



THE LATE EPHRAIM J. TOTTEN.

EPHRAIM J. TOTTEN was born March 30th, 1806, at the homestead near Bethel Church, Tottenville. During his early life, from 1823 to 1845, he followed the sea, being captain and owner or part owner of various vessels engaged in the coasting trade. In 1850, he took a load of merchandise to the Pacific coast and engaged for some time in mercantile pursuits. Although he met with some reverses in sending his goods on a long and perilous voyage, he did, on the whole, a prosperous business during his short stay in California.

On his return to Staten Island he carried on a mercantile business in Tottenville until 1874, when he retired from business and began the cultivation of his farm, the old homestead property.

Mr. Totten was always known as an energetic, enterprising, public-spirited citizen, and held a number of public offices. He was supervisor in 1846-7 and was a member of the legislature in 1848. He was one of the projectors of the Staten Island railroad and one of the directors.

When he was 40 years of age he became a church member and from that time his life was devoted to church work, and all its interests were his. He filled every office and was recording steward and president of the board of trustees of Bethel M. E. Church for nearly 40 years, holding these offices up to the time of his death in April 1891.

He raised a family of eight children, six of whom are still living. He was born on the place where his father, grandfather and great grandfather lived since the Revolutionary. The old homestead stood in front of the present house. In 1855, he pulled down the old one and erected that which now stands just back of the old site. The old farm occupied nearly the whole village of Tottenville which took its name after him and his brothers.