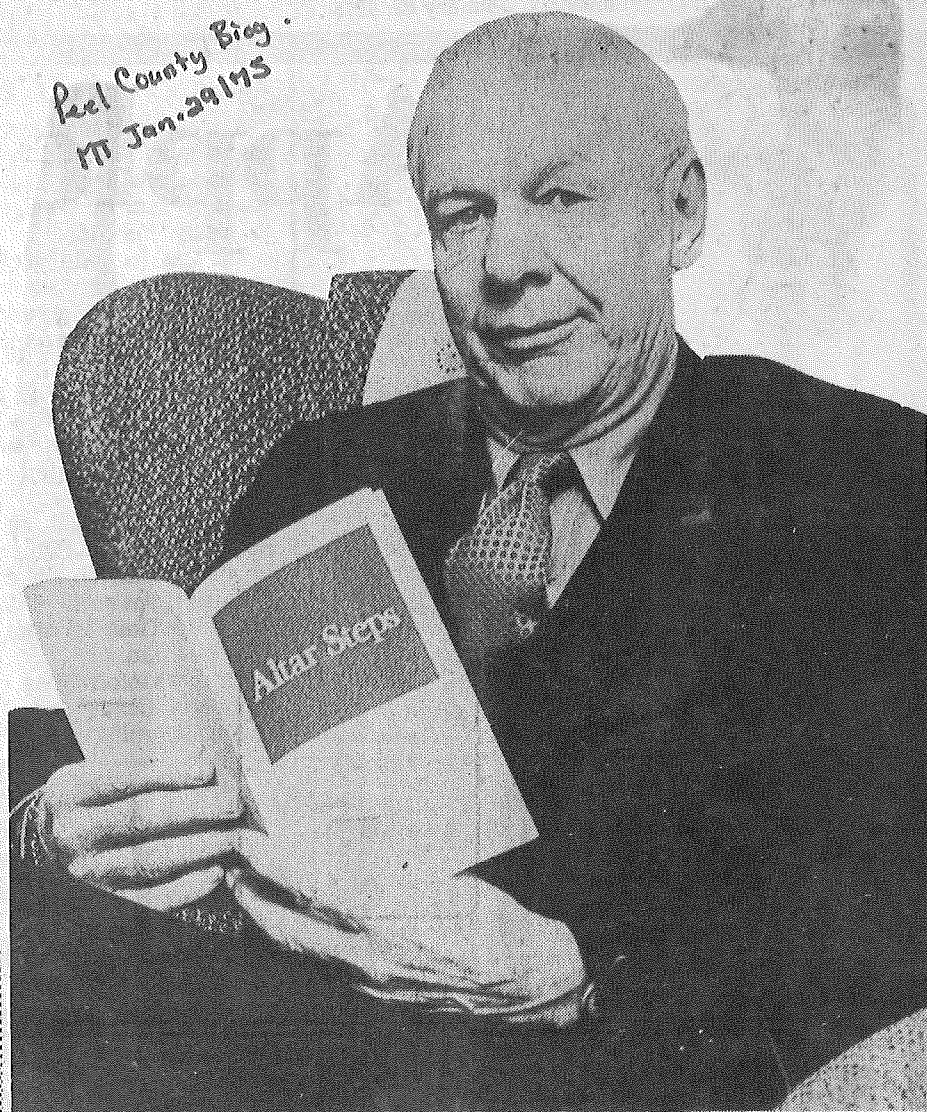


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Altar Steps, a book of prayers and meditations, was written recently by Rev. Earl Eddy, retired minister of Christ United Church. There were 600 copies published. Times photo by Stan Carmichael.

# 'Here is myself'

By SANDY STOUTH

'Here is my book. Nay, more than that . . . here is myself.'

So reads the preface of Altar Steps, a book of prayers and meditations written by a local retired minister, Rev. Earl Eddy.

"I didn't really intend to write a book," he says. However, prompted by congregation members of

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Christ United Church — Patti Hutchison, Penny Ecclestone, Jackie Fraser and his daughter Helen Oughtred — Rev. Eddy, 72, began working on the book about a year ago.

"I had been leading prayer for five years at the church," and these people wanted a collection of those prayers. I didn't think anyone would read it."

Fifty copies of the 600 published, are left.

Gordon Croft, a member of the Clarkson church and owner of Croft Printers in Toronto, printed the book at cost price.

"We're hoping to raise \$700 to \$800 from the books, but I'm not making any money out of it. The proceeds will go toward a local charitable cause."

Although some persons have suggested a second edition be printed, Rev. Eddy wants to await response to advertisements on the book in the Hamilton Conference News and the United Church Bulletin.

Born in August, 1902 in the village of Scotland, Ont. (near Brantford) Rev. Eddy has worked 42 years in the ministry.

"I retired five and a half years ago. I was only retired two months when Rev. (Arthur) Morgan (of Christ United Church) told me to get to work," he says.

Rev. Eddy works about four or five mornings in his church office each week, and makes regular visits to hospitals and nursing homes in the area. Last year he made 1,123 visits.

He was called to the ministry while still in high school in Brantford, and entered McGill University, Montreal, in the fall of 1920. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1925.

He also earned an "ad eundem" degree in philosophy from the University of Alberta in 1927. After ordination that year, he spent seven more years.

"I was to stay in the west for two years, but instead I stayed 10 years. For the first two years, I went by horseback visiting the homesteads. If I had a dollar for every time I fell off a horse, I'd be rich."

He was then called to a little church in Scotland. While serving there, he commuted to McMaster University, where he received his Bachelor of Divinity in church history. His thesis was Worship in the Early Church.

After a ministry in Hagersville, he went to St. John's in Oakville in 1942. He later received a Doctorate of Theology in church history. His thesis was The Beginnings of Congregationalism in the Early Canadas.

"My whole life has been given to the study of history. And I think my love of English is what made my prayers different."

Rev. Eddy also served at Central Church, Weston for eight years, St. Luke's in Hespeler and St. Paul's in Windsor.

"We sold most of the copies within the church, but since I've also served at other churches, those who remember me have also bought books."

A regular contributor to the Canadian National Dictionary of Biography, Rev. Eddy was also moderator of the CBL radio program Morning Devotions in the late 1940s to early 1950s.

Last year he took a course in English at Sheridan College.

He and his wife of 50 years, Ethel, live on Bramblewood Dr.

"I'm a very ordinary person," he says. "I'm just glad to leave something behind."