

## Vick and Amelia Richard: A Legacy Built on Forty Acres, Hard Work and Perseverance.

On December 25, 1915, Vick Richard and Amelia Taylor were joined in holy matrimony. They were the parents of seven children and two foster children. They lived in several communities from Natchez to Creston, where they contributed to the community. Amelia, with only a seventh grade education acted as a mid-wife and missionary and Vick with no education worked on farms as a butcher and carpenter.

Even though they loved all the communities they temporarily lived in, they had a desire to own their own land. They wanted a place to call home, where they could raise their own food, but most of all where their children and grandchildren could call their own. It was out of love and respect for their parents that Amelia and Vicks sons, who were away serving in the military, sent their mama money to purchase the land.

With that goal in mind, on June 27, 1944, Amelia purchased 30 acres from Pompey Taylor. Still not satisfied with the acreage Amelia purchased ten additional acres two years later.

This land was cleared with two mules, axes, picks, shovels and the blood and sweat of Vick, Amelia, and their children and foster children. Along with the mules that helped clear the land, the farm housed and fed cattle, hogs, and poultry of every description. A productive farm was created and family and friends from all over the parish were blessed from that productivity.

Being human, Vick and Amelia both had their shortcomings, yet they never let that overshadow their overall mission. After Amelia's death, Vick did not cease living. He kept their lifelong dream for nurturing family, friends, and love of the community by starting the Taylor/Richard Family Reunion in 1976. Along with Vick, his children worked hard to maintain what is now a strong 41-year-old tradition.

Vick and Amelia left behind an enduring legacy built on these 40 acres: the love of family, the love of friends, the love of the community, the love of the land and most of all, the love and faith in God.

In the document commemorating the 26<sup>th</sup> annual Taylor – Richard Family Reunion (Established 1976), themed, "Remembering Our Roots," the following two excerpts were included. They embody the rich family heritage:

Genealogical Research by: Brandon Richard

The patriarch of our branch of the Richard family is Victorin Richard, also known as Vick Sr. He was born to Suzanne Richard in rural Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, and was a Creole of mixed Native American and African descent. Dates vary per record as to his actual birth year, but it most likely falls between 1838 (which is stated on his death certificate) and 1843 (according to various censuses). Information on his father has not yet been uncovered.

Victorin Richard first appears in Natchitoches Parish records in 1875 with his marriage to Keziah Thompson. The 1880 census shows him in the vicinity of the Oakland Plantation in Bermuda. It is believed that he was farming for the Plauché family on Cane River during this time. Further research will hopefully help us to determine the exact plantation from which he came, and this will aid future genealogical study.

Still I Rise by: Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may trod me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?  
Why are you beset with gloom?  
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells  
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?  
Bowed head and lowered eyes?  
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.  
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?  
Don't you take it awful hard  
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines  
Diggin' in my own back yard.

You may shoot me with your words,  
You may cut me with your eyes,  
You may kill me with your hatefulness,  
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?  
Does it come as a surprise  
That I dance like I've got diamonds  
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.