



# Haverford Township Historical Society



## THOMAS WEIDEMANN (1882-1960)

Compiled by Richard D. Kerr

*[The following is excerpted from Who's Who of Delaware County 1926, John T. Donahue, editor, published by Press of Chester Times in 1926.]*

**THOMAS WEIDEMANN**, buyer for the Atlantic Refining Co., and who serves as President of the Haverford Township Board of Commissioners, resides in Brookline, at 209 Kathmere Road. A member of the Masonic fraternity, St. Alban's Lodge, 529; Philadelphia Consistory and of Lu Lu Temple, of the Mystic Shrine. Mr. Weidemann was born in 1882, on November 19th, the son of Daniel and Margaret Harrison Weidemann. His wife is Nellie McCuen Weidemann, and the children, Charles, Margaret and Marion, the girls being twins. He is a member of the Brookline Square Club, the Craftsman's Club of Delaware County and the Girard Craftsman's Club. A member of the Presbyterian Church, and politically a rock-ribbed Republican. While he is an ardent baseball fan, polo is his outstanding hobby.



[The following is from Pennsylvania House of Representatives "Biographies" at <http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/BiosHistory/MemBio.cfm?ID=2383&body=H>]

**WEIDEMANN, Thomas**, a Representative from Delaware County; born in the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pa., November 19, 1882; attended, Philadelphia public schools; chief oil buyer, Atlantic Refining Company; elected commissioner and president, Haverford Township; elected as a Republican to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for the 1929 term and reelected to serve 4 consecutive terms thereafter; appointed, Local Government Commission (1935-1940); not a candidate for reelection to the House for the 1939 term; elected, treasurer and tax collector, Haverford Township (1938-1954); died, October 24, 1960 in Yeadon, Delaware County, Pennsylvania; interred, Arlington Cemetery, Drexel Hill, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

[The following is excerpted from Delaware County *Daily Times*, Chester, Pa., Tuesday, October 25, 1960]

### **Thomas Weidemann, 78, Dies in Yeadon**

YEADON - Thomas Weidemann, for 30 years political boss of Haverford Township and once a power in county Republican politics, died Monday in the Vart-Hahn Nursing Home. He was 78. He had retired from politics four years ago, moving out of the township whose political direction came from him for three decades. At the time of his death, his home was in Ocean City, N.J. He was Haverford Township treasurer and tax collector from 1938 to 1954 and was a representative in the state legislature from 1928 to 1938. From the age of 12 until 1948, he was employed by the Atlantic Refining Co. When he retired he was the company's chief buyer. He entered politics as a young man and served on the Board of Township Commissioners. On the county level he was a member of the GOP Board of Supervisors, the so-called "War Board" headed by John J. McClure. He was a Mason, former president of the Haverford Township Free Library, a member of the Union League, Brookline Civic Association and Brookline Fire Co. He is survived by his wife Nellie McCuen Weidemann; a son, Charles; two daughters, Mrs. Murray Hitchcock and Mrs. George Howell, and four grandchildren. Services will be 11 a.m. Thursday from the Toppitzer funeral home, Garrett Road and Lansdowne Ave., Drexel Hill. Friends may call there Wednesday evening. Burial will be in Arlington Cemetery, Drexel Hill.

[The following is excerpted from *Ruling Suburbia: John J. McClure and the Republican Machine in Delaware County, Pennsylvania*, by John Morrison McLarnon, University of Delaware Press, Newark, Del. and Associated University Presses, London, England, 2003.]

"McClure . . . had spent years perfecting his Chester organization and believed that his was the only way to govern efficiently. It was also the only way to insure continued success. In order to save the citizenry from anarchy, McClure created the Delaware County Republican Board of Supervisors. He invited the three most powerful local bosses to join him on the Board. James Wolfenden, scion of an old textile manufacturing family, represented Upper Darby, Springfield, the Lansdownes, and Yeadon. William Purdy, a business associate of McClure, oversaw the Chester Pike corridor. Thomas Weidemann, a gentleman farmer from Haverford, represented his home township, Radnor, and the outlying districts. Theoretically the four supervisors were equals, each responsible for his section of the county. There was never any doubt, however, that McClure was first among equals. In time, the Board was informally renamed the War Board. McClure never liked the name. But it was his creation and, ultimately, the most enduring expression of his political genius. Its task, in 1926, was to eliminate all vestiges of Republican resistance in the county and bring the upstart townships to the north in line."

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