

Take a moment with me to look around . Look at the beautiful blue sky, the same sky the citizens of Old Rippey looked at. See the leaves that are changing color, in the same way they did when there were citizens living just down the road. The grass is still green and needs to be mowed once in a while. Notice the headstones inside the fence. Each one represents a life, each life had a story. Some of those stories were short, very short. Others were good long lives. Some of those headstones reveal a little of someone's story. One headstone speaks of an Englishman that was born in the late 1700's but is buried here. Others say merely daughter or son, no name, just daughter or son, buried beside a parent. As I have cared for the cemetery over the last 14 years, I have often wondered what some of these stories might be. Never once has anyone spoken to me, to tell me their story.

Today, we dedicate this monument to the glory of the Schoolboy Soldiers of Rippey. In this way we memorialize and remember these brave individuals. Their story has been told and is etched into the sides of the monolith.

So on behalf of the the Washington Township Trustees, I want to say thank you to all who had a

part in making this happen. A special thank you to Chuck Offenberger who discovered this amazing story, presented it to Mrs. Boyd's class, inspiring them to dig deeper and take on the research that made this project come alive. They not only studied the event, they researched the individuals, the uniforms of the soldiers, the weapons and much more. They even took on the identity of the soldiers for the Memorial Day presentation and many are here today. Thank you for your dedication.

I also want to thank the Jefferson Monument Works for their part in getting the monolith ordered and delivered. They graciously donated the bench which has been placed near the monument so visitors have a place to rest and ponder this part of Greene County history.

I know that I cannot list all the people who had a part in this, so I will merely offer a blanket thank you to all who had a hand in it..