

JAMES B. CROSSEN, superintendent of the city water works of The Dalles, Wasco county, was born in County Donegal, Ireland, August 11, 1838, the son of Anthony and Ellen (Baxter) Crossen, natives of Ireland. In 1839 or 1840, the father came to the United States with his family and settled in New York city, where he died in 1897. He was engaged in the furniture business many years. The mother died in Ireland.

Our subject passed through the graded schools of New York, and later was clerk in his father's store until May 20, 1859, when he came west, passing the first four years in California, mining on the south fork of Scott's River, Siskiyou county. For several years he was constable of South Township, and also served as deputy foreign tax collector under M. Sleeper. In February, 1863, he passed through The Dalles en route for Placerville, Idaho. December 7, 1863, he returned to The Dalles where he has since resided. Following a few days' work on the Cascade railroad he was connected with the Umatilla hotel several months, and then engaged in draying, which business he conducted profitably for five years, disposing of the same to Bulger Brothers. In 1876 Mr. Crossen was elected sheriff of Wasco county, on the Democratic ticket, by a majority of one hundred and eight. He was re-elected in 1878 by a majority of three hundred. While he was in office the Klamath Indian outbreak occurred. Mr. Crossen retired from office in 1880, and engaged in the furniture business at The Dalles two years, when he disposed of the same and followed the occupation of an auctioneer. In 1880 he was re-elected sheriff, serving two years, and then he received the appointment of postmaster of The Dalles, by President Cleveland. He served four years, and was elected county clerk, serving two terms. Mr. Crossen was eighteen months in the grocery business, and when he disposed of the same he was appointed superintendent of the city water works which position he still efficiently fills. Our subject has one sister, Delia, widow of John McBride, now living in New York city.

At Callahan ranch, California, February 11, 1863, Mr. Crossen was married to Frances C. Gray, who died at The Dalles in February, 1870. The second marriage of our subject took place at The Dalles, August 21, 1872, when he was united to Laura A. Marlin, born near Astoria, Oregon, the daughter of Henry and Emily (Olney) Marlin, the father a native of Pennsylvania, the mother of Ohio. Henry Marlin was a pioneer of the Pacific coast, coming west in 1845. He was engaged in the lumber business, owning mills at Tongue Point, and several schooners. He died in Seattle about 1889. The mother accompanied her husband west. She is a first cousin of Richard Olney, attorney general under the administration of President Cleveland. She now lives with our subject at the age of eighty years. Mr. and Mrs. Crossen have four children; James A. in California, with the Southern Pacific railroad; Grace, wife of John Dexter, Vallejo, California, an engineer in the United States Navy Yard; G. William, with the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company, residing at The Dalles; and Emily, at home. Fraternally Mr. Crossen is a member of the A.F. & A.M., R.A.M., B.P.O.E., K. of P., A.O.U.W., and O.E.S., his wife and daughter belonging to the latter. Politically he is a Democrat. Ellen Olney Kirk, the celebrated authoress of Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, is Mrs. Crossen's first cousin.