

## Captain John Ryan Memorial Park

Located to the left of the Newton Police Headquarters in West Newton on the corner of Washington Street and Cherry Street, the park was dedicated in 1993. Ryan was 31 when he joined the police force after 15 years of distinguished military service. This park was dedicated to him in 1993.

Engraved on a stone in the park is the following: “A kind and decent man of courage whose life exemplified service to family and country”



**Captain John Ryan**

John Ryan was born in West Newton, August 25, 1845. Although John's father, the first Irishman to live in Newton, wanted John to follow in his footsteps as a carpenter, John heeded the "call to arms," and at the age of 16 joined the Frontier Army in the newly organized 28th Massachusetts Irish Brigade. His military record reads like a what's what of American combat experience: Battle of Second Bull Run, 1862; Battle of Antietam, 1862; the Siege of Petersburg, 1864; the Battle of Washita, 1868; the Yellowstone Campaign, 1873; the Black Hills Expedition, 1874; and finally the Battle of the Little Big Horn, 1876.

Among the 7th Cavalrymen fighting at the Little Big Horn, Ryan stands out as the sole member who also took part in so many other classic engagements, campaigns or expeditions. His only rival for such renown would have been George Armstrong Custer himself, who, ironically, he located and buried after the Battle of the Little Big Horn June 25, 1876. Indeed, between his Civil War and "Indian War" experiences, Ryan took part in more than 40 engagements and was wounded many times.

After surviving the perils of so much combat, Ryan moved on to carve out a fascinating career as a high-ranking officer in the Newton Police Department. On January 21, 1878, Ryan was appointed as patrol officer. He would retire 35 years later with the rank of Captain of Police. John retired on December 31, 1913 with wide acclaim as a popular and highly-respected member of the Newton Police Force.

John Ryan died in his hometown of West Newton on October 14, 1926.

[Information in the biography comes from "The Past Times" and "The History of the Newton Police Force"]



COMPANY C  
28<sup>TH</sup> REGT.  
MASS. VOLUNTEERS



MEACHER'S IRISH BRIGADE  
1<sup>ST</sup> DIVISION 2<sup>ND</sup> CORPS

CAPTAIN



NEWTON POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

COMPANY M  
M



7<sup>TH</sup> U.S. CAVALRY  
CUSTER'S COMMAND

# CAPTAIN JOHN RYAN MEMORIAL PARK

BORN IN WEST NEWTON, AUGUST 25, 1845  
DIED IN WEST NEWTON, OCTOBER 14, 1926

CO. C, 28TH REGT. MASS. VOLS., 1861-1864  
WOUNDED FIVE TIMES WHILE A MEMBER OF GEN. T. F. MEACHER'S  
IRISH BRIGADE, 1<sup>ST</sup> DIVISION, 2<sup>ND</sup> CORPS  
CO. K, 61<sup>ST</sup> REGT. MASS. VOLS., 1865  
2<sup>ND</sup> BRIGADE, 2<sup>ND</sup> DIVISION, 5<sup>TH</sup> CORPS  
CO. M, 7<sup>TH</sup> U.S. CAVALRY, 1866-1876

### U.S. ARMY

CORP., NOV. 23, 1866  
SERGT., NOV. 27, 1868  
1<sup>ST</sup> SERGT., OCT. 10, 1869-DEC. 21, 1876

### NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

PATROLMAN, JAN. 21, 1878  
SERGT., JUNE 22, 1891  
LIEUT., JAN. 12, 1898  
CAPT., MAR. 16, 1903-1913

A KIND AND DECENT MAN OF COURAGE  
WHOSE LIFE EXEMPLIFIED SERVICE TO  
FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND COUNTRY.

DEDICATED OCTOBER 3, 1993

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GRANDCHILD OF CAPTAIN RYAN