

## **RICHARD HENRY ALLEN**

Richard Henry Allen was born in 1807, in Wilkes County, North Carolina. Following a career as a merchant in Yazoo City, Mississippi, in 1840 he moved to New Orleans and became a cotton factor. In 1859, Allen retired to Thibodaux, entered sugar cane planting, and in 1861, purchased Rienzi Plantation at public auction. During the Civil War, Allen's sugar crops were destroyed and the sugar houses wrecked. After the war, Rienzi became a productive plantation once again, and the still lovely home regained its lively atmosphere. A successful and self-made man, Allen was married first to Adelaide Dorsey, and second to Margaret Elizabeth Green. He had no children, and when he died in 1894, his will directed that "the tribunals of Louisiana . . . have nothing to do with my estate unless something arises that cannot be avoided." The will's unclear meaning led to years-long litigation with 14 attorneys to assist and ended with a 61-page judicial decision.