosby also became friends with Times reporter Nan Robertson around the same time.\textsuperscript{203}

\textsuperscript{199} Aline Mosby to Warren J. Brier, 17 Jan. 1977, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
\textsuperscript{200} Warren J. Brier to Aline Mosby, 8 Dec. 1977, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
\textsuperscript{201} Aline Mosby, interview by Suzanne MacDonald, School of Journalism, University of Montana, written, 7 June 1977: 8.
\textsuperscript{202} 1985 “Around the Oval.” University of Montana.
Lewis and Mosby became very close and shared a home in the Dordogne region of France. Although the two were deemed opposites, Lewis was one of Mosby’s closest friends. Lewis was a deep, politically astute person while Mosby tended to be low profile and non-political.\(^{204}\) Within the journalism community, Flora was not as well liked as Mosby.\(^{205}\)

Lewis, a successful journalist at the New York Times, shared her trials and tribulations in a Mansfield Lecture at the University of Montana.\(^{206}\)

"Flora delivered a splendid public lecture and spoke informally with awestruck journalism students," wrote Charles Hood, then dean at the University of Montana School of Journalism. "At both events, Aline sat proudly in the audience, frailer than I had remembered her and wanting to stay out of the spotlight."\(^{207}\)

\(^{204}\) Axel Krause, personal interview by author, Paris, France, 6 June 2002.
\(^{206}\) Charles Hood, interview by author, e-mail, 18 Feb. 2002.
Illustration 20: Aline Mosby with boss Henry Shapiro, Spring 1975.
Twelve years after Mosby studied Chinese at Columbia University, the United States and China resumed diplomatic relations. Part of the rekindled relationship involved the admittance of foreign correspondents – four from each country. The United States called upon the Associate Press and United Press International to send two correspondents apiece. UPI sent Aline Mosby and Robert Crabbe.

Mosby was a little apprehensive when she received the news of her new assignment from UPI’s foreign editor. She did not remember the concepts of the Chinese language that she studied over a decade ago, a language where characters represent concepts instead of words.

“That’s all right,” the foreign editor told her. “We don’t care. Go there for two years.”

Mosby instantly saw the length of the assignment as an issue. The hardships she encountered in prior Communist posts were still fresh in her memory. She knew work in China would likely entail 20-hour days, seven days a week. Her request to shorten her term was quickly granted.

In typical fashion, UPI was in a huge hurry to get Mosby to her new post. On short notice, she managed to find someone to lease her Paris apartment and take care of her cats. She packed two suitcases and was in route to the Orient. Per UPI’s request, she made a pit stop at corporate headquarters in New York.208

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Mosby vividly remembered getting off the airplane in Tokyo on her way to Beijing and instantly feeling like the minority.

"I was one of the very few people in the airport with round eyes," she said.

When she arrived in China, she felt like a visiting celebrity. The Chinese people were elated to see Americans.

"I remember that first day, I just went on a walk down the street, and I had some children trailing me, and everybody staring. It was incredible, people smiling," she said.

"It was just incredible! They were so welcoming and nice. ... It was just fantastic."

Mosby lived in a hotel the first two months of her stay. She and Crabbe would write in the hotel rooms and take stories to the telegraph office to be sent to Hong Kong. The foreign ministry had the idea that the correspondents could stay in the hotels, but Mosby refused. She told the ministry the current arrangement was not a good way to live or work.

The ministry finally allowed the U.S. correspondents to move to one of the diplomatic compounds, which housed the Pakistani, Indian, and French diplomats as well as the Agence France Presse bureau. Mosby and Crabbe selected a section of the compound on the ground floor because it had marble floors. The AP took the same space upstairs, which turned out to be the better option.

"They didn’t have cockroaches, but we did. We made a bad choice, I guess," she said.

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209 Ibid., 107, 137.
210 Ibid., 107.
The living quarters were transformed into two apartments and an office. Due to a lack of furniture, UPI flew Mosby to Hong Kong to shop for furniture. Eventually the apartments were livable. For the office, they placed straw mats on the floors, found desks for the translator and themselves, and hooked up the Xinhua machine and a separate telex to receive telex messages. The Chinese news agency, Xinhua, was comparable to the Russian Tass.

They sacrificed the extra bathroom for a darkroom, since they were also responsible for taking and developing photos.211

Like the Soviet Union, China unofficially censored the news. The Chinese foreign ministry tapped all the electronics to see what UPI was sending out, but Mosby never heard the ministry complain about the stories.

“They were very pleasant to work with,” she said.212

Mosby said the compound was a dramatic improvement from the hotel, but it had a couple of drawbacks. One involved the Pakistani women. Moslem customs prohibited women from going outside during daylight so the women would ride their bicycles around the compound at night making “all sorts of noises” and waking everybody up.

The other drawback was the garbage.

“Some of these people from Third World countries in the building would just open their windows with the garbage pack and just let it drop down two or three stories if they didn’t feel like going downstairs,” Mosby said.213

212 Ibid., 138.
213 Ibid., 108.
Like her arrangements in Moscow, UPI provided a cleaning person as well as a car and chauffeur to get around. But the food situation differed dramatically. Crabbe, who brought his wife and son to China with him, decided a private chef was in order since neither he, his wife nor Mosby knew how to cook Chinese. UPI agreed and arranged for someone to cook them lunch and dinner.

"It was just marvelous," Mosby said.

For a working schedule, Mosby and Crabbe tried to alter the day and night duty, although they often worked both.

"But whoever was on morning duty would go in about 7:30 a.m. or 8 a.m. in the morning, look at the Xinhua wire to see what we’d missed," she said. "The translator came on duty at eight, just as in Moscow, to start reading the papers. I could understand the headlines in the newspapers, and I could listen to the radio and know vaguely what they were talking about, whether it would be anything we would be interested in, but I couldn’t read the copy." 214

Mosby hired a Chinese teacher soon after she arrived and her Chinese came back to her after six months. 215 Chinese was just one language in Mosby’s multi-lingual vocabulary. She also spoke English, French, Spanish, and Russian.

"She succeeded in making them all sound the same," said UPI co-worker Dick Longworth. 216

214 Ibid., 108-110.
215 Ibid., 138.
Crabbe had studied Japanese and could speak the Japanese language. Mosby said that
the Chinese used many of the same characters as the Japanese, but Crabbe was also at a
loss in the translation.\(^{217}\)

Mosby wrote many kinds of stories in China, the bulk being what it was like in Beijing.
One tactic she used to get into the houses of the Chinese was to ask about their cats,
because everybody had one.\(^{218}\)

"Because that's what Americans wanted to know, was what China was like," she said.

"It had been completely closed to us, you know. The French had been there for quite a
while, and the Brits, but Americans and American news media didn't have the faintest
clue what it looked like."

Mosby said there was something different to write about every day, whether it being
old walls still standing or torn down, Chinese people on bicycles, or the Chinese doing
Tai Chi exercises on the street.\(^{219}\)

She remembered doing a story on a vegetarian restaurant that she went to with some of
the AP correspondents.

"Out on this table came a huge Peking duck, the way they serve it, all sliced with fat on
top and little lines where you see the veins in the meat," she said.

"Then a huge fish with the fin and the jaw, with teeth, and it had been cut in half, and
there were the ribs and so forth, you know. All of this made with vegetable products!

Just incredible!"

\(^{218}\) Ibid., 138.
\(^{219}\) Ibid., 111.
UPI had a “chummy” relationship with the AP correspondents. Mosby said they would hang out, but would never talk about the stories they were working on or writing.  

One of Mosby’s renowned stories was a series about religion in China. The majority of past articles written about religion in China focused on Christianity because the Chinese government was allowing the Christian churches to reopen. When Mosby discovered Christianity pertained to a few million people in China, she felt most of the stories were not objective.

“There are several million Christians, but that’s nothing in China when you consider [its] population,” she said.

Mosby sought people of every religion – Christians, Confucians, Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems. But she hit a road block in tracking down the Jewish religion. Everybody told her that there weren’t any Jews in China.

She finally got a lead on finding Jewish Chinese at an embassy reception for American Jewish musician Isaac Stern. Stern’s daughter told Mosby of a research paper written by somebody at a Jewish institution in New York on the history of Jews in China.

“I don’t mean Jewish refugees who would have come there from the Soviet Union or from other countries in this century; I mean Jews going back to many hundreds of years,” Mosby said.

The paper named the Chinese town of Haiphong as the home of many Chinese Jews. Mosby called the foreign ministry to confirm her lead.

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220 Ibid., 110-111.
221 Ibid., 139.
222 Ibid., 112, 139.
223 Ibid., 139.
“There aren’t any Jews in China,” the man at the foreign ministry told her.

Mosby kept pestering the foreign ministry. They admitted the existence of the town, but claimed it was closed to foreigners. By convincing the ministry of the harmlessness of her story, she was allowed to take a train to the town where Jews supposedly lived.

Upon arrival, Mosby had a tough time getting the travel agency guides and a government official to understand her inquiry.

“After about two days of arguing, it finally occurred to me that I was saying it incorrectly in English,” she said. “I suddenly remembered that there’s a word that Chinese use in English very often that they learned when they were studying English many years ago, and that is the word “ancestors.” It’s a very important thing to them. So I said, ‘Do you know anybody with Jewish ancestors?’

“And he said, ‘Well, of course! Several people.’ So he whisked me off to meet three Jewish families, and that was really quite fascinating.”

At first, the families were hesitant to talk to Mosby, but her sincerity won them over.

The husband in the first family was of Jewish descent. He didn’t observe the Jewish holidays or the diet and took his family to the Christian church because it was the closest thing to the Jewish religion.

Mosby recalled the second family being much better off and educated. They knew the history behind their ancestry and told her they had to stay in hiding during the Cultural Revolution in China.

\[224\] Ibid., 140.
During her interview with the second family, Mosby noticed the man was wearing a cap, just like the man in the first family. She asked why.

"We have to disguise the fact that we have curly hair," he told her. Then he took off his cap and revealed his curly mane.

Mosby noted that the men in both families had slightly slanted eyes from intermarriage. Therefore, they could pass for Chinese if they covered their hair since true Chinese have perfectly straight hair. One of the men told her that since the end of the Cultural Revolution, it was safe for them to show their curly hair in public.  

"That was one of the most fascinating stories I think I have ever done," she said.

When Mosby returned to Paris, she won the annual International Bernard J. Cabanes Prize for her reporting in China. The award, given to news agency journalists, was named after Bernard Cabanes, the editor-in-chief of Agence France Presse who was killed in a Paris bomb explosion in 1975. Mosby was the fourth recipient of the prize. She believed she won the award for her Chinese religion story.

"I just thought it was a marvelous story. I mean, nobody ever thought of there being real Jews in China. My God!" Mosby said.

After the paper went to print, Mosby received a lot of letters from Jews in the United States.

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225 Ibid., 114–115, 140.
226 Ibid., 140.
Mosby was able to generate a lot of story ideas as well as travel a good portion of China by covering the visits of American politicians.

"They all had to be covered, because if a mayor came from Detroit, the Detroit press would demand coverage, which was great, because I got to go on with the visitors all over Beijing to special meetings and to special things that the Chinese officials were showing them, and then go out of town with them on official trips," she said.

Mosby would often spin off stories from her trips on the things she saw, such as the excavating of life-sized statues in Sian that had been there for thousands of years, the spectacular site of the green mountains in Kumming, and the lives of Chinese farmers. Mosby also wrote stories from the press junkets that the foreign ministry organized, which were on politically safe topics. She said the country "really tried" to provide features for the journalists. Stories deemed politically unsafe took a little more work to cover and usually did not incorporate foreign ministry assistance.

On several occasions, Mosby and several correspondents would watch the protest demonstrations on Tiananmen Square where activists would hang posters of dissidents. Mosby said the wall was known as the "democracy wall." On one visit, she said the press received a tip that the police were going to rip down all the posters. Mosby was on the scene when police arrived at 2 a.m. She wrote a story on the event and kept some of the fragments of the posters that she later made into a collage.

At another political event, Mosby thought that she would have trouble speaking with Deng Xiaoping, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party and the most powerful person

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229 Ibid., 116.
230 Ibid., 116-117.
in China. But after telling the foreign ministry that she would like to speak with him, they allowed her to talk to him for a few minutes. Years later, Mosby could not remember the details of their conversation, but she noted that he was very lively and gave the feeling that he was in favor of opening up the country.231

Mosby sought out some stories for the mere challenge. Her story on Peking Man stemmed from the fact that the location of his bones was closed to Westerners. The foreign ministry was slow in granting her voyage. The delay was not due to the nature of the trip, but rather the Chinese hierarchy and bureaucracy. Mosby took her goddaughter, Amy Slater, and Crabbe’s daughter on the five-hour trip. She said the trip was fascinating because they were the first Westerners to visit the little museum and souvenir shop. Mosby remembered buying “about the only thing” in the souvenir shop: an ashtray in the form of an ape smoking a cigarette.

