



JAMES SHANAHAN.

The subject of this sketch was born on the 6th of February, 1829, in Ireland. When he was eight years of age, his parents emigrated to America and settled at Onondaga Hill, Onondaga county, N. Y. In 1844 they emigrated to Michigan and settled in the vicinity of Ann Arbor. Young Shanahan remained on the farm for two years, when he started to carve out his career. He left home with a few shillings in his pocket, and began work in learning the trade of a stone cutter. This completed, he assisted his oldest brother, who was an extensive contractor, in the building of lock 50 on the Erie Canal and locks 9 and 10 on the Oswego Canal. After the completion of this work, he went to Lanesborough and was employed in the construction of the Sterucco viaduct on the Erie Railroad. After this, he formed a co-partnership with his brother and two others, and built the masonry of the first sixteen miles of the Central Railroad between Syracuse and Rochester. This was completed in 1852. In the following year, he and his brother built the masonry on the Oswego Railroad. In 1854 he was engaged in building locks on the Sault St. Marie Canal. In the following year he came to Tribes Hill, N. Y., and assisted in the construction of the combined locks at Waterford. In 1859 he was selected by the Dorchester Freestone Company to examine their quarry property in New Brunswick, with a view of reporting its resources. Under his suggestion a new quarry was opened in the following year, the company was reorganized, and it was decided to give full charge to Mr. Shanahan. The result was highly satisfactory, for during that year fifty-four hundred tons of stone were shipped from the quarries, some of which went into the famous dry goods store of H. B. Claflin, in New York city. The net profit to the company that year was \$8,000, this being the first year that the company did not assess itself to pay deficiencies. In 1861 Mr. Shanahan was compelled to remain at home, and the deficiency to the company was upwards of \$6,000. His return was demanded, and in 1862-3 he had charge, and came away only when 37 per cent discount for money compelled the stoppage of the work.



MRS. JAMES SHANAHAN.

In 1864-5-6 he was engaged in the construction of the New York Central elevator and the first, or, as it is now called, "the old bridge" across the Hudson at Albany. After the completion of these he went to work on the Cohoes dam, a structure 1,400 feet long, which he completed in one season.

In 1868-9-70 Mr. Shanahan was superintendent of Section No. 3 of the Erie Canal. In the fall of 1868 he was the Democratic nominee for member of Assembly for Montgomery county, and was beaten by 164 majority for his competitor. The following year he was renominated and elected by a majority of 612. He served upon the canal committee, the committee on public printing, and the sub-committee of the whole. Serving at a time when corruption in office was the rule, he came out of office with no stain upon a character that has been uniformly good throughout a well-spent life.

In 1870 he obtained the contract for furnishing the stone for the new bridge across the Hudson at Albany, and in eighteen months 17,000 cubic yards of cut stone were furnished from his Tribes Hill quarries. After this work was completed, he set to work on the heavy retaining walls to the west approach of the old bridge at Albany. During the time that the new double tracks for the Central Railroad were being constructed, he built the masonry between Fort Plain and Fink's Bridge, as also that between Schenectady and Albany, including the stone for the Schenectady bridge. During the last few years he has built all the masonry for the eastern division of the Central road.

In February, 1878, he was appointed, without his solicitation, as assistant superintendent of public works, having the charge of the eastern division of the State canals.

In October, 1854, he married the only daughter of James and Ellen Maloy, of Ann Arbor, Michigan. He immediately came to Tribes Hill, where he has since resided. He is the father of eight children, all of whom are living.