

# HISTORY OF *Orange Mound*



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## ORANGE MOUND

Orange Mound, developed as a Negro subdivision at the turn of the century, was formerly a 5000 acre plantation owned by John George Deaderick. Bounded by the Southern Railway on the north, Airways on the west, Park on the south, and Goodwyn on the east, Memphis' oldest and best known African-American community received its name from the row of mock orange shrubs in the side yard of the Deaderick home.

### Hedge Gave Name to Orange Mound

March 3, 1951 *Commercial Appeal*

**Q – How did Orange Mound get its name?**

**A –** The original orange mound was a big hedge of Osage Orange, along what is now the east side of viaduct over the I.C. "Belt Line" tracks. It was the hedge at the road edge of the side lawn of the fine old Deaderick home. The residence faced South and what is now Carnes was once only the carriage entrance to the historic home.

The rambling two-story house was exceedingly fine residence when it was built in the wilderness between 1825 and 1830. Memphis was nearly five miles away through the woods when it was incorporated in 1826, and there was nothing in the town but two stores, a blacksmith shop, and a tavern. About 500 persons (probably counting some Indians) lived in the village on the bluff.

There was only one way to get to "town." The Pontotoc Trace (now Lamar) was a very old Indian trail between the Chickasaw headquarters in Mississippi and their hunting stand on the River. It ran through the forest a short distance south of the Deaderick place.

John George Deaderick was able to build a fine home. He was a member of the family that once owned the heart of Nashville and gave the State the hill on which the capitol is built. He was under some obligation to build a nice residence because his bride was a Virginia girl whose father objected to the marriage.

There were about 5,000 acres in the Deaderick plantation. The Memphis and Charleston Railroad (now Southern) was built through it. The plantation was still a big farm when the Civil War came, big enough for one of the occupying armies to be encamped on it, with a residence attractive enough in its old age to be taken as headquarters for the general. Later, part of the upper part of the plantation became the Montgomery Park race track (now the Fairgrounds). Much later part of the land was sold to Elzey Meacham, who developed the Negro subdivision, which took its name from the old hedge.

The big row of mock orange shrubbery has been well forgotten, and it took the combined efforts of the researchers of Goodwyn Institute and Cossitt Libraries to find the original Orange Mound.

Size of the original property is apparent from spacing of the streets named by the family. Of course, there is Deadrick, in which the city fathers have lost an "e" from the family name, though they have put it back on some street markers. Mike Deaderick, one of the sons of John George, named Park when he gave the county the right-of-way for a new road. He chose the name because his wife was the former Jane Park. He named another road "David" because his wife's father was David Park, and another Barron because her mother had been a Barron. Spottswood was named for Mike Deaderick's cousin, and Hamilton was chosen because it was a favorite name in the Deaderick family for over 200 years.

Members of the family still live here, and thousands of motorists who use Park Avenue regularly have reason to recall the family every time they steer their automobiles around the little wooded curve in Park. Among the trees are the gravestones of the Deaderick family cemetery.

### Orange Mound Next to Harlem

December 30, 1947 *Memphis Press Scimitar*

Orange Mound here in Memphis is the second largest Negro community in the world, according to Rob Wright, president of the Orange Mound Civic and Welfare Club. Harlem in New York is the largest.

"There are about 8,000 families in Orange Mound," Rob says. Figuring five to a family means 40,000 people."

The community is pretty self-sufficient. It has stores, theaters, a high school (Melrose), a swimming pool, a park.

The Welfare Club distributed baskets to 75 needy families at Christmas. Each contained, among other things, a whole ham! Old friends of some of the needy families no doubt are dropping in to