“The Chinese smoke like chimneys! Oh, they smoke more than the Russians do!” she said.232

In comparing Beijing to Moscow, Mosby said there were many advantages – the food was better and the people were much friendlier. But in covering a story, many things were the same: all interviews had to go through the foreign ministry for prior approval; visas were required to travel; several parts of the country were closed to correspondents; all press conferences were organized.

Mosby also noticed that the Chinese tended to copy the Soviet Union in Communist practices. Like the Russians, the Chinese liked to hang huge portraits of post-revolution

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231 Ibid., 117–118.
232 Ibid., 118–119.
leaders. The Russians would hang Vladimir Lenin, while the Chinese went with Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Mao Zedong. The two countries also had political bureaus, the Central Committee and a Politburo. The Politburo was a smaller group responsible for determining policy.

Mosby wrote a story about this similarity and spoke about the issue at a farewell dinner the foreign ministry threw for her when she announced her departure.

She recalled the man from the Chinese foreign ministry asking her, “Now that you’re leaving, would you give us some advice about things that you think we should do?”

At first, Mosby was shocked by the question. The Russians would have never asked her that question when she left. But after thinking about it, she replied:

“Well, one thing that shocked me, and I really didn’t think you should do it, is that you have copied the Russians in putting up these political icons of your leaders in these big portraits. I can see how you’ve copied the Soviet system in many ways.

“I don’t see why you copy the Russians like this. You’re a great people, you’re a great nation. You don’t need to have those portraits out there. Why do you have [Marx and Engels], those round-eyed people? They’re not Asians. Why do you have them there for your country?”

After leaving China, Mosby remembered reading news articles detailing the removal of the portraits on the main square. She doubted that her comments were the sole influence, but she wondered what prompted their removal.²³³

²³³ Ibid., 112.
Mosby’s China tour ended in June 1980, after a year and three months. She said she could have stayed for another six months, but her replacement, Ray Wilkinson, was eager to get started.234

En route back to Paris, Mosby wanted to take the Beijing-to-Moscow train called the Trans-Siberian Express that goes through Mongolia. Amy Slater wrote that the train was the only safe option Mosby had to transport all the Chinese lamps, antiques and art that she accumulated.

“As a result, she became the first American in I don’t know how many years to get a permit to travel across Mongolia,” Slater wrote.235

To take the train, Mosby needed to get a Mongolian visa. The Mongolian Embassy was reluctant to give her a visa because an American diplomat recently tried to enter the country and was thrown out on suspicions of being a spy. A Soviet press attaché spoke to the embassy for Mosby. He told them that Mosby was too dumb to be a spy. His scheme worked and her visa was granted.

Mosby got off the train at Mongolia’s capital, Ulan Bator. At the train station, she ran into the British ambassador whom she had met when working for UPI at the United Nations. He insisted that he and his family entertain her in Mongolia. Mosby spent a week touring Ulan Bator. She went to the theatre, bought a folklore robe, visited tents called yurts that served as homes to many Mongolians, and viewed some Soviet-style Communist-built buildings, which she said were very ugly. The British ambassador’s

234 Ibid., 119.
235 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
wife tried to take Mosby to a flea market, but the Mongolian foreign ministry canceled the trip when they heard wind of it over Mosby’s tapped phone.

“The Mongolians didn't want anybody to see the flea market because it was, to them, not Communist progress, and something they would just be ashamed of. It wasn't “construction towards communism,” as the Soviets would say,” she said.

Mosby noticed that the Mongolians also copied the Soviet Union. It did not take her long to notice the iconic pictures of leaders around the city and the multitude of spies on each floor of her hotel.236

A week later, Mosby boarded a train to Moscow. On the train, she had a problem finding her compartment. A Soviet man and his wife said, “Oh, come on in and sit down.”

After they learned that she was an American journalist, they got out the vodka and shared some food. Mosby eventually looked at the wall and noticed a Soviet Army hat, and an officer’s hat and coat. She grew tense and when she left to find her compartment, she noticed that over half of the cars contained the Soviet military.

Mosby finally found her compartment, but a few Russians soon found her and asked to talk with her. She went to their compartment and they started to needle her with the propaganda they had read in the Soviet newspapers. She rebutted by saying that the Soviet press was full of lies and the United States isn’t what they thought it was. The Russians started to yell back at her and the conductor of the train came to the

compartment to see what the noise was about. He made Mosby to go to her compartment.

She remembered thinking, "Oh, my God! I'd had that doping experience in Moscow, and here I am sticking my noise into things. I'm going to get in trouble again."

Although she found the trip through Siberia fascinating, she was nervous for the rest of the trip.

Once she arrived in Moscow, she wrote her stories about Mongolia and the train rides, for very few Westerners had been on the train from Mongolia to Moscow.

When she got back to Paris, her friends hardly recognized her. Mosby was exhausted from working sixteen-hour days, seven days a week and her clothes were hanging off her.237

She took a three-month hiatus from UPI and retreated to a home she'd purchased in Menorca in 1965, off the coast of Spain. She also paid a visit the United States. Mosby dabbled with the idea of taking a job with Scripps-Howard in Washington to replace the retiring women's-page fashion editor, but decided to go back to UPI in Paris.

Mosby described her post in China as "one of the great moments of my life."

"I always remember it with nostalgia," she said.238

237 Ibid., 120-123.
238 Ibid., 123, 137.
“It’s like Avis rental cars. If you’re number two, you try harder.”

— Aline Mosby in response to whether felt she had to prove herself as a woman.

In an era where a woman’s role was in the home, Mosby worked as a single woman in a male-dominated industry. For many years she felt she was in a different league than her male counterparts; and she knew she had to prove herself to receive respect. But rather than dwell on sexist or discriminatory incidents, Mosby remained relatively silent and sought almost passive aggressive routes to get her way. When Time, Life, Fortune, Inc. filled its quota of interns, she talked them into taking on one more. When diplomats told her she could not bring her car to Moscow, she shipped the car as baggage. When UPI was against her covering the Moroccan troops in the Sahara War, she went anyway.

“Although she was tiny and appeared frail and a bit ditzy, I never knew her to give up on something she wanted,” her goddaughter Amy Slater wrote.

Mosby decided to bring out the positive when she discussed the lack of professional women in her era. In 1965, she wrote a story called “Where are the new Nelly Blys,” which analyzed the reasons behind the decline of female foreign correspondents. She waited until the eighth paragraph to mention, “some media are against hiring women, except to cover fashions in Paris.” The entire scope of the article concentrated on the great things women foreign journalists had accomplished and the advantages women

240 Ibid., 100.
241 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
reporters had overseas. Women, Mosby wrote, have the ability to obtain special
courtesies at embassy receptions and foreign offices. She believed women came closer to
understanding the people and way of life in foreign lands. It was as if Mosby were trying
to recruit more women into journalism while telling men that female journalists were
nothing to balk at.

“The only thing she complained about [in] her career as she got older was the influx of
much younger and inexperienced journalists. She considered them all 14 year olds,”
wrote Anne Kupper, one of Mosby’s longtime friends.242

Many inquiring minds questioned why Mosby never married or had children. The
answer is not that she didn’t want to get married or conceive a child. Mosby had
boyfriends – a newspaper columnist, a doctor, a psychiatrist, the head of public relations
of an airline – but she never found a suitor of her desire.243

There was at least one man who offered his hand in marriage, but Mosby said he didn’t
like the idea of her working.

“I wanted to be independent and not rely on some man to give me household expense
money to pay for my clothes and my metro fare and so forth,” she said.244

Arthur Higbee, a co-worker of Mosby’s, remembered one of his friends trying to make
some progress with the legendary redhead. He said she turned his friend down so
gracefully that it was “an honor.”245

242 Anne Kupper, interview by author, e-mail, 25 March 2003.
243 Betty Slater, phone interview by author, 10 March 2003.
Mosby’s main priority in life was to be a journalist and she often found herself torn between her career and her personal life.246

“I think the fact that she never had children made her sad,” Amy Slater wrote. “Many years ago, well before it was socially acceptable, one of her friends had a child outside of marriage. I remember her telling me about this friend and her daughter with a mixture of horror and awe. She tended to be quite a prude and so was uncomfortable that her friend wasn’t married, but was, I think, jealous that her friend had a child.”247

Mosby did not dispute that she yearned for a child of her own.

“I would have liked to have had children,” Mosby said. “But I didn't, and I accept that. I adjusted to it many, many years ago. I'm not unhappy or the least bit lonely. I'm so busy, I can't keep up with everything.”248

In a sense, Mosby had a secondhand family. When Mosby worked in Hollywood, she became very good friends with Len Slater, then head of the Newsweek bureau, and his wife Betty. Mosby was the godmother to the Slater daughters, Amy and Lucy.249

“She was very chic and glamorous to us, with her Paris designer wardrobe, multiple hairpieces, homes, cats and fascinating friends,” wrote Lucy Slater, Mosby’s goddaughter.

“When Aline was in her prime, she embodied everything an intelligent girl might aspire to and still be single.”250

247 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
249 Ibid.
250 Lucy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 11 March 2003.
Amy Slater described Mosby as “a mythical creature who would appear in many places and at various times in our lives” and possessed “a sort of ethereal personality.”

Some have questioned Mosby’s sexuality and her close friendship with fellow journalist Flora Lewis, but Betty Slater, who personally knew the two women, said the inquiries were “silly gossip.” She said the two were very close friends and later in life, Lewis grew to be very protective of Mosby. Betty Slater said Mosby was “very, very good at getting along with people,” and Lewis was not an easy person to get along with.

Ultimately, Mosby was very content with her life and if she could go back in time and change anything, it would probably be sections of her career.

For one, Mosby wished she would have kept a diary throughout her life. She managed to keep a journal during her first visit to Moscow, which helped her write “The View from 13th People’s Street” so quickly. But Mosby wasn’t able to maintain her diary after Moscow. It was as if she dedicated her writing to UPI instead of herself.

Mosby also voiced a couple regrets in her reporting assignments. She was disappointed in herself for not accepting a post in Vietnam. UPI asked Mosby if she wanted to be a Vietnam war correspondent, but she declined because she felt timid and the position sounded awful to her.

“I should have gone. That was stupid,” she said later.

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251 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
252 Betty Slater, phone interview by author, 10 March 2003.
254 Ibid., 92.
Her other regret was not seeking a post in Washington, D.C. Mosby said she always planned on requesting an assignment in Washington, but other assignments kept her sidetracked.255

“I think that journalists should learn how their government operates and cover the White House or the State Department,” Mosby said. “I just think you learn a lot about political reporting that way and economic reporting, too.”

Mosby did not regret, however, working for a wire service the majority of her career. She received job offers from various newspapers throughout the years, but stayed with UPI for the effect of writing for thousands of newspapers, radio and television stations – not just one.

“I was always given good assignments and marvelous bureaus to work in, good stories, and I was happy and enjoyed it and loved the work, and didn’t mind that the salaries were not as high as in some other media,” she said.256

Why didn’t Mosby work for the top dog of the wire services – the Associated Press?

“UPI was always much more relaxed and much more friendly than AP,” she said. “It still is. That’s about the only good thing about UPI when you work for them, because they don’t pay extremely well, and they expect a lot of work. But it’s always fun.

“UPI people, the correspondents together are usually friendly, and people don’t try to beat their colleagues on a story or cheat them out of it or something, which does happen in other agencies and on newspapers, jealousy and bitterness and so forth. But all the UPI

255 Ibid., 143.
256 Ibid., 142.
bureaus I worked in were never like that. There was always a spirit of camaraderie, which, according to AP people, did not exist in most AP bureaus.\textsuperscript{257}

Mosby felt UPI was number two to AP because it was a private company, and AP was a cooperative and had more money. Even though AP may have been more “dignified,” Mosby said UPI had more fun and probably worked harder. UPI employees were often extremely loyal and they called themselves “Unipressers.”\textsuperscript{258}

As a journalist, colleague Jonathan Randal described Mosby as “the real article, shoe leather reporter, never complaining about staking out politicians, diplomats or movie stars in all kinds of weather and at all hours of the day or night.”\textsuperscript{259}

Arthur Higbee said Mosby went after a story “like a tank” and had a “terrific will.” He said she did not mind being edited, especially if she was decently edited, and she didn’t need any “bossing” except to go home.\textsuperscript{260} Even as a slight acquaintance, journalist Helen Thomas noted that Mosby was “a wonderful reporter, daring and a fine writer.”\textsuperscript{261}

As time progressed, Mosby formed strong beliefs on the ethics of her trade.

“The main thing about journalistic ethics is that I think reporters must write the truth and not make up quotes, and do their very best not to make mistakes,” she said.

“I think there are some reporters, if they only get half of a sentence in a quote, then they will make up the other half, what they think the man said, which I don't think [is]...
“I hope that the news media continues as it is now and that there always will be good journalism schools. Sometimes I wonder if ten years from now everything will just be a sound byte newscast on television and radio, and I don't know. It's a little worrisome. You wonder. Many newspapers have closed in recent years, and you just hope that the printed medium will keep going as long as television and radio.

