

SCENE II
(Pantomime)

The light going up on the set immediately in front of the audience reveals Charlotetown at the crossing of the two main roads. Slightly left of center is the log courthouse, with small balcony at the front. The structure sits high upon pillars and beneath the one-story building is a market place. Produce can be seen, and several women, sellers and buyers, are talking animatedly. Immediately at the center is Jack's Tavern, a two-story log building, with dormer windows at the top and a long one-story porch across the front of the first story. At the right of the tavern is another building, a store; farther down is another and beyond it is Joe Nicholson's tavern. Down the street at the extreme right is Queen's Museum. In front of this building boys are playing in the street. The game is the popular "long balls" of that day.

At the left of the courthouse a small board structure, Dr. Ephraim Brevard's office, has his shingle over the door. Seen between it and the courthouse and in the background are the side and front of Colonel Thomas Polk's residence. Other buildings, all small, are at the left of Dr. Brevard's office. In the foreground, right, is the low store building of Duncan Ochiltree. Across from it at the left is another low structure, somewhat similar to Ochiltree's. A hitching rack to which two lean horses are tied stands at the front and slightly back from the door of the Ochiltree store. Another rack is at the left of the courthouse, in the narrow street between that building and Colonel Polk's home.

Several men, two of them in rough dress, including hunting shirts, their hair tied with eel-skins in plaits behind their necks, and coonskin caps, and the others wearing knee breeches and long coats but of a plain and somewhat severe pattern and quality, are standing at the right of the door giving entrance to Jack's Tavern.

As they talk, with evident animation, an old man, an apron about his round middle, comes out through the door, pushing a man who is evidently in the last stages of drunkenness. He shoves the fellow to the edge of the porch, gives him a kick in his rear that sends him reeling to the sidewalk, three

feet below. The drunken man staggers across the narrow roadway, rolls down into the street. The old man, the tavernkeeper, Pat Jack, bends over, whacks his legs resoundingly with the palms of his hands, and guffaws. The drunk staggers to his feet, shakes a trembling fist at the old innkeeper, and then his face rounds into a silly grin. The men on the porch, having turned at the disturbance, are smiling.

Just at this instance a minister comes walking along the street from the left. As the innkeeper spies him, he straightens up quickly, his face suddenly solemn, and bows. The men on the porch tip their hats and bow. The drunk, attempting to straighten his sagging frame, reaches up to tip his hat, realizes he has none. The minister recognizes the salutes, smiles, pauses an instant to speak to the drunk in the road, continues along the sidewalk toward the right.

In that moment two boys on thin-bellied horses come racing from the left and the one nearest the sidewalk reins his horse sharply to the right to avoid the drunk who has started across the road. The drunk, seeing him, turns, tries to clamber up the slight slope to the sidewalk, as the light dies away.

NARRATOR

This was Charlottetown of the seventeen-sixties, a cluster of log houses sitting upon the crest of a little hill, a hamlet in the back country strangely resembling, strangely different from Charlotte of our day. Here lived our pioneer forefathers, some from titled families of England and Scotland and the Continent, some refugees from persecution or debt or prison, bold and hardy folk seeking a new way and a different life, some weak, some courageous, some of moderate wealth, many very poor -- all of them fast being shaped in the fires of a compelling destiny into that new and distinctive world citizen, the American.

Here was the center of a vast region that stretched westward into the dark and lonely reaches of the forests, even to the homes of the proud Cherokees. Into Charlottetown to trade with

men cast in the same mold came sturdy men of the far back country, resolute, fair men, religious men who feared God but no man, men who valued above everything else the individual liberties they had earned and won.

This was the little Charlottetown to which on an August day in 1768 came His Excellency William Tryon, Governor of the Province of North Carolina and Big Wolf of the Cherokees, seeking the aid of the Mecklenburg militia in putting down what he so glibly termed the rebellion of the Regulators in the Alamance region.

(The light goes out on the Narrator and comes up quickly upon the set in front of the audience, revealing the village in the immediate neighborhood of the courthouse.)