

A HERO



H. Ricketts

SOON after the Boy Scout movement was started in Bulawayo, about 1911, by the Rev. T. O. Beattie, with Milton lads forming the majority of those enrolled, there occurred an incident which resulted in the award of a life-saving medal being made by Lord Gladstone as Chief Scout of South Africa.

The Scout who received the medal was Harold Ricketts, and he was the first Milton boy to be decorated for valour.

The presentation was made by Sir Lewis Michell.

The incident happened during the Christmas holidays (1911-12), when Harold, his mother and stepfather (Mr. Powell) were in a hut that was struck by lightning.

All three were knocked unconscious. Harold recovered first, to find the hut in flames.

He dragged Mr. Powell out and returned for his mother, but was not strong enough to pull her out.

He rushed for a bucket of

water and dashed it over her, then "with what must have been an almost superhuman effort, managed to drag her out, then went for help".

Mrs. Powell died from shock, but Mr. Powell, who was headmaster of Selukwe Public School, recovered.

Harold himself, a Beit Scholar, was killed in France in 1916 while serving as a 2nd lieutenant with the machine guns — Royal West Surreys.