“You wonder how people can understand things unless they read a newspaper which goes into the background and has sidebar stories that explain this and that and the other. I don't think that people really understand what's going on unless they do read longer stories in newspapers and in the news magazines, Time and Newsweek, the Economist. One must read more. I hope reading doesn't go out of style. The television age is certainly upon us.”

Higbee noted that although the biggest thing in Mosby's life was journalism, she wasn't utterly wrapped up in work. When she was off duty, she was off duty.
CHAPTER 11

JOURNALISTE ADIEU

On June 2, 1982, two young entrepreneurs from Tennessee, Doug Ruhe and Bill Geissler, purchased UPI from E.W. Scripps Company for one dollar. Mosby said that less than a year after the purchase “things began to fall apart and they began to sell off everything.”

“They sold all of UPI's assets,” she said. “They sold the photo department to Reuters. They sold their share of the UPI television film business to ITN of England and ABC of America. They sold the financial wire, it broke off and became independent. United Features Syndicate also went its own way—that's Snoopy and Garfield and so forth. We always had a United Feature person in the Paris office; that was gone. There was nothing left but the news service, the sports wire and the news wire. That was all.”

The Paris bureau shrank from eight employees when Mosby arrived in the 1960s to two employees by the mid-1980s. When she decided to quit in 1984, Mosby was the lone person in charge and had one correspondent, Ron Popeki.

Before she quit, she paid a Paris-based American lawyer a “big hunk of money” to look into the pension.

“That took about a year to check into that and decide whether to take the lump sum, which they had bargained down to about half what I should have had, or to take a pension,” she said.

In the end, Mosby decided to take the lump sum when an executive of the New York Times offered her a yearly fee to freelance. She officially resigned from UPI at the age of 63 in September 1985. Her first freelance job for the Times was covering Mikhail Gorbachev’s wife, Raisa, when they visited Paris, the couple’s second trip to the West.  

Mosby spent a good part of her retirement traveling between her various homes, all of which she adored. She was always on the lookout for tasteful decorations, and it was common for her to hunt the flea markets early in the morning to purchase art, trinkets, rugs or anything to make an elegant rustic atmosphere in her residences.

“Aline had fabulous taste,” wrote Amy Slater, Mosby’s goddaughter. “Her taste was very eclectic, tending more towards the ethnic, rough hewn. She had some wonderful art.

“As she got older, we always marveled that she could in the same paragraph talk about new draperies for one of her houses and the latest international political conflict.”

Her permanent residence was Paris, but she owned three other properties. One was an old farmhouse on the Balearic Island of Menorca, Spain, that she acquired in 1965 for $1,800. She initially restored the home with the $5,000 she received for an L’Express story about Lee Harvey Oswald. Mosby spent practically every summer on the island with the Slater family, who bought a neighboring home. For many summers, the Slater

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271 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
and Mosby homes contained a colony of journalists. Betty Slater recalled numerous visits from Flora Lewis, Nan Robertson, Richard Growald, and Walter Logan, to name a few. The island had a distinct family atmosphere. Amy Slater recalled that when Mosby was in Paris, she dressed beautifully, but when in Menorca, “she tended to pull out the same old beach clothes year after year.”

In Western Montana, Mosby’s father owned a cabin on Finley Point, Flathead Lake. The home was a little log lodge located on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Mosby inherited it from her father and vacationed at the lodge every spring. She always considered the trip “going home.”

Finally, Mosby shared a cliffside converted post office home, which she called Ancienne Poste, in the village of Beynac in the Dordogne region of France with fellow journalist Flora Lewis. Mosby purchased her portion of the property with the money her father had left her. She tried to visit the home one out of every six weeks, but rented it out to friends during the summer because she didn’t care to be there during the high tourist season.

Mosby’s homes were all incredible to look at, but they were old and required improvements and continual upkeep.
“Since she had so many houses, she was constantly waiting for some tradesperson to do some work,” Amy Slater wrote. “I supposed it annoyed her that they were often unreliable, but she usually was quite funny about it.”

Mosby treasured her many friendships and she would often go out of her way to help or entertain those close to her. For instance, when Amy Slater visited Mosby in China, Mosby arranged for a Marine guard from the U.S. Embassy to escort Amy Slater to the theatre.

“He showed up at her door in full dress uniform,” Amy Slater wrote.

B.J. Cutler also vouched for the way Mosby went “the extra step” for her friends.

“Carol [B.J. Cutler’s wife] was writing a magazine article and wanted to include the recipe for the apple cake served at the then wonderful Au Lyonnais, a restaurant Aline introduced us to,” he wrote. “The owner, M. Violet, with great ceremony had given Carol a hand-written recipe of the cake as a going-away gift. But the recipe didn’t work. Carol called Aline and asked her to ask Mr. Violet a few questions. She did better: she got a large piece of cake, carefully wrapped it and air-mailed it.”

Mosby loved food, wine and champagne, especially Kir Royale. This love was common knowledge among the journalism community as Helen Thomas, also a fellow Unipresser, wrote that Mosby was known to say, “Life is too short to be drinking house
wine.” Mosby was also notorious in becoming slightly obsessive about her gastronomic interests. Anne Kupper, a longtime friend, recalled an “endless” dinner when Mosby insisted on discussing the exact ingredients of a dish with a French waiter.

“She was a tiny woman, maybe 5’2” and less than 100 lbs,” Amy Slater wrote. “Nonetheless, she loved food and would drive us all crazy in Menorca trying [to] ferret out some new, undiscovered and fabulous eating spot (of which there were almost none back then).”

But although she loved culinary art and entertaining, those close to her said she did not eat a lot and was not a very good cook.

“When we were all in Menorca in the summer, we’d bring extra food to any gathering at Aline’s so we wouldn’t starve,” Amy Slater wrote.

Mosby was also into jazz music, particularly pianists like Oscar Peterson, and had specific rules on correct behavior like that dictated by Emily Post or Miss Manners. And she was very passionate about animals, especially cats, and refused to stand for any type of animal cruelty. Once when Mosby was away on assignment, she left detailed instructions for B.J. and Carol Cutler, who were to tend to her cats.

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285 Helen Thomas, interview by author, e-mail, 5 March 2002.
286 Anne Kupper, interview by author, e-mail, 25 March 2003.
287 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
288 Aline Mosby, interview by William Knowles, School of Journalism, University of Montana, tape recording, 5 June 1992.
289 Anne Kupper, interview by author, e-mail, 25 March 2003.
290 Amy Slater, interview by author, e-mail, 26 March 2003.
"We got very precise directions on where to buy frozen fish for their dinner and how to cook it. Three-star cat food chez Mosby," the couple wrote.\textsuperscript{291}

Several friends called Mosby "cat crazy," but colleague Arthur Higbee said he wouldn't go as far as calling her a "cat lady," even though she was known to go to the ground floor of her Paris building and feed all the neighbor cats.\textsuperscript{292}

In her spare time, Mosby was extremely active in the Anglo-American Press Association of Paris.

"She was particularly helpful in organizing the annual garden-party gala of the association, which rotates between the British and American ambassadors' residences, displaying keen insights and resourcefulness to make our biggest event of the year a huge success," wrote Axel Krause, secretary general of the Anglo-American Press Association.\textsuperscript{293}

Krause described Mosby as a friendly, thoughtful, relatively shy person with a warm, childlike sense of enthusiasm. He said she wanted to contribute to her community and found a niche in the Anglo-American Press Association. She never wanted to run for office, but was eager to organize the gala and soon made the event the focal point of the year.\textsuperscript{294}

Planning the annual event allowed Mosby to use her imagination and it gave her an excuse to contact some old friends and associates. Even though her contact pool was deep and prestigious, Arthur Higbee said Mosby was not much of a big shot.

\textsuperscript{292} Arthur Higbee, personal interview by author, Paris, France, 5 June 2002.
\textsuperscript{293} Axel Krause, interview by author, e-mail, 8 April 2002.
\textsuperscript{294} Axel Krause, personal interview by author, Paris, France, 6 June 2002.
“You’d be surprised. She knew all these people,” he said. “She didn’t flaunt all her connections.”

In the early 1990s, Mosby told Higbee, “I need to take some memory pills.” He said she had become forgetful and her friends began to worry.

Krause said Mosby’s friends helped her along despite the increasingly frequent memory lapses.

“We were a ‘backstop’ for her for a long time. It kept her going,” Krause said.

But as Mosby’s mental state continued to deteriorate, Krause described the situation as “nightmarish” for Mosby as well as her friends.

Ex-Unipresser Bill Landrey detailed Mosby’s failing memory in his last visit with her.

“When we saw her last October [1997], she came across Paris in a taxi to our borrowed pied-a-terre,” he wrote. “She looked around, remembered it as our apartment, remembered the pictures on the wall, talked about all the dinners we had there. We didn’t tell her that they weren’t our pictures, and that she had never been there.”

Throughout the mid-1990s, Mosby’s sister, Mary Jane Bader, received concerned calls from Mosby’s friends. One friend called to discuss the possibility of Mosby having Alzheimer disease. Eventually several tests in Spain and California as much as confirmed that Mosby suffered from the brain diminishing condition. Bader tried to get her sister to move to California so she could care for her, but Mosby wanted Bader to live with her in Paris.

“She hated to give up her friends and her place,” Bader said.297

Bader, who many say was not especially close to Mosby, said she continued to receive calls from Mosby’s friends about her health. She said one friend reported Mosby having nothing but cat food in her cupboards. In February 1998, Mosby fainted and wound up in the hospital. In turn, Bader flew to Paris to move Mosby and her cat to a retirement home in San Marcos, Calif.298 Mosby insisted to all her friends that the move was temporary.299

Six months later, on August 7, 1998, Mosby died of a cerebral hemorrhage at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido, Calif. She was 76.

Charles Hood, University of Montana School of Journalism professor and dean, vividly recalled when he received the news of Mosby’s death.

“I was working on the copy desk at the International Herald Tribune in Paris when I received an e-mail from Bob McGiffert, an [University of Montana] emeritus professor who had worked at the IHT before me, telling me that Aline had died,” Hood wrote.

“When I passed the information on to my night editor, Charles Mitchelmore, he jumped. ‘We’ve got to get an obituary together,’ he said. ‘Aline was highly respected here.’

“Somehow it seemed right that a former Montana journalism professor was able to receive the news of Aline’s passing at what was one of her favorite newspapers.”300

297 Mary Jane Bader, phone interview by author, Missoula, Mont., 4 April 2002.
298 Ibid.
299 Betty Slater, phone interview by author, 10 March 2003.
300 Charles Hood, interview by author, e-mail, 18 Feb. 2002.
One of Mosby’s obituaries said that on the day she died, UPI colleagues Hank Rieger and Howard Williams were dining at a San Diego seafood restaurant to plan a surprise party for her.\textsuperscript{301} Her death stunned many of her friends. Betty Slater said even though Mosby’s memory was failing, she was not ill. Mosby was still full of curiosity and went on every excursion that was offered.

According to the death certificate, Mosby died of a spontaneous, non-traumatic brain aneurysm. Yet according to Bader, Mosby’s cat escaped from Mosby’s apartment through a balcony door or window, and this apparently made Mosby panic, “jump up and down” and collapse, which could have played a role in her death.\textsuperscript{302} Regardless, an autopsy was not performed.

In a will drafted March 1997, Mosby requested her ashes to be in an urn next to her father. She also asked that if her cats should survive her, they should be put down and their ashes placed with hers unless a suitable home could be found for them. Mosby specifically denounced any religious service or “funeral” to be organized in her name. Religious services there were not, but at least four memorial gatherings took place in her honor.\textsuperscript{303} Her family held a service at Silvergate Retirement Residence, San Marcos, Calif., as well as at Mosby’s cabin on Flathead Lake in Montana; the Slater family held a


\textsuperscript{302} Mary Jane Bader, phone interview by author, St. Helena, Calif., 24 Nov. 2002.

gathering near Mosby’s home in Menorca, Spain;\textsuperscript{304} and the Anglo-American Press
Association assembled in her honor in Paris.\textsuperscript{305}

An announcement of her Paris memorial was published in the October 1998 Paris Free Voice, a magazine for English-speaking Parisians.

The AngloAmerican Press Association of Paris will gather in memory of Aline Mosby, an American journalist and longtime Paris resident who died in California in August. Non-members are cordially invited to share their recollections of Aline with friends and colleagues from France and abroad. Nov 5, 7pm, La Maison France-Amérique, 9-11, av D. Franklin Roosevelt, 8e, Metro Franklin Roosevelt, tel: 01.44.09.76.47.\textsuperscript{306}

The AngloAmerican Press Association had never organized a memorial service for one of its members. One would assume that Mosby requested the service or the service was put together because Mosby died with no family in France, but neither was true.

