

Characters

JAMES RIVINGTON

A pleasant looking and fit man in his fifties. He always wears a purple coat with breeches and waistcoat that match nothing else. He is constantly in a state of expressive flux.

ROBERT TOWNSEND

A small man of about 25 with a prominent nose, he keeps his hair short, dresses in grey and brown, and speaks quietly. He is affable and easy to know but not at all witty.

JAMES DELANCEY

A striking man in his early forties, authoritative, confident, quick, and guarded, he is nevertheless charming. He dresses in the finest linens, elegant but not ostentatious.

GEORGE MONATGU

A handsome man of 26, very much in command, witty, and self-confident. He is in uniform.

MRS. FRANCES ABINGTON

An actress of about forty, she is exceptionally beautiful, fierce about her convictions, socially flirtatious, and hard-headed. She dresses with taste and simplicity.

Setting

The settings can be represented by a small table and two chairs on a blank stage. They are: the Delancey Farm on a bluff overlooking the East River in New York; a drawing room in the Delancey estate; the commander's quarters on board the *HMS Kingfisher* in the New York Harbor; a London coffee house; and the office above Rivington's Coffee Room on Queen Street, New York. The final scene repeats the location of the first.

Time

The first scene takes place in the summer of 1779. Subsequent scenes begin in the winter of 1775 and trace forward to autumn of 1780.

Note

Records on detail and events for the American Revolution display vast contradictions in date, chronology, personnel, and place. I've combined versions most convenient to the progression of the play.