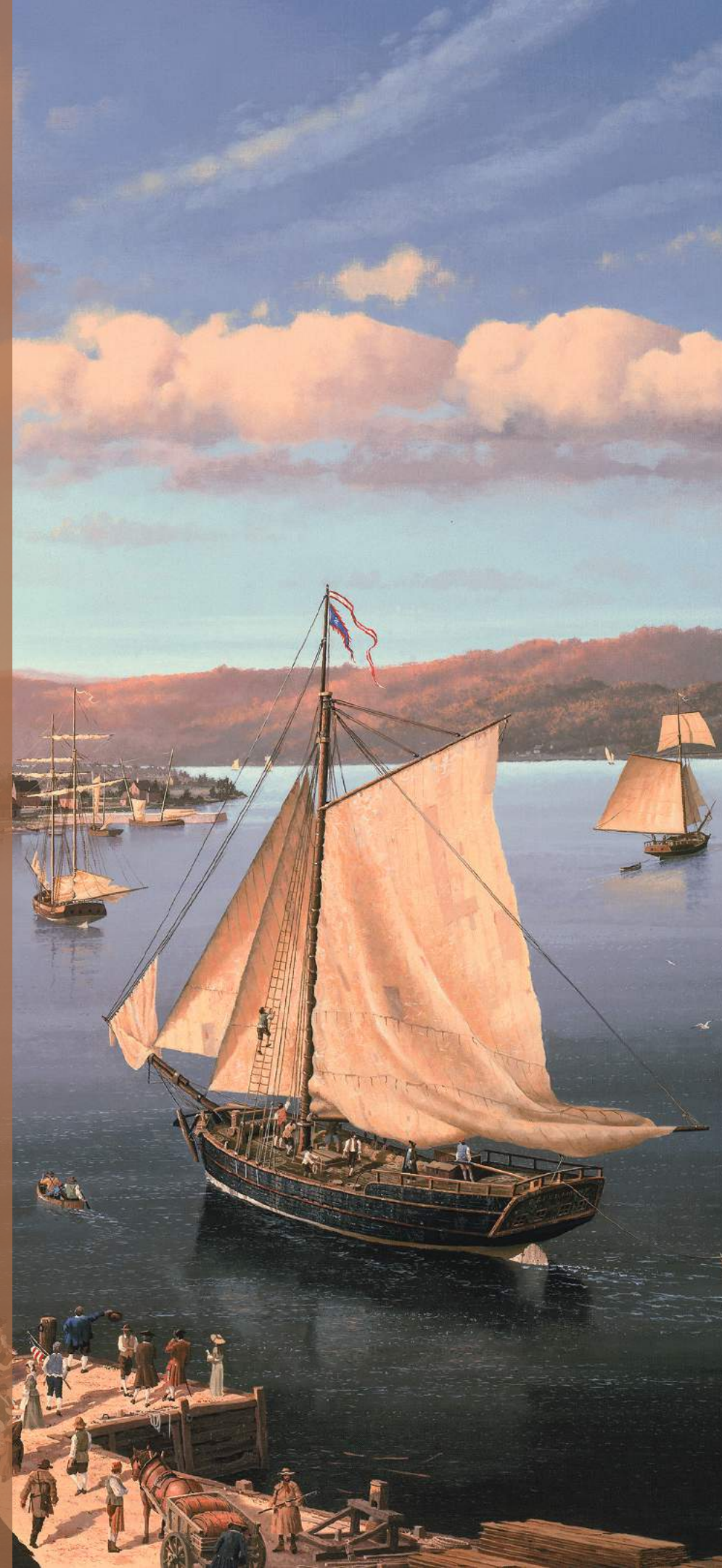




Image: *The Return of the Experiment*, Len Tantillo, 1994, oil on canvas, courtesy of Len Tantillo



Object: *Teacup and Saucer Brought from China on the Experiment*, probably Jingdezhen, China, c. 1786, porcelain, Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of Peter Gansevoort Ten Eyck, x1940.700.562



The Capital Region in 50 Objects

China Trade

City records reveal that Captain Stewart Dean built a home along Albany's waterfront in the year 1775. With the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, he offered his services to the American cause and for three years his ship named the *Beaver* and his crews aided the war effort gathering supplies in battles with British ships as far south as the Caribbean. Towards the end of the war, he was made a member of Albany's Committee of Correspondence and became a leading citizen of the city.

Almost immediately after the United States won its independence from Great Britain, captains like Dean ventured into the lucrative and dangerous world of maritime trade. Dean built a 60-foot-long sloop named the *Experiment* in Albany in 1784, and with the help of merchant investors, he set off to trade with China in 1785 with a tiny crew of seven men and two boys. Dean's investor's loaded the sloop with silver, ginseng, rum, and furs to trade with the Chinese, and equipped it with cannon, pistols, rifles, gunpowder, and ammunition to keep the crew and cargo safe from pirates.

Dean successfully returned to Albany 18 months later in the summer of 1787, a voyage of 14,000 nautical miles. The cargo, including tea and china, made a significant profit for Dean, his partner Teunis Van Vechten of Albany, and the voyage's New York City investors, who soon commissioned Dean for a second voyage.

Dean's cargo from the *Experiment* included this porcelain teacup and saucer. It was part of a larger tea set that its original owners valued as an exotic luxury item used for formal entertaining.

Vocabulary

Cargo – goods carried on a ship

Exotic – from or characteristic of a distant, foreign country

Lucrative – producing a great deal of profit

Luxury – of great comfort, ease, and wealth

Maritime – connected with the sea

Merchant – a person or company involved in trade, especially one dealing with a foreign country

Nautical – a unit used to measure distance at sea; 1 nautical mile equals 1.15 standard miles

Porcelain – a white ceramic used to make dishes, cups, and saucers; also referred to as china

Sloop – a small sailing ship with one to three masts

China Trade

Name _____ Date _____

Directions

Use the depiction of the object, image, and corresponding text to answer the following questions.

1. Name of the objects: _____

2. What material were they made from? _____

3. Where were the objects made? _____

4. Why did Captain Dean want to acquire the objects? _____

5. Name of the image: _____

6. What event does the image depict? _____

7. What body of water is depicted? _____

8. What city is depicted? _____

9. Name two types of trade goods the *Experiment* brought to China:

a. _____ b. _____

10. Name two types of trade goods the *Experiment* brought back from China:

a. _____ b. _____

11. Why were the objects considered valuable luxury items? _____

STEM Interdisciplinary Questions / Web Connections

Science

What is porcelain made from? _____

Mathematics

If the *Experiment* traveled 14,000 nautical miles, how many standard miles did it travel?