“The idea just surfaced spontaneously and those of us who contributed to making the arrangements were delighted to be paying our last respects to her this way – informally, recalling the better days of the profession, her role in it,” wrote Krause, organizer of the event.

He wrote that when they were deciding what form the event should take, Higbee commented that a religious ceremony would be “the last thing she would want.”\textsuperscript{307} It is unclear as to whether the organizers had any knowledge of Mosby’s will, but Krause said

\begin{footnotes}
\item[305] Axel Krause, interview by author, e-mail, 8 April 2002.
\item[307] Axel Krause, interview by author, e-mail, 8 April 2002.
\end{footnotes}
another journalist told him that if they were to organize a memorial meeting in a church, Mosby probably wouldn’t have turned up!\(^{308}\)

Mosby’s friends and colleagues in the Association gathered at one of her favorite Paris locations, the LaMaison France-Amérique. Krause, Higbee and Lewis made brief statements about her, her past, and the memories she left. Those who could not attend sent written tributes.

**Dick Longworth, ex-UPI:**

> For someone who led the adventurous life she did, Aline was a soft and gentle person, devoted to cats and friends, proud of people she worked with, terrifically loyal – probably too loyal to UPI, which treated her like a star but still conned her into working nights and weekends when she should have been passing this drudgery onto younger reporters. Covering a story with Aline always had a touch of grace to it.\(^{309}\)

**Jonathan Randal, ex-UPI, Washington Post:**

> Not for nothing was the UP known as “The Fear of Wages,” a play on words on that old Yves Montand thriller, “The Wages of Fear.” It was in that grand tradition that Aline was trained and persevered. She could have worked for many another more prestigious master and in fact did fine work for The New York Times as a freelancer in Paris. But she remained a quintessential Unipresser and that was nothing to be ashamed of.\(^{310}\)

**Scott Sullivan, ex-Newsweek:**

> While most of us eventually become a little blasé about the world out there, she approached each new subject with eyes as fresh as a baby’s. No one ever had a better friend. She would give another hack the shirt off her back, or – more importantly – a peek at the lead she was writing.\(^{311}\)

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\(^{308}\) Ibid.


Bridgid (Phillips) Janssen, ex-UPI:

The old UPI bureau at 2 rue des Italiens bulged with files from Aline, from the sports that she covered like a trooper on late night shifts to the heart-wringer features that she spun from that touch she had with every kind of people. She seemed so vulnerable and self-deprecatig that she drew out their souls, then she would march off and bang out 1200 words with sparks flying from the keyboard. If you watched her carefully you could learn a lot about writing and about life.\textsuperscript{312}

The administration of the University of Montana School of Journalism said Mosby repeatedly talked about leaving her cabin on Flathead Lake to her alma mater. This did not materialize as, according to Bader, Mosby sold it to her nephew a couple years before her death. It is unclear as to what transactions took place, since Mosby left her remaining Flathead Lake interests as well as her real estate property located on West Front Street in Missoula to Bader’s four children in her 1997 will.\textsuperscript{313}

Mosby did bequeath $3,000 to the School of Journalism in her 1997 will to establish an annual $300 scholarship. She wanted the award to go to a dedicated female student pursuing journalism as a career. Unfortunately, the University of Montana never received this donation. Reportedly, after her 1997 will, Mosby put monetary assets into a trust, which did not include a provision for the University of Montana.\textsuperscript{314}

\textsuperscript{314} University of Montana Foundation development officer Curtis Cox to University of Montana journalism print department chair Carol Van Valkenburg, 5 May 2003, School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula.
A box of Mosby’s reporting memorabilia was given to the university after Mosby’s death. Mosby’s sister, who said Mosby’s life was one she had imagined for herself, made the donation to the school.

The final developments of Mosby’s will remain a mystery, which is unsettling given her frail mental state in the months following her 1997 will. As the School of Journalism’s most successful female graduate, her legacy at the University of Montana will be, at best, low-key. At present, Mosby’s memory lives on if someone inquires about her book in the School of Journalism alumni glass display or if someone reads this dusty thesis off the shelves in the School of Journalism library.

Were Mosby’s wishes carried out, based on what she stated when she was of sound mind? The unanswered questions are probably a story Mosby herself would try to report like the countless stories she investigated throughout her remarkable career.

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315 Mary Jane Bader, phone interview by author, St. Helena, Calif., 24 Nov. 2002.
Leads

Paris Dropping Hemline a Bit

PARIS, July 20 (UPI) – The news leaked out yesterday that hemlines are going to take a slight dip this fall. Not more than an inch, but it’s still electrifying to women the world over who’ve just shortened their skirts for the umpteenth time.

German Selling French on Rye

PARIS, Aug. 8 (UPI) – A German baker who used to drill oil wells in Texas and date Hollywood actresses has won a victory of sorts over France. He is prying the French looks from French bread and getting them to eat rye bread. Some experts of the local scene consider this as [a] historical first.

Going is Tough for French Unit Waging Anti-Alcoholism Drive

PARIS, Oct. 7 (UPI) – On the third floor of a faded ex-mansion on the Left Bank of the River Seine, a group of dedicated men and women today plotted a tactical shift of their “war.” No more subway signs pleading with Frenchman to stay sober. The new offensive: The French government’s eight-year-old anti-alcoholism campaign will be aimed at children and highway travelers.

Will ‘Mona Lisa’ Smile on America?

PARIS, Dec. 10 (UPI) – The Aging Beauty is able to travel, her departure date is reported set, but whether the French people will let their beloved “Mona Lisa” leave the Louvre Museum for a visit to the United States like some common tourist remains to be seen.

Leonardo da Vinci’s master piece, a symbol of fathomless feminine mystery for 456 years, has become the center of national storm aroused by the Government’s unannounced but fairly definite decision to lend the painting to the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the National Gallery in Washington.

One-Piece Suit Bared as Bikini Cover-Up

PARIS, April 25 (UPI) – The bare bikini has been demoted on the 1963 beaches in favor of the cover-up one-piece bathing suit. Designer Pierre Cardin’s high fashion swim suit show last night confirmed what Paris shop girls have known for weeks: That the fashion of wearing a couple of bows on the beach is passé.

Edith Piaf’s Life is Sadder Than Her Saddest Songs

PARIS, May 4 (UPI) – The most tragic figure in show business today may very well be a little, frizzle – haired women struggling again – as she has struggled doggedly for years – to maintain a frail health that will allow her to sing.

For Edith Piaf, singing is life. “If I stop singing,” she has said again and again, “I’ll die.

**Paris ‘Bargain Sale’ Beats Three-Ring Circus**

PARIS, July 12 (UPI) – The young French girl grabbed a black cocktail dress off the rack, nearly ripping off a rose in her effort to nose out another eager sales hound.

The scene was not bargain day in a department store basement.
It happened in the high-fashion salon of Christian Dior.

**Work at 1232 B.C. Site**

ABU SIMBEL, Egypt, Dec. 1 (UPI) – The fresh holes in the cliffs where archaeologists and engineers have just made test borings are like a sign of doom to the tourists.

Black scarabs scuttle in the sand and wild hogs howl. But determined tourists, guidebooks in hand, are working frantically against time to see the famed temples at Abu Simbel before they are chopped up and moved for eternity from the cliffs of which they were carved 3,000 years ago.

Under an appeal from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 47 countries of the world, rich and poor, have agreed to scrape together 36 million dollars to save the two temples before they are drowned by rising Nile waters from the new Aswan Dam.

**Paris is Startled By Girl Designer**

PARIS, Dec. 14 (UPI) – The new sensational designer of women’s clothes in Paris is, of all things, a woman.

Among present major powers in the fashion world, only one, Gabrielle Chanel, is a woman.

But a fast-rising star in the world of big-name designers is Miss Emmanuelle Khanh, 26. As a former model for the high fashion house of Givenchy and Balenciaga the outspoken Miss Khanh couldn’t care less about the costly creations of the reigning male designers.

**Is George Orwell’s 1984 Upon Us?**

PARIS, April (UPI) – In eight years it will be 1984. Will George Orwell’s book 1984 – in which individuals are controlled by numbers, TV surveillance and computerized information – come true?

The industrialized nations, admitting alarm, have discussed what’s left of the privacy of the individual at special conference, Data Protection and Privacy, organized by the western world’s economic watchdog, The Organization for Cooperation and Development (OECD).

**Gifts Demonstrate Faith in U.N.**

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Nov. 5 (UPI) – When a tour bus stopped in front of the United Nations in early October, a lady tourist rushed to the blue-uniformed guards at the gate, stuffed something into the hands of one of the them and ran back to the bus.

The $320 the guide found crumpled in his fist was sent to the UN treasury.

And in another corner of the United States, the attorney for a late Texas spinster opened her will to discover she, too, had strong faith in the United Nations. She left her entire estate of $670,000 to the world organization.

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Mrs. Hemingway Defends Her Husband’s Image

NEW YORK, June 19 (UPI) – She was, really, a character out of Hemingway. Her voice deep, a little rough, sensual. Her figure tiny in the fashionably short blue dress but strong and womanly. Her white hair short, the blue eyes warm and direct.

A copy of “How to Speak Serb-Croat” on the bedside table. A bulletin board with neatly thumb tacked photographs of her on her boat, in the Havana bar with Hemingway himself, at a villa in Italy, fishing off Peru, hunting in Spain. Photographs of her in London during the blitz...she was a dark haired foreign correspondent then covering the Munich pack, the war in France...

Mrs. Ernest Hemingway, the attractive widow of the writer, stood on a zebra run in her Manhattan penthouse and with spirit defended the Hemingway image of which she still is a reflection.

The current book on her late husband, “Papa Hemingway,” by A.E. Hotchner, is a best-seller. But to her it’s “a phony sensational book” with “vast inaccuracies.”

Middle Class Blamed for Population Threat

NEW YORK, Sept. 11 (UPI) – The United States is having its own population explosion problems. And it’s the middle class families in suburbia who threaten to elbow Americans out of living space.

Faced with a growth of 3 million and soon 6 million souls a year, Americans both on a private and government level, at last have recognized that birth control begins at home.

‘Mao’s Thought’ Clue to Red China Enigma

Dec. 18 (UPI) – “The whole world can be remolded only with a gun. As advocates of the abolition of war, we do not desire war; but war only be abolished through war...”

These are the words of Mao Tse-Tung, leader of Communist China, the awakening giant whose swelling atomic power gives them more chilling weight than ever before.

UN Diplomats See the Real America

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 31 (UPI) – A delegate to the United Nations General Assembly, an ambassador from the Sudan, stepped from the airplane in Wyoming to be astonished by rousing “yippees” from natives on horseback.

“Hi Omar,” beamed a greeter from the local Chamber of Commerce. “This here is Joe, your host. I’m Harry and...” he jabbed the Moslem ambassador with a wink, “Do you drink, Omar? How about a drink?”

Did the distinguished diplomat from Khartoum take offense? No sir, he moved right into Joe’s house as a guest and had a drink with Harry as part of his program to learn what Americans really are like.

Dr. Omar Adeel and 1,055 other diplomats attached to the United Nations in New York and to embassies in Washington have been educated by 37 free goodwill tours around the United States sponsored by U.S. businesses.

The Mao Mystery in China: How it Looks to the Experts

Dec. 15 (UPI) – In August 1945 the Chinese Communist party chairman, Mao Tse-tung, noted in one of his many poems that ancient leaders of Asia such as Gehghis Khan “are all past and gone.”

“To see more truly great and noble-hearted.

“We must look here in the present,” he rather immodestly wrote.

But bizarre convulsions throughout China have brought predictions from some scholars and other experts that Mao, ruler of 700 million people since communism came to power in 1949, may also soon be “all past and gone.”

Since November 1965, and more intensively since August 1966, the world’s largest nation has been wracked by an upheaval that Mao himself chose to call a “cultural Revolution.”


Even Music in Duel Film Called Spicy

BY ALINE MOSBY

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 1 (UPI) – Parents, if you intend to keep your children from seeing Duel In the Sun, you’d better not let ‘em hear it either. Even the music in the film is sexy.

The composer, Dimitri Tiomkin, told us so.

“It’s sensual, full, round, exciting and full of meaning, but subtle and obvious,” he said.

He’s not worried, though, about feeling the long arm of the censor. The average movie-goer, he said, won’t notice the pulsy notes unless he reads this first, which puts you a step ahead of the guy who didn’t.

“The music contributes just as much passion to the picture as the action and dialogue,” Tiomkin explained. “But it’s blended so well that you won’t notice it’s sexy—it’s just background.”

There was a mightily fuss kicked up hereabouts after the Duel premiere, so the movie is being toned down before it reaches your family theatre. Tiomkin’s music got by, but some of the action didn’t.

The cut scenes reported included those in which some actors, including a preacher, cast longing glances at sloe-eyed Jennifer Jones. Those scenes weren’t set to music, so Tiomkin’s suggestive tunes remain intact.