### The Deaderick Family



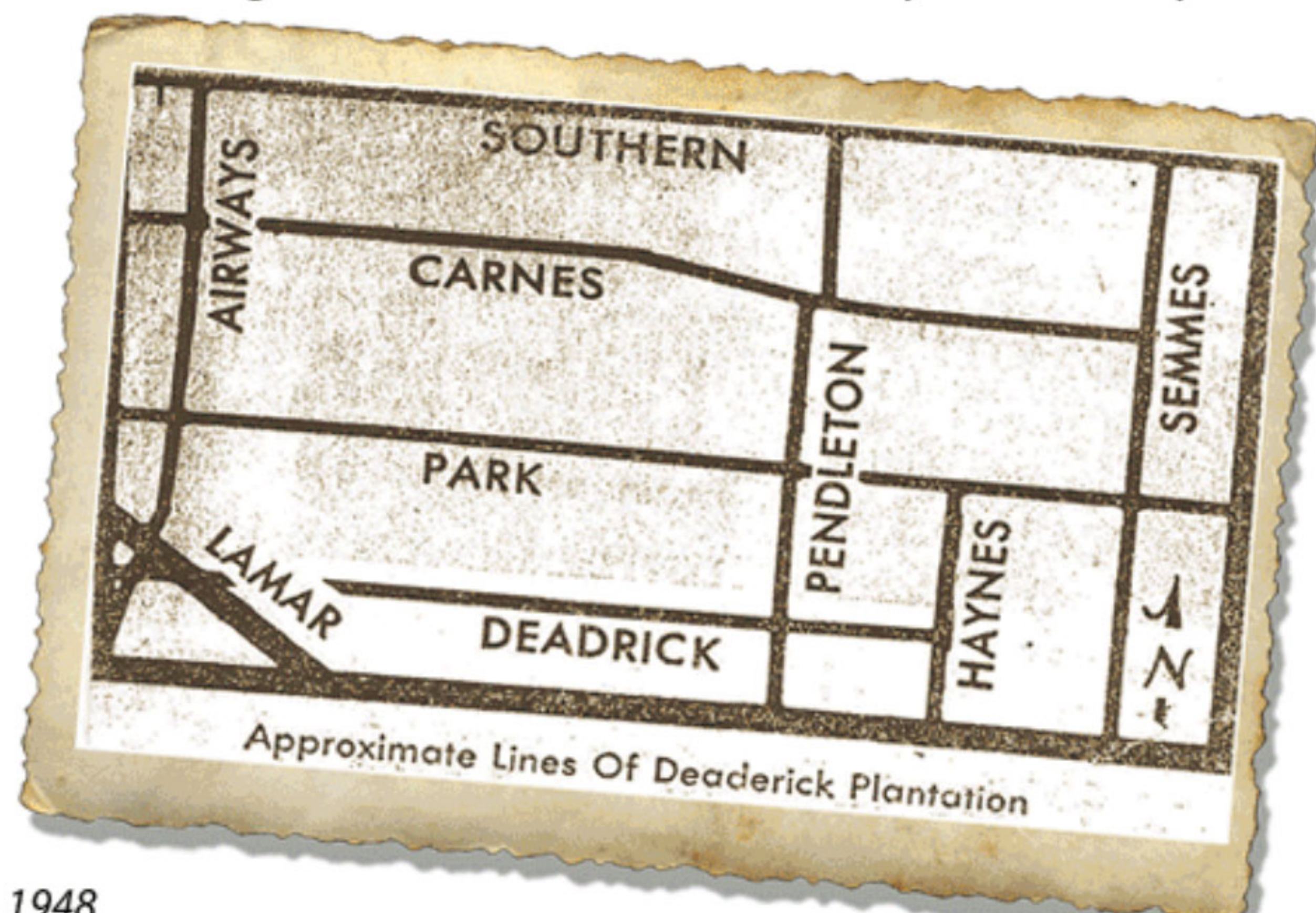
**Barron Deaderick**

John George Deaderick built the original Deaderick home between 1825 and 1830. It was a rambling two-story house facing west on Trezevant approximately at the present intersection of Carnes and Trezevant.

At his death, John George Deaderick left the house and part of the farm to his son William Pitt Deaderick. After the death of her husband, William Pitt Deaderick, Martha Park Deaderick sold part of the land to Elzey Meacham for a subdivision, having required him to promise that it would not be sold to Negroes. In spite of this promise, he did develop a Negro subdivision called Orange Mound, from the large osage orange hedge that was on the east side of W.P. Deaderick's property extending from Spottswood Avenue south to what is now Barron Avenue (May not have been quite that long).

Mike Deaderick, brother of William Pitt Deaderick and father of Mr. John Garland Deaderick (the source of this information) gave the county rights of way through his property as they opened up streets and named the streets after members of his family as follows:

- **Park** – named for his wife
- **David** – named for his wife's father David Park
- **Barron** – named for his wife's mother Jane Rhodes Barron
- **Spottswood** – named for a cousin
- **Speed** (now named Semmes) – named for sister's husband
- **Hamilton** – a given name in the Deaderick family for over 200 years



July 8, 1948  
From the Memphis Room  
File on Orange Mound