

The Monuments Men



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THE MONUMENTS MEN

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Paperback. Book Condition: New. Not Signed; From 1943 to 1951, 350 or so men and women from thirteen Allied nations served as the men and women of the Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives section (MFAA) of the Allied armed forces: the eyes, ears and hands of the first and most ambitious effort in history to preserve the world's cultural heritage in times of war. They were known simply as Monuments Men. But during the thick of the fighting in Europe, from D-Day to V-E Day, when Germany surrendered, there were only sixty-five Monuments Men in the forward operating area. Sixty-five men to cover thousands of square miles, save hundreds of damaged buildings and find millions of cultural items before the Nazis could destroy them forever. Monuments Men is the story of eight of these men in the forward operating theatre: America's top art conservator; an up-and-coming young museum curator; a sculptor; a straight-arrow architect; a gay New York cultural impresario; and an infantry private with no prior knowledge of or appreciation for art, but first-hand experience as a victim of the Nazi regime. They built their own treasure maps from scraps and hints: the diary of a Louvre curator who secretly tracked Nazi plunder through the Paris rail yards; records recovered from bombed out cathedrals and museums; overheard conversations; a tip from a dentist while getting a root canal. They started off moving in different directions, but ended up heading for the same place at the same time: the Alps near the German-Austrian border in the last two weeks of the war, where the great treasure caches of the Nazis were stored: the artwork of Paris, stolen mostly from Jewish collectors and dealers; masterworks from the museums of Naples and Florence; and the greatest prize of all, Hitler's personal hoard...

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