“There’s nothing wrong with sensual music, anyway,” Tiomkin insisted. You can hear sex in a lot of long-hair tunes.

“Listen to Ravel’s ‘Bolero’ and Richard Strauss’ ‘Don Juan,’” suggested Mr. T., but we detected a note of caution. “They’re based strictly on sex.”
Marilyn Monroe Admits
She's Nude Blonde of Calendar

BY ALINE MOSBY

HOLLYWOOD, March 13 (UPI) – A photograph of a beautiful nude blonde on a 1952 calendar is hanging in garages and barbershops all over the nation today.

Marilyn Monroe admitted today that the beauty is she.

She posed, stretched out on rumpled red velvet, for the artistic photos three years ago because “I was broke and needed the money.”

“Oh, the calendar's hanging in garages all over town,” said Marilyn. “Why deny it? You can get one any place.”

“Besides, I'm not ashamed of it. I've done nothing wrong.”

The beautiful blonde now gets a fat paycheck every week from an excited Twentieth Century-Fox Studio. She's rated the most sensational sweater girl since Lana Turner... she lives in an expensive hotel room... she dines at Romanoff's.

Lived in Orphanage

But in 1949 she was just another scared young blonde, struggling to find fame in the magic city, and all alone. As a child she lived in a Hollywood orphanage. She was pushed around among 12 sets of foster parents before she turned an insecure 16.

After an unsuccessful marriage, she moved into Hollywood's famed Studio Club, home of hopeful actresses.

“I was a week behind on my rent,” she explained. “I had to have the money. A photographer, Tom Kelley, had asked me before to pose but I'd never do it. This time I called him and said I would as soon as possible, to get it over with.”

“His wife was there. They're both very nice. We did two poses, one standing up with my head turned profile, and the other lying on some red velvet.”

Marilyn speaks in a breathless, soft voice, and she's always very serious about every word she says.

“Tom didn't think anyone would recognize me,” she said. “My hair was very long then. But when the pictures came out, everyone knew me. I'd never have done it if I'd known things would happen in Hollywood so fast for me.”

Marilyn's bosses at plushy Fox Studio reached for the ulcer tablets when the calendar blossomed out in January.

“I was told I should deny I'd posed...but I'd rather be honest about it. I've gotten a lot of fan letters on it. The men like the pictures and want copies. The women, well...”

“One gossip columnist said I autographed the pictures and handed them out and said 'Art for Art's Sake.' I never said that.”

“Why, I only gave two away,” said Marilyn, and blinked those big, blue eyes.
BY ALINE MOSBY

MOSCOW, Nov. 14 (UPI) – Lee Oswald, still sporting the chop-top haircut he wore in the U.S. Marines, said Saturday that when he left America to seek citizenship in Russia “it was like getting out of prison.”

But his dream of achieving Soviet citizenship in exchange for the U.S. citizenship he renounced went aglimmering. The 20-year-old Texan from Fort Worth said Soviet authorities would not grant him citizenship although they said he could live in Russia freely as a resident alien.

“Imperialism” and lack of money while a child were his main reasons for turning his back on his native land, he said.

A slender, well-groomed youth, he carefully thought out his phrases before speaking in an interview at a Moscow hotel.

He had announced on Oct. 31 that he had renounced his U.S. citizenship and was seeking Soviet citizenship “for purely political reasons.”

He said he told the U.S. embassy he was a devoted believer in communism and had read books on the subject since he was 15. Memories of a poverty-stricken childhood played a part in his decision, he said. His father, he said, died before he was born.

“I saw my mother always as a worker, always with less than we could use,” he said. He insisted his childhood was happy, despite poverty. He admitted his mother “would not understand” why he had fled to Russia.

“In the Marine Corps I observed the American military in foreign countries, what Russians would call military imperialism,” he said.

“I was with occupation forces in Japan and occupation of a country is imperialistic,” he said.

“I would not want to live in the United States and be either a worker exploited by capitalists or a capitalist exploiting workers or become unemployed.

“I would not be happy living under capitalism.”

He said Karl Marx’ work “Das Kapital” set him on the road to communism, and he began to read all he could find about it.

Oswald joined the Marine Corps at 17. During his hitch he learned to be a specialist in radar and electronics.

“I saved my money — $1,600 — to come to the Soviet Union and thought of nothing else,” he said.

Many things bothered him in the United States, he said — race discrimination, “harsh” treatment of “underdog” Communists and “hate.”

Don’t Pop Champagne Cork!

BY ALINE MOSBY
EPERNAY, France, Dec. 24 (UPI) — Approximately three hundred years ago this year champagne was “discovered,” but at any anniversary celebration in this land you won’t hear corks popping.

Corks that pop, swizzle sticks to remove the fizz from champagne and foreign wineries that call their wines “champagne” are the enemies of a semiofficial “war” in this sun-washed province called Champagne in central France.

“A cork should come out gently – like a sigh,” explained one indignant executive at Moet and Chandon, the first and one of the foremost champagne makers of France. “If there’s anything we can’t stand, it’s popping cork. That means the champagne has not been properly cooled, or that it was shaken. If anybody around her pops a cork, he apologizes.”

“And swizzle sticks – gasp! We spend five years putting bubbles in champagne and then some people with swizzle sticks destroy our work in five seconds.”

The very mention of foreign “champagnes” is enough to send citizens of Epernay whose main industry is making sparkling wine, into despair. Rene Sabbe, a descendant of the Moet-Chandon family, points out that the French champagne industry has brought suit in England against dealers selling Spanish “champagne.”

“American sparkling wines are honest wines, but they can’t compete with us,” he added.

“Oh, it’s horrid!” he said.

These appear to be the only three thorns in the side of the champagne industry, which began around 1660, 1662 or 1668, according to various accounts.

Dom Perignon, a monk of a Benedictine monastery which owned some vineyards at Hautvilliers in the Marne Valley near here, is credited by many historians with discovering that if you ferment wine twice, instead of once, it becomes bubbly.

Other historians say sparkling wine was known for years before Dom Perignon, but that he invented the champagne glass, the tying of wire around the cork, the fermenting of the wine in cool caves and the shape of the bottle that made possible production of the champagne on a large scale.

At any rate, champagne, named after the region of France where it is made, was a smash success. There are now 12 major champagne producers in France, plus many smaller houses. In 1961 France produced 1,388,451 gallons.

Champagne is the most costly wine because it is the most difficult to make, taking five years instead of one.

BY ALINE MOSBY

HASSI BEIDA, Sahara, Oct. 18 (UPI) — Moroccan troops dug in around this palm-fringed desert outpost today while their artillery lobbed shells at retreating Algerian forces.

Machine-gunners crouching behind boulders fired occasional bursts into the distant hills where the Algerians sought to set up new defense lines.

The Moroccans recaptured Hassi Beida yesterday as part of their see-saw struggle with the Algerians for control of the surrounding desert border area.

Hopes of showing alleged atrocities appeared to be the main purpose of Moroccan officials in bringing a group of foreign correspondents here to see the disputed frontier area.

Ruins of Camp

Gen. Abderaman Buby showed us carefully preserved ruins of a Moroccan camp at Hassi Beida, which, with the neighboring village of Tindjoub, was seized by the Algerians last week and recaptured yesterday by the Moroccans.

In last week's attack on Hassi Beida, the general said, the Algerians killed ten Moroccan Army auxiliaries camped by an oasis.

He said the Moroccans suffered six killed and 20 wounded in recapturing the outpost.

We walked through charred embers of the desert tent town. In the ashes were burned pieces of bright orange wool rugs, charred helmets, razor blades, cooking pots and mattresses.

Four Chevrolet trucks stood side by side, twisted and blackened. Underneath one was the charred body of what the general said was a Moroccan soldier, one arm stiffly raised.

"Take a picture of this," said the general.

The general continued: "The Algerians always came here to get water at the oasis. They were our friends. Then they murderously attacked us. The Moroccans did not fire a single shot. It was savage and brutal. Yet the Moroccans and Algerians are brothers."

The general shrugged his shoulders when asked why the Algerians destroyed the vehicles instead of capturing them and why they burned four palm trees around the waterhole.

Algerian Prisoners

Moroccan soldiers filling their canteens with gray water at the waterhole appeared bewildered by questions.

One soldier told me that the Algerians caught the Moroccans sitting around in their pajamas shortly before the noon attack. A Moroccan policeman rushed over and told the soldier we were questioning to go away.

The general showed us nine young Algerians who he said were prisoners taken in yesterday's counterattack.

The prisoners had been brought from a nearby village in a truck for the press visit. They sat on the ground in the shade of a palm tree. When I tried to question one, a Moroccan officer interrupted to say: "None of them speak French, only Arabic. You can see they get the same rations as we and are well treated."

The prisoners said nothing.

Two had bloody gashes on their faces, crawling with flies.

The general said the Algerians during the counterattack retreated to a nearby mesa, "where they hid in the cliffs; it took us until a few hours ago to clear them out."

Moroccan soldiers were atop the mesa today silhouetted against the sky. The main Moroccan forces were said to be on the other side of the mesa.

Hassi Beida was guarded by Moroccan jeeps, equipped with 57-mm recoilless American anti-tank guns. Other soldiers manned radios or stood with submachine guns.

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Recalls Oswald in Soviet Union
Reporter Viewed Him as Naïve, Determined

[In a Moscow hotel room four years ago Lee Oswald told a reporter, "I couldn't live under the capitalist system," and explained why. In this dispatch the reporter describes that interview. It provides an insight into the nature of the man charged with the slaying of President Kennedy.]

BY ALINE MOSBY

PARIS, Nov. 23 (UPI) - He wanted to stay in the Soviet Union said the slight and intense young man sitting in room 233 of the Metropole Hotel in Moscow.

Living in the United States, he added, would mean being exploited by the capitalists. That was one of his reasons for coming to Moscow.

"Lee Harvey Oswald, Fort Worth, Tex., arrived Moscow, Oct. 15, 1959, applied Oct. 16 for soviet citizenship," I had written in my notebook that day when I was on assignment in the UPI bureau there.

Early today after Oswald's arrest in Dallas, I found my notes on what he had said in Moscow after he went to the American embassy there and asked that his citizenship be canceled.

Looking out the window on Revolution square, he talked easily as if he were anxious to get all that he said published.

"I was born in New Orleans and lived for two years in New York," he said. "I spent most of my life in Fort Worth. My father died before I was born. My mother works in shops, mostly in Fort Worth."

As he continued, he gave me the impression of a person who is determined but unsure of himself, naïve, and emotionally unbalanced.

Joins Marine Corps

"I played baseball and football in high school," he said. "I had a certain amount of friends, but I don't have many attachments now in the United States," he said. "In my childhood I enjoyed a few benefits of American society. I was a bookworm."

"I joined the marine corps when I was 17 and served in Japan and the Philippines and was discharged, as a radar operator private first class, when I was 20 in Santa Ana, Cal., last Sept. 11. I won a good conduct medal."

I asked why he wanted to remain in the Soviet Union.

"I'm a Marxist," he said seriously. "I became interested about the age of 15. An old lady handed me a pamphlet about saving the Rosenbergs [Julius and Ethel Rosenberg who were executed as spies]."

"I still remember that pamphlet about the Rosenbergs. I don't know why. Then we moved to North Dakota and I discovered one book in the library, 'Das Kapital.' It was what I'd been looking for. It was like a very religious man opening the Bible for the first time.

"I started to study Marxist economic theories. I could see the impoverishment of the masses before my own eyes in my own mother. I thought the worker's life could be better. I found some Marxist books on dusty shelves in the New Orleans library and continued to indoctrinate myself for five years.

Waits Two Years

"I've not just been thinking about this; I've been waiting to do it for two years, saving my money, just waiting until I got out of the marine corps, like waiting to get out of prison. For two years I've had it in my mind not to form any attachments because I knew I was going away.

"My mother doesn't know. She's rather old. I couldn't expect her to understand. It was not quite fair of me to go without telling her, but it's better that way.

"Having been in the marine corps, I observed American leaders in foreign countries. The Russians say military imperialism and occupation of one country is imperialistic, like Formosa.

"I helped drag guns in Formosa and watched American technicians show Chinese how to use them. If you live with that for three years, you get the impression things aren't quite right."

Calls It "Exploitation"

Then he added that living in the United States means exploitation by the capitalists.

"Capitalism has passed its peak," he said. "Capitalism will disappear as feudalism disappeared."

Oswald said he was against segregation.

"I've seen poor niggers, being a southern boy," he said, "and that was a lesson. People hate because they're told to hate, like school kids. It's the fashion to hate people in the United States."

I saw him once after that, in a Moscow theater when he was with a Russian girl.

Where are the new Nelly Blys? 

BY ALINE MOSBY

Flies stuck to my eyelids and mouth and now and then one would try to crawl inside. It had been a 12-hour, all-night ride up from Marrakech to this Moroccan army post, and the trucks that were to bounce us American correspondents over blazing sand to the front in the 1963 Algerian-Moroccan border “war” promised no food or water.

