

#### 4. The Vanderveers, the Dutch Church, and the Break with Great Britain

The associations with the Frelinghuysen and Hardenbergh families also help to shed light on the factors behind the Vanderveer families' pro-Revolutionary leanings during the War of Independence. As followers of Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, John Freilinghuysen and his student, Jacobus Hardenbergh were allied with the Pietist faction within the Dutch Reformed Church. One of the underlying causes of the Leisler Rebellion of 1682 was lingering resentment over the English take over of New Amsterdam. Leisler's anti-Anglo faction was linked with the American Dutch Reformed pietist movement whose members, even after the failure of the rebellion in 1692, continued to harbor grudges against the British government and those "orthodox" Dutch who collaborated with them.

Due to the leadership of Theodorus Frelinghuysen and several other earlier influential Dutch reformed ministers, New Jersey's Dutch population demonstrated a pronounced pietist leaning, which expressed itself in the form of anti-British feelings during the Revolutionary War period. New Jersey's less numerous "orthodox" Dutch were more likely to be sympathetic to British cause. That the Vanderveer family belonged to the Pietist faction is demonstrated circumstantially by their relationship to the Frelinghuysen and Hardenbergh families but also by a 19th-century account by a clearly partisan "orthodox" commentator describing the religious beliefs of Dr. Henry Vanderveer, Elias Vanderveer's son. Henry Vanderveer "acknowledged the Divinity of the Saviour, but seemed to believe in universal salvation. This want of a true religious belief was a sad blot on a otherwise noble character" (Honeyman 1873: 213).

Jacob R. Hardenbergh, a friend of George Washington, was an outspoken patriot and a thorn in the British army's side, so much so that a £100 reward was offered for his capture. His stepson, Frederick Frelinghuysen was also a well-known patriot, serving in the Provincial Congress of New Jersey on the committee of Public Safety and representing New Jersey in the Continental Congress in 1779, 1782 and 1783. Frelinghuysen served as the captain of a Corps of Artillery and a colonel in the Hunterdon County militia. He fought in skirmishes at Springfield and Elizabethtown, at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse and the Battle of Trenton (StanKlos.com 2000, Rutgers University Libraries 2004). It is tradition that during this last battle, it was a shot from Frelinghuysen's pistol that slew the Hessian commander, Colonel Johannes Rahl.

With knowledge of the activities of his friend and brother-in-law, Frederick Frelinghuysen, one should not wonder that Elias Vanderveer would have been detained by British forces nor should it be surprising that the Vanderveer family would have amicably provided accommodations for General Knox during the period of the Pluckemin encampments nor that it would have also provided a burial plot for his infant daughter.