

Kenneth B. Hopkins: Lifesaver



Ken Hopkins' 1912 lifesaving medal

In 1912, Kenneth B. Hopkins of Cranford was awarded a Gold medal for lifesaving by the National Council of Boy Scouts of America. He had rescued a six-year old boy who had fallen through the ice on the Rahway River.

Unfortunately, neither the BSA headquarters nor the Scout troop had a record of the award, and the local newspaper does not seem to have carried the story, so even the name of the six-year old is unknown. Hopkins, however, had his medal, and an account of the medal's presentation appeared in the December 1912 issue of *Boy's Life* magazine.

Interestingly, in March 1911 Hopkins and a young friend narrowly escaped drowning when their canoe plunged over Sperry dam and overturned. They were rescued "after considerable difficulty" by town policemen.

Kenneth was the first of several Cranford Scouts to received life saving awards from the BSA. The list includes William Maher, Thomas Carroll, Winchester Britton, and Donald Robinson.