We had slept a few hours in the car. I had left Marrakech in such a hurry that I had nothing in my handbag for a morning toilette except a lipstick. The army post outdoor latrine was horrifying. I searched for a palm tree. And it was lucky I washed my face and hands under the open pump before I noticed a dead rat floating, whiskers and pink belly up, in the pool below.

Adventure and excitement to me, and I wouldn’t trade it for all the comforts of home. But is the comparative hardship of reporting far from the home office the reason why the lady foreign correspondent is a disappearing species?

Not many members of the petticoat press are still racing after prime ministers or airplanes in foreign capitals carting cosmetics as well as cameras from Delhi to Dublin, or sharpening wits as well as pencils with male colleagues around the globe. Rather, the ladies seem to be retiring – to the home front. Washington is awash with the distaff sex: Nancy Dickerson of NBC, Helen Thomas of UPI, Marianne Means of the Hearst Headline Service, etc. (possibly because the news media have discovered lately that Presidents like to be asked questions by girls).

But overseas, the corps of full-fledged permanent American women correspondents has dwindled. Where are the Nelly Blys, Dorthy Thompsons and Anne O’Hare McCormicks who used to grace the front pages with exotic datelines?

A batch of women served overseas during and after World War II. The late INS spawned Rita Hume, Lee Carson, and Ruth Montgomery. The United Press’ female foreign scribes included Hazel Hertzon and Ann Stringer. And Marguerite Higgins earned her trench coat in Korea; but marriage has kept her in Washington since, except for sporadic trips to check up on Saigon, Moscow, and other points.

Eleanor Packard and her husband Reynolds Packard were both UP war correspondents in the 1940s, and both are now working in Rome for the New York Daily News. But Mrs. Packard appears to be the only survivor of the wartime pancake press who still files regularly from abroad.

Some media are against hiring women, except to cover fashions in Paris. One AP executive stoutly insists he isn’t, but that “the girls work abroad only briefly” and then flee back to home and husband. Some gals who have worked overseas have been able to stay a good many years because their husbands did. One of the best-known and respected women foreign correspondents in recent years, and an OPC past prizewinner, Flora Lewis, London correspondent of the Washington Post, is returning to the U.S. this year because her husband Sydney Grason has been named foreign news editor of the New York Times.

That leaves only a handful of American women currently reporting full-time for U.S. media overseas. The UPI contingent includes Roberts Roth in Jakarta, Sheila Walsh in Rome, and this correspondent in Paris, formerly Brussels, London, and Moscow. AP and Time have no female foreign correspondents. Newsweek last year for the first time sent a girl abroad, Elizabeth Peer, who now reports from Paris.

The Reporter’s Mediterranean correspondent is Claire Sterling. Beverly Deepe, who went to Saigon on her own and scored noteworthy scoop interviews, has joined the New York Herald Tribune as permanent correspondent.

In addition, many wives of men stationed abroad work as journalists on local papers, such as the international edition of the New York Times, the European edition of the New York Herald Tribune, and Rome Daily American, the Japan Times, etc. In Rome the AP hires Louise Hickman twice yearly to cover fashions. Marianne Weller, wife of the Chicago Daily News Rome

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staffer George Weller, is an active journalist; so is Linda Beech, wife of CDN correspondent Keyes Beech in Tokyo.

Being a woman reporter has its advantages everywhere, but especially overseas. When I telephoned a new American defector in his Metropole Hotel room in Moscow on snowy November day in 1959, he consented to let me interview him, saying: “I won’t see any men reporters. But you’re a woman.”

Later in his hotel room where he talked for more than two hours, Lee Harvey Oswald explained, “Women are more understanding.”

Covering then Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson’s tour of the Benelux countries was a shoo-in. He invited me to ride in his private airplane, even in his own compartment. In Brussels he swept me off to an intimate gathering at the home of U.S. Ambassador Douglas MacArthur II. Much to the obvious annoyance of Mrs. MacArthur, Johnson insisted I sit on the arm of his chair, too.

Despite the courtesy given women reporters at embassy receptions or foreign offices, the problems of living and working overseas may be one hurdle keeping less adventurous girl reporters at their desks at home. In the first place, a lady correspondent has two jobs: She must work in a fiercely competitive field and do a man’s job, keeping up with male reporters. She must also keep house and be a woman.

For me, working as one of three UPI correspondents in Moscow meant 2 ½ years of living right in the UPI office, with Teletypes in the hall near my bedroom and seven American and Soviet UPI staffers sharing the kitchen and toilet. Staring Russian burglars (or were they KGB secret agents?) in the eye and checking the market for meat was party of my daily life. Between dashing off to the Central Telegraph office to file stories or covering Khrushchev press conferences, I had to order food from Copenhagen, paint the kitchen cupboards, and hire exterminators to wrestle with the cockroaches and bed bugs.

The male correspondents did not have to bother with getting diplomatic friends to bring lipsticks and night cream to Moscow. (The Soviets are better with cosmonauts than cosmetics.) Neither did Henry Shapiro, Bob Korengold, Marvin Kalb, or the other boys then in Moscow have to stand in line at the only good Soviet hairdresser’s for an East German permanent or an Italian beehive coiffure.

Living in Paris to me is much more comfortable. But, of course, the male correspondents in the French capital don’t have to face the hazards of all those beautiful clothes which take time to buy (three fittings, maybe four). A six-day week, or sometimes seven, can be taken in stride by my male colleagues, but that doesn’t leave a female much time for hair salons and flea markets (and if you don’t want to spend your money on the glories of French living, you should have stayed home, anyway!).

Then, too, keeping house is a problem for a foreigner in any land, even in France. But I consider homemaking abroad to be a special advantage for a woman writer. A woman is more likely to eat and live at home than on the town, and the best way to know a country is to face the markets, shops, and local plumber. Women correspondents come closer to understanding the people of any land by arguing with the gas company (how could a bill for one person who’s never at home in Paris be $40 a month?), by trying to find cottage cheese or sour cream in Paris food shops (not there), by learning the French way of food shopping (one stop at the fish store, then the meat store, bakery, cheese shop, etc.).

Actually, London and Paris are becoming so international that after a while one might not feel like a foreign correspondent in these capitals. To feel a difference from home nowadays, you have to move south to more exotic lands. I possibly shaved 10 years off my life while covering Jackie Kennedy’s second visit to Greece but gained enough adventure to last a lifetime.

My competition was AP’s Frances Lewin, who came from Washington with Jackie and who is one woman reporter I’ve met to whom I bow low in admiration. Jackie did not want to be followed by the press, but we stuck by her despite rainstorms, transportation difficulties, and the ruses of her Secret Service protectors.

Those who cover riots haven’t known mob action until they’ve tried to elbow their way through hundreds of yelling, exuberant Turks — including an army of Istanbul photographers built like football players —
trailing Jackie from museums to
mosques in Istanbul. We had to
rent river boats in a hurry to
follow the then-President’s wife
up the Bosporus (the UPI-NBC
boat beat the AP boat in a race
on the way back).

When Jackie tried to elude us
by steaming to Aristotle
Onassis’ private island south of
Corfu, we reporters managed to
track her down by racing there
in taxis and a ferry boat. It was
a hair-raising, 14-hour dash
through rainstorms on slippery,
narrow mountain roads. Our
driver was a high-spirited
young man who kept getting
lost on the unmarked rutty
roads, all the while shouting,
“Tharos!” meaning “courage.”

The last hurdle before our
island destination was a
ferryboat that was closed when
we skidded to a stop around
midnight. We woke up to the
proprietor – two old ladies –
who got out of bed and,
pumping up and down like
marionettes, maneuvered the
barge across the rough water to
the island near Jackie’s
hideaway.

But that “war” in Morocco
indicated to me why there are
not many women war
 correspondents. The UPI was
against the idea, but I happened
to be in Morocco when the
border fighting broke out, and
the Moroccan government
decided to take some
photographers and magazine
and television newsmen to the
“front.”

On five minutes’ notice, off
we went with no time even to
visit a powder room or grab a
toothbrush. The last day’s
travel was in those Moroccan
arm trucks over burning sand
dunes right out of a scene from
a Rudolph Valentino sizzler.
We would lurch up the side of
one dune and plunge down the
center. I never asked for
special treatment, and I am
against women reporters
expecting the same. But I was
admittedly grateful when the
Moroccan soldiers insisted I
ride in the cab up front with the
driver, leaving the male
correspondents to be ratted to a
pulp in the back.

Yes, the city room back in the
States may be more
comfortable. My makeup was
running in the heat, and I was
doubtful my insides would
survive. But the sight of
machine guns silhouetted
against the red sky along with
palm trees and 14th-Century
pink Moroccan castles was
worth all those four years of
working to graduate from
journalism school.

I wouldn’t trade sleeping two
nights without food and water
(except for green watermelons)
on the Nile River bank to watch
the dismantling of the Abu
Simbel temples for all the
comforts of a U.S. beat, either.
Stones whizzed past my head
when I covered a Soviet-style
“spontaneous demonstration”
from inside the beleaguered
U.S. Embassy in Moscow, but
that was worth 10 stories on the
home front to me in memories.
After You’ve Seen Paree – Montana
Getting back to the land and the sky

BY ALINE MOSBY

From the tall window of my beamed 17th-century Paris apartment, I survey two busy sidewalk restaurants, the lofty trees and bookstalls edging the Seine and the lacy spires of Notre Dame cathedral.

But to me just as magnificent a show is the view from my American retreat. It’s an old log cabin on an Indian reservation, my childhood summer home on vast Flathead Lake in the Rocky Mountains of northwestern Montana.

My yearly pilgrimage from Paris to the lakeside village of Polson offers astonishing contrasts.

The French explorers Louis and Francois de la Verendrye are believed to have been the first non-Indians to set foot in what is now Montana, in 1743. One village south of the lake is called Frenchtown for 19th-century settlers. In nearby St. Ignatius, a French priest built a Gothic church copied from those of this motherland.

But to Paris travel agents Montana might as well be the moon. The only site they recognize is the Rockies – “Ahh, Les Montagnes Rocheuses!” Even they are surprised that the New York-Poison trip costs as much or more than Paris-New York and can take longer.

The flight to New York properly belongs in the world of Paris: Two Frenchmen debating the merits of French restaurants in New York, the perfume creator Paloma Picasso in her Yves Saint Laurent trouser suit, the hostess serving goose liver pate, poached salmon with spinach and fresh mushrooms, wine.

New York is always a jolt, especially the open, easy American manner, a joy to come back to after European strictness. Lovers quarrel on the street, people shout, sing and dance up Seventh Avenue. The city’s rudeness and crime shocks too. A news dealer shrugs off a plea for directions. A shrub in front of an apartment house is chained and padlocked and the airport bus driver warns, “Don’t let anyone carry your baggage.”

The Minneapolis flight is a different world. Relaxed, polite passengers wear neckties and mustaches and proper briefcases, winging home to the city billed as the most livable in the United States. One passenger laments he has been transferred by his company to Connecticut. “It’s pretty crowded on that coast,” he sighs, peering down at peaceful Minneapolis floating amid trees and lakelets.

Between planes in Minneapolis I always search in vain in the airport bookstore for a decent spy novel among the sex and self-help books.

At last the third and final plane, distinctly less plush than the first one, heads west, stopping at town after town like a milk train. Not counting Alaska, Montana is the fourth largest state, the size of Japan, but with a population of less than 800,000.

The cast of characters on the plane differs from the Minneapolis yuppies – young backpackers, students greeted in airports with shrieks and flowers, women astonishingly fat from supermarket junk food and little exercise (public transportation is scarce, distances are enormous, most everybody drives). I know I’m closer to home when ranchers lope aboard in cowboy boots and hats. Most everybody talks slowly, smiles, exudes politeness and says hi-have-a-nice-day whether you’re a stranger or not.

One woman in a yellow pants suit and harlequin glasses grins that she’s been visiting relatives “back east in Minneapolis.” A jeans-clad woman’s harried manner broadcasts that she’s a newcomer, having moved up from Las Vegas. “Oh, the people in Polson are so nice,” she says.

The end of the line across 500 miles of Montana is Missoula. Students from the dude ranch area of Seeley Lake, home from participating in a national contest, swarm off the plane to a riotous welcome. Businessmen in sports jackets, relaxed college professors, jeans, beards and perms from the Kut ‘n Kurl Beauty shop fill the terminal.

Outside is the incredibly wide sky that gives Montana the name of Big Sky country – and illusion wrought by valleys cut widely by glaciers in the west or by flat plains in the east.

My car heads north, soon passing the sign

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"Welcome to the Flathead Indian Reservation, home of the Salish, Kootenai and Pend d'Oreille tribes." The 1.2-million acre reservation, one-third owned by non-Indians, is one of seven in Montana.

