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### IN OUR IMAGE - Christopher Award

A \$5,000 award, it was announced February 15th, has been granted Houston Harte, selector, and Guy Rowe, artist, as a result of their work in connection with the Roman Catholic edition of IN OUR IMAGE, an Oxford University Press publication.

The award was made by the Christophers, 18 East 48th Street, New York, N. Y., in recognition of the contribution IN OUR IMAGE has made to the task of bringing Christian principles into American life. Two other books, "Pillar of Fire," and "Miracle at Carville," and two motion pictures were also given similar awards by the Christophers.

A striking new delineation of Old Testament figures is presented by IN OUR IMAGE, a collection of narratives from the Old Testament selected by Houston Harte, Texas newspaper publisher, and illustrated in an entirely new fashion by Guy Rowe, the distinguished Time magazine cover artist.

The book, 9 x 12 inches, contains 32 four-color reproductions of Rowe's paintings. Done in the style of Time covers, the background of each portrait is studded with symbols and devices related to the career of the subject.

IN OUR IMAGE, distinguished both as a religious book and as a work of art, is priced at \$10. Upon its publication in the fall of 1949, in a Protestant edition with text from the King James version, the book created a stir because of its unorthodox treatment of traditional figures and sold widely throughout the nation. Clergymen and art critics joined in the public discussion of the book's unusual characteristics. Roman Catholic demand led to the appearance, a year later, of a Catholic edition with text from the Douay version. This edition has

the imprimatur of the Most Rev. Laurence J. FitzSimon, Bishop of Amarillo, who has also written a special Preface to the edition.

The idea for IN OUR IMAGE occurred to Houston Harte as he tried to reconcile the fact that although the Holy Bible was more widely owned than any other book, it was not widely read.

Both adults and young people, he felt, looked upon the ancient Biblical characters with either awe or a tinge of fear. Mr. Harte traced this reaction back to the manner in which the historical figures had been pictured - unworldly, unreal, unappealing.

He hit upon the idea for IN OUR IMAGE: a presentation of Old Testament characters as the kind of human beings they doubtless were in real life, subject to physical frailties, some pathetic and appealing in their weakness, others endowed with beauty and quiet dignity, all very much like people we meet today. The key to each character lay in the words of the Bible itself, Harte concluded, and the need was for an artist who could live with the words of the Book until they had become sufficiently real for him to translate their meaning on canvas.

Guy Rowe, the Time cover artist, agreed in 1945 to take on this unusual commission.

Rowe, from his boyhood in Salt Lake City, at the turn of the century, had been forced to struggle for a livelihood. His formal schooling was limited; he worked in mines, and as a cowhand, a mechanic, an acrobat and a lumberjack. But always he aspired to be an artist.

In 1913 he was able to attend night classes at the Detroit School of Fine Arts and for six years he studied under John P. Wicker. Next came employment as a commercial artist by an advertising agency, but always his major interest was portraiture. Gradually he reached a position in which he could be selective about his commissions but the restlessness that had been manifest in his early roving days became a characteristic of his maturity.

He developed variations of two ancient methods of painting, one involving the use of grease as a base and the other using wax. The first was devised by the cave dwellers in connection with the animal paintings which decorated their homes; it is believed that the fat of the very animal depicted was often used in the creation of the wall picture. Wax was used by the Egyptians and Greeks in portraits of the deceased which were painted on coffin lids to identify the remains for posterity.

Rowe combined both media. He modernized the old processes by the introduction of acetate sheets (called protectoid) as the base to which he applied his grease-wax medium. Actually he paints on the reverse side of the protectoid. From the standpoint of appearance, the process gives a translucent and intense color quality which is peculiar to the technique. This quality is one of the striking features of the Rowe paintings.

When queried Rowe confessed to unfamiliarity with the Good Book. However, he had a vivid memory of his early childhood when his father used to walk about the house reading aloud from the Bible to him and his mother. He remembered it as an exciting experience, but in the crowded intervening years he had given little time to the Scriptures. Now the prospect of exploring the Biblical text for character clues intrigued him.

Before making a single brush stroke, he spent months reading and re-reading the Old Testament. Then he began a quiet search for people in real life who seemed to be the physical reincarnation of the Biblical characters. These he found among his own friends, on trains and planes and in other public places, in great world figures of today, even in his own family. His own son and daughter-in-law posed for his painting of Adam and Eve. But in all other instances no living people sat for him. His models were images created in his mind by the words of the Bible and the people he saw around him.

In a side-street cafeteria in New York, he encountered a man who

reminded him of Elijah. Returning at noon the next day he found the same man again, and for three weeks continued to visit the place, studying every line and plane in his subject's face. Never once did they speak to each other but doubtless his unwitting model will some day discover his portrait between the covers of IN OUR IMAGE.

Rowe's paintings are distinguished by his attention to detail. He placed a mirror next to his easel and, where a problem arose as to just how a shadow would fall, he used his own reflection as a guide. One day after several paintings were well on toward completion, he was started to discover that his own nose was beginning to appear frequently. It was necessary then to restudy the entire group and to alter the proboscises in instances where he had been carried away by the reflection in his mirror.

In the course of preparing family meals, the artist's wife set aside animal fats, an important ingredient in her husband's painting technique, which is said to resemble that used in Egyptian encaustic painting. She also did a vast amount of research on background, clothing, and implements, and made excursions to the Botanical Gardens, the zoo, and the library to insure historical accuracy in her husband's highly detailed paintings. Paying warm tribute to her assistance, Rowe says it would have been impossible by himself to have done this kind of research in addition to his intensive study of the Bible and of contemporary people.

To assist the reader, the stories of IN OUR IMAGE are headed by their familiar names rather than the location of the Books from which they are taken. Jephthah, for example, is a famous Biblical name but only the Bible student knows that his story of conquest and tragedy is found in the Book of Judges.

Houston Harte, who served for twelve years as vice president or director of the Associated Press, is publisher and owner of the San Angelo Evening Standard and Standard-Times.

The Foreword to the book is by Kent Cooper, executive director of the Associated Press and an old friend of Houston Harte's. This appears in both editions. The Catholic edition has the imprimatur of the Bishop of Amarillo, as well as a special Preface by the bishop.

The Rowe paintings, which in the original measure about 15" x 21", have been reduced in the two editions of the book to bleed from pages that are 9" x 12". Copy has been set in 14-point Monotype Times New Roman #327, with 4-point leading. Titles are set in Perpetua Titling. Since the pictures bleed, captions giving the title and artist's data are on the text pages facing the illustrations.

Incidentally, in order to reproduce the artist's comments as accurately as possible, in the picture captions, Oxford University Press made an all day recording of an informal discussion with him in one of its many pre-publication conferences.

Plates for the book were made in England, and the book itself was designed by John Begg. Text printing was done by Berwick & Smith of Norwood, Mass. Press work on the illustrations and jacket was handled by John P. Smith Co., Inc., of Rochester, N. Y.

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