Two Albany Merchants

I'm Philip Van Rensselaer, a Hudson River merchant and sloop owner. I live next to the river, in a large mansion called Cherry Hill, just outside the city of Albany. I also have a store in Albany and a warehouse where I store my goods. My wife, Maria (pronounced "Mariah") and I have 13 children.

I have always lived in the Albany area. My Dutch ancestors were some of the first settlers of the Upper Hudson River Valley in the 1600s. My cousin is Stephen Van Rensselaer, the patron. I am not as wealthy as he is, but I am a well-known businessman. I lived from 1747-1798.

I'm Stewart Dean. During the Revolutionary War, I moved from Maryland to Albany. I lived in a house near the river and built many docks for my sloops, and warehouses for my goods. I have 11 children: Two with my first wife who died; and nine with my second wife, Margaret.

I trade on the Hudson River. I also sailed my sloop, the Experiment, to China. In 1787, I became the second American merchant to successfully complete this trading voyage. I went to China several more times. I lived from 1747-1836.

"Return of the Experiment"

Here is a picture of what the Port of Albany might have looked like in 1787. The large sloop is the Experiment, which belonged to Stewart Dean. Philip Van Rensselaer’s sloop looked like that too.

Painting by Len Tantillo