The highway winds past Indian towns selling taxless cigarettes, since Indians are not taxed, past the National Bison Range that saved the American buffalo from extinction, past the snow-collared Mission Mountains looming like a flat theatrical backdrop.

The "in" car is the pickup truck, usually with a dog in back, usually a Labrador. Once I saw a pickup with five black Labs in back. The "in" food is beef, beef and beef and the highway rolls past acres of cattle plus horses and sheep. The latter are exported under the theory that nobody eats lamb in Montana. Lamb fanciers settle for frozen New Zealand lamb from the supermarket.

The vin du pays is sour mash bourbon whisky. One Flathead Lake resident, however, is pressing grapes from Finley Point near my cabin to make near-instant champagne in this land of cowboys and Indians, a scene that would paralyze winemakers in the Champagne region of France.

More signs and sounds reflect the conservative, patriotic, religious folk: country western music and National Rifle Association plugs on the radio, "Hi Neighbor" signs in supermarkets and "Jesus Died to Save Sinners" billboards on the highway, American flags waving on front lawns. The people are fiercely proud of Montana. They shun job-creating industries for fear they might spoil the land.

Down a hill on Finley Point, in a forest of dusky-green pines, my cabin has survived the hard winter. Two women, radiantly smiling, await to seek converts to Jehovah's Witnesses, asking, "Do you know you never will die and can live forever in paradise?"

"I'm in paradise now," say I.

To my rocky beach I race with binoculars and bourbon. The osprey nest built of long sticks still clings amazingly to the top of a dead pine tree. Twenty-eight miles to the end of the 120,000-acre lake, deep blue mountains are layered like ruffles. The farthest misty ridge encloses Glacier National Park.

My Indian neighbor gives a welcome hug. Robins begin their evening concert. Two honey-colored deer chew their way through the underbrush. A single-file platoon of honking Canada geese flaps slowly over the lake, as smooth and silent as glass. A loon gives his raucous cry, a sound that more than any other typifies the American wilderness.

The scene puts into its proper place that merely manmade greatness of Notre Dame that I see from my Paris window. Montana, an uncommon land. Home again.
APPENDIX 2: MEMORIAL TRIBUTES

Charles Hood
Former professor and dean emeritus, University of Montana School of Journalism

Thank you for giving the University of Montana School of Journalism the opportunity to share a few memories about Aline Mosby at her memorial service in Paris. As a professor and dean emeritus who has been associated with the school for more than 30 years, I followed Aline’s career with great interest and pride.

The school’s association with Aline began in 1939, when she enrolled as an 18-year-old freshman brimming with brio and girlish enthusiasm. In an autobiographical sketch preserved in her student folder, she reported that she liked staying up late, cats, October weather, the boogie-woogie, poetry, short stories, work when it doesn’t require one to move around much, pretty clothes, excitement and chocolate milk shakes. Her dislikes included vague assignments and straight-laced people.

Four years later, with her journalism training complete and a Mademoiselle magazine internship under her belt, she was anxious to show what she could do in the real world. Her admiring dean, James L.C. Ford, wrote in her behalf to newspaper editors in Seattle, Portland and San Francisco. His letters are wonderful period pieces of the ’40s. Listen to this one:

“Do you want a first-class girl reporter with pep, personality, and ideas? Aline Mosby, who graduates in a few weeks after four years of training in journalism, is ready for action on your paper and I can’t give her too enthusiastic a send-off.

“She has a high scholastic average, was editor of the university year book, a correspondent for Mademoiselle, has had fine radio newscasting experience (her father owns and operates the local radio station) and has a world of drive. In addition to that, she is very attractive.

“Somebody is going to snap her up fast – and what a find they’ll have! Will it be you?”

As it turned out, “Loop,” as she was called by her friends and professors alike (it’s a radio term), was snapped up by the United Press bureau in Seattle, and soon she was breathlessly telling the dean that she had been promoted to night manager. Over the next fifty years or so, Loop’s letters never stopped coming to the School of Journalism, keeping us in the know – her breezy, upbeat style – about her adventures in Hollywood, Moscow, New York, Beijing and Paris. She delighted in the attention generated by her foray au natural into a California nudist camp to get a feature story, and in recounting the tales – sometimes funny, sometimes chilling – of her years in Moscow as a “bachelor girl among the Bolsheviks” who covered Francis Gary Powers’ U-2 trial, interviewed Lee Harvey Oswald, and survived a surreal incident in which the KGB may have slipped her a mickey.

Through the Bernard Cabaes Prize for her reporting on China recognized her as the serious journalist that she was, Aline never forgot to have fun, even in the midst of momentous events. Waiting each day outside a house in a Paris suburb where Henry Kissinger and his Vietnamese counterpart were negotiating an end to the Vietnam War in the early 1970s, she and her news colleagues didn’t just twiddle their thumbs.

“Out of our cars we would take great French pate, bread, cheeses, fruit and a bottle of wine,” she recalled in a story preserved in her folder. “We would spread all our goodies out and then everyone would sit on the lawn in front of the house and have a picnic. We would drink wine and lie in the sun on the grass.

“It was great fun. That was the nicest assignments I ever had.”

For years, we would see Aline at the School of Journalism each spring, when she would make her pilgrimage from Paris to Missoula and to Flathead Lake, where she had a home. During the mid-1970s, we
talked her into extending her visits by several weeks to teach a special J-School course, International Journalism. On such occasions, she often brought her own world with her. Her class visitors included her old boss, Henry Shapiro, the dapper and eloquent UP Moscow bureau chief, a tough-talking Russian diplomat and a public affairs officer from the Israeli Embassy. She introduced students from Wolf Point and Cut Bank to the International Herald Tribune and the Economist, and assigned them to read William L. Shirer’s “Berlin Diary” and Evelyn Waugh’s “Scoop,” two books she treasured. She was amazed by students’ cynicism, appalled by their ignorance of the rest of the world, and dismayed by their spelling, which she described as “a disaster.” But she enjoyed these teaching stints, which she called “Operation Professor.”

Years later, in 1985, when I had become the dean, I looked on as Aline, in cap and gown, received her hood as an honorary doctor of letters at the University of Montana’s graduation ceremonies. Her fellow honorees were Carroll O’Connor, television’s Archie Bunker, and Michael Smuin, choreographer of the San Francisco Ballet. The three of them celebrated together on stage in a display of exuberance that delighted the audience. Smuin even did a pirouette.

The last time I saw Aline was in 1995, when she brought her friend Flora Lewis, another journalistic legend, to Montana for a visit. Flora delivered a splendid public lecture and spoke informally with awestruck journalism students. At both events, Aline sat proudly in the audience, frailer than I had remembered her and wanting to stay out of the spotlight.

Over the years, Aline and I had talked of my visiting her sometime in Paris, and I finally made it this year, filling in as a vacation-relief editor at the International Herald Tribune. But by that time the apartment at 1 Rue Maître Albert was empty. She had returned to the United States for medical treatment. I was in the middle of an editing shift at the IHT when I learned, via e-mail from Montana, of her death in California, and passed on the sad news to my colleagues in the newsroom. Not until that moment did I fully realize how highly Aline was regarded by the international community of which she was part.

When I returned to Montana from Paris, Aline’s personal papers had already arrived at the School of Journalism, a last gift from “Loop.” In an open box, sitting alone atop a stack of yellowed correspondence, was Aline’s well-thumbed copy of “Scoop.”
Betty Slater and Leonard Slater
Former bureau chief, Newsweek

We first met Aline in Los Angeles in the early 1950s when she was covering Hollywood for UP and Len was head of the Newsweek bureau. We became close friends – she was a godmother to our two daughters, Amy and Lucy – and for the next 50 years as we all moved about the world, sometimes living near one another (in New York and France) sometimes separated by an ocean or a continent.

Over the years, we had so many laughs and adventures with Aline: a camping trip on the Navajo reservation in Arizona, hectic shopping sprees in Paris, Amy’s visit to her in Beijing.

In 1964 we bought neighboring homes on the Balearic Island of Menorca and shared vacations there every summer for the next 33 years. We were expecting Aline in Menorca once again last September.

As we cleared out her house, we kept expecting to run into her in the next room or find her swimming in her pool. We could almost hear her complaining about the leaves in the pool or recounting the rescue of a drowning woodchuck. It is still hard to believe that she is gone. There is truly a void in our lives, which no one else will fill.

B.J. Cutler and Carol Cutler
Former editor-in-chief of Scripps Howard Newspapers
Food writer

We are privileged to be friends of Aline since the early 1960s. For most of that decade we all lived in Paris and took many weekend trips together. Right until the last time we saw her last fall, she recalled those two-day visits to the countryside. We would wait for her to finish work by Saturday noon, pick her up at UPI and go off to enjoy cathedrals, chateaux and museums. We usually stayed in hotels that had a one-star dining room. Good food was important to all three, and as thin as Aline remained, she tucked away very well.

One winter we flew from Washington to Paris on Christmas day, drove to Barbizon and stayed overnight at the Bas-Breau. We invited Aline and Ronnie Koven to join us for dinner. They arrived with Aline bearing a chilled bottle of champagne in a new cooler that she was excited about – it had removable inserts that you kept in the freezer until needed. She was still using that clever wine holder the last time we saw her. Aline loved champagne, especially as Kir Royale. At the Bas-Breau she was annoyed but not surprised that they exacted a stiff corkage fee.

A few years after we settled in Washington, Carol was writing a magazine article and wanted to include the recipe for the apple cake served at the then wonderful Au Lyonnais, a restaurant Aline introduced us to. The owner, M. Violet, with great ceremony had given Carol a hand-written recipe of the cake as a going-away gift. But the recipe didn’t work. Carol called Aline and asked her to ask Mr. Violet a few questions. She did better: she got a large piece of cake, carefully wrapped it and air-mailed it. That’s what a good friend she was – always going the extra step.

Even her beloved cats, Natasha and Mao, enjoyed good food. Once when we stayed in her apartment while she was away we got very precise directions on where to buy frozen fish for their dinner and how to cook it. Three-star cat food chez Mosby.
Aline and I both worked for UP before there was an I. I first met her in London where she was waiting and waiting and waiting for a visa for Moscow in the late 1950s. When she eventually got there, she did such a good job that the KGB slipped her a mickey and she awoke in the Moscow drunk tank to flash bulbs popped by accommodating official photographers. That was scarcely a pleasant experience, but Aline had survived the rigors of Hollywood Confidential and was one to be easily nonplussed.

She was the real article shoe leather reporter, never complaining about staking out politicians, diplomats or movie stars in all kinds of weather and at all hours of the day or night. We always made a bee line for each other at Paris parties. My happiest reporting memory of Aline was covering the arrival of Baby Doc Duvalier in France in the middle of the winter in the 1980s... I had just arrived from some African pleasure dome if memory serves, and was equally unsuitably attired. A US Air Force jet had flown the unwanted Duvalier and his beautiful, since divorced, wife out of Haiti. Until the last minute no one knew exactly where in France they were going to land. Finally we were told he was headed for Lyon, so off we took off in a chartered jet. But once there we were told he had landed on Grenoble.

With the press in hot pursuit, Baby Doc escaped by motorcade to the banks of Lake Annecy where he had rented a five star hotel which closed for the season. Not a sensible line of copy was filed for days. But the point of the story is that the Pere Bise was open and neither Aline nor anyone else had any compunction about justifying excellent meals consumed in that wonderful three story restaurant. That made the snow and cold bearable. To those not members of the DownHold Club of ex-Unipressers that may not sound so extraordinary. Silly story for once in a pleasant place. But such high living was not often tolerated in the UP, indeed was actively discouraged. Not for nothing was the UP known as “The Fear of Wages,” a play on words on that old Yves Montand thriller, “The Wages of Fear.” It was in that grand tradition that Aline was trained and persevered. She could have worked for many another more prestigious master and in fact did fine work for The New York Times as a freelancer in Paris. But she remained a quintessential Unipresser and that was nothing to be ashamed of. Goodbye, dear friend.

Scott Sullivan
Former Paris bureau chief, Newsweek

Aline was a marvelous person and a very special journalist. Till the last days when illness finally slowed down, she was an example to us all. Her energy and industrious were legendary. More: she maintained to the last an extraordinary enthusiasm for each new story. While most of us eventually become a little blasé about the world out there, she approached each new subject with eyes as fresh as a baby’s. No one ever had a better friend. She would give another hack the shirt off her back, or – more importantly – a peek at the lead she was writing.

They don’t, alas, make many of em like that anymore. Indeed, they never did.

Mary Jane Bader and Family

She lies under a cover of pine needles nestled among the trees close to the shore of beautiful Flathead Lake in Montana. The deer browsing pay homage – the squirrels look for nuts on the stone well while the loons give their lonely cry.

