

# THE GATHERING STORM

IMAGES OF AMERICA ON THE EVE OF THE CIVIL WAR

## The Peculiar Institution

Slavery arrived in North America along side the Spanish and English colonists of the 17th and 18th centuries, with an estimated 645,000 Africans imported during the more than 250 years the institution was legal. But slavery never existed without controversy. The British colony of Georgia actually banned slavery from 1735 to 1750, although it remained legal in the other 12 colonies. After the American Revolution, northern states one by one passed emancipation laws, and the sectional divide began to open. The number of slaves compared to number of free blacks varied greatly from state to state in the southern states. In 1860, for example, both Virginia and Mississippi had in excess of 400,000 slaves, but the Virginia population also included more than 58,000 free blacks, as opposed to only 773 in Mississippi.



These Africans were illegally smuggled in the United States at Key West, Florida, on the slave ship Wildfire on April 30, 1860, less than a year before the start of the Civil War. This Harper's Weekly engraving was made from a daguerreotype photograph that has been lost. *Library of Congress*



Edward James Roye was born into a prominent African-American family in Ohio in 1815, two years before the American Colonization Society was organized to resettle African-Americans in Liberia. Roye, pictured here in an 1850s daguerreotype, immigrated to Liberia in 1846 and became president in 1870, only to be deposed and brutally murdered in 1871. *Library of Congress*



Massachusetts native William Lloyd Garrison became one of the North's most prominent abolitionists after starting the newspaper *The Liberator* in 1831 and helping found the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. *Library of Congress*



African-American slaves sit next to their cabins on a plantation near Rockville, South Carolina, in this image taken in 1859 or 1860 by Charleston photographers Osborn & Durbec. *Robin Stanford Collection*