THREE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ABOUT THE MOORE’S LANE/BOULDEN BLVD. POTTER’S FIELDS

#1 *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, June 18, 1954:25

This one is about the Moore’s Lane Potter’s Field

**Headline: “Levy Court is Reimbursed by Estate for Burial Fee”**

“The Levy Court Commissioners had a rare experience yesterday when they received a check for $75 representing reimbursement for the burial of James F. Tribbett.

When Mr. Tribbett died sometime ago there appeared to be no personal or estate funds to pay his burial expenses. Under the circumstances the Levy Court pays the bill and nothing more is heard about it.

But it turned out that Mr. Tribbett had funds and a check from Samuel Handloff, an attorney representing the estate, was received and, by resolution, deposited in the general fund.

Mr. Handloff and Chief Deputy Coroner Herbert M. Harrington filled in some of the background last night.

Although Mr. Tribbett, who died last May, was buried in Potter’s Field – officially designated the New Castle County Cemetery — near Farnhurst, Mr. Handloff at the time of the man’s death was handling the foreclosure of a property belonging to him.

The property changed hands at a sheriff’s sale and there was a surplus for the estate after the mortgage claim had been met. It was from this surplus that they attorney sent the fee to the Levy Court.

Mr. Harrington agreed that this was a rare case. Although there is a feeling that a family should reimburse the county from insurance or other funds that might become available, there is no law that requires it.

Those buried in Potter’s Field – there have been about 50 so far this year, Mr. Harrington said – are the unclaimed, the indigent and those whose families cannot meet the expense of burial.

The funds for the burial come from the state, with the amount allocated for each varying with the three counties. The fee in New Castle County is $75.

There is no requirement for a religious service but they are held at the request of the family.

#2 The Evening Journal, Wilmington, Del. 7-24-1962:1

This one is about the Moore’s Lane Potter’s Field

**Headline: “Levy Court Agrees to Take Over Cemetery”**

The Levy Court today agreed to take over responsibility for the maintenance of the New Castle County cemetery and institute a broad reform.

It instructed its chief engineer, John Taylor, to investigate the possibility of regrading the seven acres off Moore’s Lane, near Castle Hills, and to see about reburying those already buried there. Taylor was also told to investigate the possibility of burying the indigent dead someplace else.

Harry H. Lambert, president of the court said that “dollar-wise it’s already the Levy Court’s problem, even though the responsibility seems to have been the coroner’s. The Levy Court might just as well consider taking it on as a permanent job, rather than let it change hands every two years with the change in the coroner.”

County Comptroller William Smith, a former coroner, was at the meeting and said the State Welfare Home was responsible for the cemetery until 1956. The home still pays the coroner $75 per burial and is reimbursed by the Levy Court. Since 1956 responsibility has been lacking, he said, with the coroner charged only with seeing that the dead were buried. The land is overgrown with weeds and people are buried in shallow unmarked graves, with no record kept of who is buried where.

Taylor was instructed by the court to see that all graves are of the legal six-foot depth and that a procedure be set up to assure adequate records of graves.

Commissioner Harry Robert asked about the possibility of using cremation, but Taylor, Lambert and Commissioner Joseph Dayton said this was not a wise course because of possible legal objections.

#3 *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, Friday June 11, 1965

This one is about the Boulden Blvd. Potter’s Field

**Headline: “New Potter’s Field Has Order, Dignity”**

By Frances McCusick

Photo through chain link fence of single marker in center of Boulden Blvd. Potter’s Field. Caption: “Well-kept look – The new Potter’s Field has an appearance strikingly different from the ill-kept previous one. The single marker is a collective memorial.”

New Castle County’s new Potter’s Field, the graveyard for unclaimed and sometimes unidentified bodies is a far cry from the former one.

The new cemetery covers half of a seven-acre tract bought by the county more than 30 years ago. It is just east of the DuPont Highway and south of the approach to the Delaware Memorial Bridge.

Unlike the old Potter’s Field, which once was described by former New Castle Levy Court Commissioner Harry H. Lambert as a “horrible weed-grown plot strewn with exposed bones,” the new graveyard has been smoothed down, seeded for grass, and fenced.

It was planned by the county engineer’s office to have order and dignity – something which the old cemetery could not claim.

Twelve sections each contain nearly 500 graves. Some are unmarked. Some have remains from the old cemetery. The sections for new burials have individuals marked graves. A central marker is in the form of a cross.

The gravedigger is responsible for keeping the cemetery neat, clean, cutting the grass, and giving it “perpetual care.”

The new Potter’s Field came into being when C.J. Langenfelder and Son, Inc., a construction company, purchased the rights to the old field field (sic) from the county for $40,000 in order to use land on the graveyard on Moore’s Lane near Castle Hills as fill on the Delaware turnpike.

William J. Doherty, of the Doherty Brothers Funeral Home and former coroner was awarded the contract for removing about 3,000 graves by Langenfelder. That project was completed in August 1963.

According to the combined estimates of Doherty and Robert C. Hutchinson, present coroner, about 120 new graves have been dug in the cemetery since then.

The coroner is paid $75 for burial of each body in Potter’s Field, which includes embalming, a wooden casket, marker and fees paid to the gravedigger.

Many of the graves contain bodies of stillborn infants, according to Hutchinson. They were sent by Levy Court to Potter’s Field because their mothers were welfare patients who had no money.

Other graves are those of men and women who have died on the street, sometimes without identification, with no form of support, or those who have died penniless or who were charity cases without relatives or friends.