Aline is home again. Thank you for having this memorial service – a celebration of life lived to its fullest.
Bridgid (Phillips) Janssen
Former bureau chief, UPI

My memories of Aline begin with my arrival in Paris in 1982. I was the upstart with just a few years of journalism experience in Toronto and Montreal when I was assigned to UPI-Paris in 1982 to be bureau manager to that veteran and legend Aline Mosby. Daunting. My new manager in London warned me that Aline might present one of the titchier sides to the job and he conspired to get it off to a good start by giving Aline one of the assignments she loved best on the day I arrived: find us a nice restaurant. So I first encountered Aline under the crystal chandeliers of the recently refurbished (she knew all the architectural nuances), three-star dining room of the Grand Hotel. As we met, I kissed her on both cheeks, and she decided that I did know something after all. And I went on to the best years of my life, working with and being friends with the greatest character I’ve known.

She spoke French with a pure Montana accent and it seemed to help to talk loudly. Her regular opening line, on phone calls to the stringer in Chad or over to her friend Pierre Berge at Yves Saint Laurent, was “EEESSSEEE Aline MOSEBEEE. Je vous ecoute tres mal!” French grammar wasn’t her forte, but French style was. She knew everything there was to know about fashion and fashion houses. And she loved to cover the shows wearing designer clothes that she’d bought with the labels clopped out from back-street discount boutiques. Since she was even more petite than most French women she got some great deals on the worn-once-by-models creations, and she was usually more chuffed at the deal she’d cut than the cut of the clothing. She loved to get a bargain and haunted the flea markets early in the morning to get the wonderful art, trinkets, rugs, everything and anything that made the elegantly rustic atmosphere of her Left Bank apartment overlooking Notre Dame, her cliffside converted post office in the Dordogne and no doubt all her other residences around the world that I never did visit.

But our real life together was covering news. The old UPI bureau at 2 rue des Italiens bulged with files from Aline, from the sports that she covered like a trooper on the late night shifts to the heart-wringer features that she spun from that touch she had with every kind of people. She seemed so vulnerable and self-deprecating that she drew out their souls, then she would march off and bank out 1200 words with sparks flying from the keyboard. If you watched her carefully you could learn a lot about writing and about life.

The last time we were together was at the Duc de Richelieu, a sawdust-on-the-floor second home to Paris bureau staffers that Aline loved because she loved practically all restaurants but also because they had two fat cats that would purr on the banquette beside you through the steak-au-poive and beaujolais. She made us all go there because she favored the chubby red-cheeked waiter who would pack up the always considerable amount that Aline couldn’t eat, to take home to her cats. For years after the bureau was gone, we went to the Duc every November for the release of the nouveau beaujolais (though every one of her UPI-Paris years, she made that Bojo story sing) including once when the men folk in our party had to transport a Very Large suitcase over the heads of a Very Squashed and Drunk crowd because Aline couldn’t miss the occasion even though she was on her way to the train station. A while back, at our last dinner there, she regaled us with stories of her days covering Romania and Vienna and Moscow, and even though her years were just starting to take their toll, she told it as if it was yesterday – as if it was one of her funny and finely-tuned UPI features that I hope still fill the remaining filing cabinets in the remaining UPI outposts.

That night, she jested, as she did with that mischievous twinkle in her eye, “You know I’ve had so much fun, pretty soon, I think I’m going to settle down and have kids.”
Aline Mosby was already a UPI star when I got to know her in the early 60s. I was working in London, but I would get to Paris at least once a month and would invite Aline to dinner. I learned to show up warily because it was not unknown that she would have a small chore waiting for me to do first. This could involve hefting something the size of a double bed, wrestling it down the stairs, somehow loading it into the back of her small white British sports car (an MG, I think), driving it across Paris and wrestling it up another flight of stairs before we could go eat around 10 at night.

Aline had already been to Moscow and been framed by the KGB, but now she was determined to be assigned to Peking. She got that job and went off to New York to study Chinese, still another language to be added to her French, Spanish and Russian. As some of you will recall, she succeeded in making them all sound the same.

When she left Paris, she turned over the names of a couple of her dinner dates to a friend of hers named Beverly Putnam, who had engineered the sale of Aline’s Moscow interview with a man named Lee Harvey Oswald to L’Express. They money she got was a down payment on her first house in Menorca.

One of the names she turned over to Putnam was a then UPI Vice President, Tom Curran. And the other was me. Without telling each other, we called Putnam on the same afternoon and invited her to have a drink at the Crillon. When I showed up, Tom blinked a couple of times but was kind enough to pay for the drinks (maybe only he was rich enough and generous enough) and suddenly discovered he had another appointment. I spent half a week’s pay taking Putnam to dinner at a restaurant – naturally she chose it – called Chez Garin that some of you may also remember. A couple of years later, when I recovered from the shock of the bill, I married her. Aline came to the wedding bearing an antique side table that has followed us everywhere since.

Over the next 30 plus years, we sometimes saw her several times a year. When I was UPI foreign editor in New York during the first half of the 70s, Aline was back in Paris, where she did a helluva lot more than cover fashion shows, in fact, she covered everything. When we then came back to Paris in 1989 for the St. Pete Times, we had dinner with her at least two or three times a year. Every year, she would invite us, usually a couple of times, to her house in the Dordogne. I was always someplace else in Europe and to my sorrow, we never went. When we got our place in Brittany, she was supposed to come there. It had been scheduled again for this summer.

For several years, her friends worried about her slipping memory. When we saw her last October, she came across Paris in a taxi to our borrowed pied-a-terre. She looked around, remembered it as our apartment, remembered the pictures on the wall, talked about all the dinners we had there. We didn’t tell her that they weren’t our pictures, and that she had never been there. But we went out for a couscous dinner and all of our memories were fresh. We wondered then how many more times we would see her, but when the word of her departure from Paris came, it was a big shock – to be followed by an even bigger one of her death.
Aline had many of the journalistic, and especially the UPI, virtues — she worked hard and long, wrote fast and gracefully, could and did cover almost everything. But many others could claim the same. More than anyone I’ve known, Aline also had a knack for being in the right place at the right time. I first met her when she came back to Moscow on a vacation relief stint in the late ’60s. India and Pakistan were fighting a war at the time and the Soviets offered to mediate. A peace conference was held in Tashkent and Aline went to cover it. The Indian delegation was led by the country’s prime minister, Lal Shastri. The conference succeeded, a deal was reached, everybody congratulated each other and called it a night. Aline was brushing her teeth before bed in her hotel when she heard shouting and wailing in the corridor outside. She went to investigate and found Indian journalists who had just heard that Shastri, only hours after his triumph, had dropped dead. Aline got a call through to Henry Shapiro, the Moscow bureau chief. Henry called me, since I lived closer to the bureau. I ran over, fielded another call from Aline and put it on the wire. UPI got a three-hour beat on the death of the premier of the world’s biggest democracy. Aline always called it her “tooth-brush story.”

For someone who led the adventurous life she did, Aline was a soft and gentle person, devoted to cats and friends, proud of people she worked with, territorially loyal — probably too loyal to UPI, which treated her like a star but still conned her into working nights and weekends when she should have been passing this drudgery onto younger reporters. Covering a story with Aline always had a touch of grace to it. We covered Georges Pompidou’s state funeral at Notre Dame on a satin-soft spring day. Once the story was phoned in, we repaired to a restaurant on the Rue de Faubourg St. Honore for a lunch of white asparagus and Sancerre. The front of the restaurant was open to the street and suddenly Richard Nixon, then battling Watergate, walked past in a crowd of gawking Frenchmen and security guards, en route from the Bristol to the Elysee to pay his respects to Giscard d’Estaing. Aline told the waiter to protect our table and we walked out, got a couple of inane quotes from Nixon, saw him safely to the Elysee, phoned it in and returned to our asparagus.

Aline did have a tendency to dither, and getting her out of town on an assignment usually involved the entire bureau in a round of packing, visa-arranging, passport-finding and ticket-buying. The Austrians in the bureau in Vienna resented her anyway, on grounds that women had no business doing anything but suckling children and cooking knodls, but Aline just laughed and sent them hustling around town on her last-minute errands. Once, in 1969, she was in Czechoslovakia, after Soviet invasion, and did a story from Pilsen on the anniversary of its liberation from the Nazis by American troops. Pilsen had been one of the few Czech cities liberated by the Yanks and the normal pro-Americanism there had been multiplied by the current anti-Soviet hostility. Aline’s story reflected all of this. The Russians hit the roof and the police summoned Aline for an interview. She panicked and, instead of appearing, jumped in her car to drive back to Vienna. But she took a wrong turn, drove north and was all the way to the Polish frontier before she realized her mistake and had to drive back.

In 1991, I was living in London again, in a Docklands warehouse, and was planning a party when Aline came to town with her great friend, Walter Logan, himself a war correspondent, in China and elsewhere, and later UPI’s foreign editor. Both were retired by then and Walter, in particular, had little on his mind but his plans for dinner that night at the Connaught. From the moment they arrived, Walter began computing what time he would have to leave to get back for his bath, his pre-dinner drink and his dinner. Aline fussed around him like a duenna, and the two spent most of the party in a high state of anxiety. Edie Smith of VOA who admired Aline greatly, watched them and laughed. “It doesn’t make any difference where they’ve been or how much they’ve done,” she said. “At a certain age, they all start acting like your parents.”
Bud (Robert) Korengold
Former reporter, UPI, Newsweek

The thing I always thought of first when I saw Aline Mosby over the last 20 years or so, was that she looked mostly like some kindly lady that might need help crossing the street.

Yet I remember her in earlier years as the lithe and stunning red head whipping around Moscow in the Soviet’s capital’s only white MG sports car and blocking traffic at every corner while Russians gathered around to ask her to raise the hood so they could see the motor.

I also knew that underneath that later appearance of frailty, she was one of the most resourceful and competitive reporters with whom I ever worked.

If you weren’t watching her closely you might find that she was somewhere in the front lines of a desert war with the Polisario or paddling up the Yangtze to report floods in China or being there first with some big breaking news event wherever she was.

Actually, for me she was much more than just a colleague with whom I shared the trials and tribulations but also the exhilaration of reporting from Moscow for UPI in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

She was – and so I still consider her – more like my big sister. She took me in and fed me and offered warmth and friendship and professional advice when I first arrived in the Soviet capital as a much younger and very inexperienced, very fledging journalist.

And we reported a lot of history – the first Soviet man – and women – in space // the Nixon-Khrushchev kitchen debate at the 1959 American exhibition in Moscow // the desalinization campaign // the ouster of Stalin from his tomb in red square // the Moscow trial of U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers // the rupture of relations between the Communist world’s two giant powers, China and the Soviet Union the Kashmir peace talks in Tashkent that ended with the sudden death of Indian Prim Minister Shastri. There were countless others.

We compared notes endlessly, not just about Soviet politics but about the even more interesting story of how the lives of ordinary Soviet citizens were changing as the terror and repression of the Stalin era slowly receded.

We grumbled together about our stern but very wise and experienced bureau chief Henry Shapiro and we shared countless evenings downing vodka with Soviet acquaintances who gave us guarded but intensely valuable insights into how Soviet society really worked.

For all these encounters Alina would indulge her passion for cooking and, always the perfect hostess, would lay out marvelous meals that were awesome by Moscow’s then impoverished standards.

Unfortunately, most of the time her Russian guests simply ignored the food to concentrate on emptying any bottle of alcohol they could find in her apartment.

But from it all Alina produced a perceptive book – “The View from Number 13 People’s Street” – about the changes in Soviet society in the Khrushchev era that is still a good read today.

Alina was at both my weddings, civil in Moscow and religious some weeks later in France and although we both eventually left Moscow, we never lost touch thereafter.

My wife Christine and I stayed at her homes in Spain and in the Dordogne and she came faithfully almost every year to spend New Years Eve with us in whatever country we were at the moment.
She was utterly feminine – always elegant, always on the lookout for one more tasteful thing with which to decorate her apartment, always concerned about her myriad cats and always kind.

She could be furious about bureaucracy or intolerance or anything she saw as a lack of professionalism. But I cannot recall, offhand, her ever saying anything nasty about or doing anything nasty to anyone on a personal level.

When she needed to be, however, she was as tough and dogged as they come.

I remember once, when in anger at something she had written, the Soviets tried to drive her out of the country by portraying her as a drunkard – although she rarely drank and never a lot.

They drugged her in a restaurant and then published in Izvestia, the official government newspaper, her picture lying in a so-called sobering up station with her red hair spread out on the pillow of her bed.

They ploy failed however. Alina’s Russian friends who had seen the photo all called up to say they had never seen her looking so beautiful and Alina stuck to her guns and stuck around for another year and a half much to Soviet dismay…

But my most vivid professional recollection concerning Alina is that during some kind of breaking big event in Moscow, people kept running into UPI office saying, figuratively, that AP had 20 people on the story and Reuters had 30 and Agence France Presse had 50,

I asked simply if Alina was there.

Yes she is, came the answer.

And I remember saying – well, then don’t worry about it. We’ll be covered and okay.

Alina, wherever you are now, I am sure you are on the story and after that, I know also that there is nothing to worry about and everything will be okay.
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