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AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

NEWS BUREAU | PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
507 East Green Street, Room 345  
Champaign, IL 61820



## NEWS

Released 2/7/14

### ILLINOIS ART HISTORY PROFESSOR WAS ONE OF THE 'MONUMENTS MEN'

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CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — “The Monuments Men” – the movie written by and starring George Clooney and opening today (Feb. 7) – is based on the true story of a platoon of art historians recruited to rescue masterpieces stolen by the Nazis in World War II. One of those Monuments Men was Edwin Carter Rae, who taught art history at the University of Illinois both before and after his service with the U.S. Army.

His photo album and official diary of his tenure as Chief of the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives branch of the U.S. Army of Occupation in Bavaria, Germany, are among the papers recently donated to the university by his widow, Dorothy Rae, and are available online through the University Archives.

Rae first came to Illinois in 1939 to work on his doctoral studies, and taught art history while working on his dissertation, “Gothic Architecture in Ireland.” He joined the military in 1942, and was transferred to the MFAA in Germany following the Allied victory, according to the Monuments Men Foundation website. He attained the rank of captain, and France awarded him its Legion of Honor.

The MFAA was a group of about 350 men and women, colloquially known as “Monuments Men,” charged with protecting and preserving cultural treasures. In the years after the war, they returned more than 5 million artistic items stolen by the Nazis and helped rebuild cultural life in Europe by organizing art exhibitions and concerts.

Rae, stationed in Bavaria, organized one of the first post-war exhibitions in Germany, showcasing many German Renaissance paintings.

He returned to the university in 1947, resumed teaching and was chairman of the art history department from 1954 to 1971. He retired in 1979 and died in 2002.

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“The Monuments Men” [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2177771/?ref=ttmd\\_md\\_nm](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2177771/?ref=ttmd_md_nm)

Edwin Carter Rae <http://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/rae-capt.-edwin-c.>

Photo album

[http://archives.library.illinois.edu/erec/University%20Archives/1203026/box\\_17/album/box\\_17\\_album\\_lowres.pdf](http://archives.library.illinois.edu/erec/University%20Archives/1203026/box_17/album/box_17_album_lowres.pdf)

Official diary

[http://archives.library.illinois.edu/erec/University%20Archives/1203026/box\\_15/diary/120326\\_15\\_diary\\_lowres.pdf](http://archives.library.illinois.edu/erec/University%20Archives/1203026/box_15/diary/120326_15_diary_lowres.pdf)

The papers he left to the university

<http://archives.library.illinois.edu/archon/?p=collections/controlcard&id=10836>

University of Illinois Archives <http://archives.library.illinois.edu/>