

## **EOFF & CHAPLINE CEMETERY (IES)**

[Contributed by Linda Fluharty.]

**June 22, 1880 - *The Wheeling Register***

### **SKULL AND CROSSBONES.**

#### **Displacement of Skeletons from the Fifth Ward Cemetery.**

If Wheeling were peopled by Chinese, instead of civilized Americans, there would have been a profound sensation in the Fifth ward for the past few days, over a rude disturbing of the bones of our ancestors. As it was there was a curious and not very attractive spectacle on exhibition for some time. Persons passing at the head of Twenty-third street might have noticed bones scattered about in the gutter. An anatomist would have pronounced them human, and a further inspection would have discovered the ends of several coffins protruding from the hillside.

It will be remembered by old residents of that part of the city that the space at the head of Twenty-third street was devoted to burial purposes. The northern portion was used generally, and at the southern end was an exclusive lot known as the Eoff burial ground. These cemeteries were used until Greenwood was established, when most of the remains were moved there. After this the **two cemeteries** were neglected, and by the general public almost forgotten. The northern one was rapidly overgrown with a thick growth of alder bushes and the shining marble stones almost concealed from view. The remains of all of the members of the Woods and Eoff families were removed to Greenwood, and the wooden headboards of the others, having long since decayed, it would be difficult to tell whose bodies are still there. Buildings gradually encroached upon the sacred precincts of these burial grounds until finally their very existence seemed forgotten.

They were very suddenly and unexpectedly brought again to mind by the recent heavy rains. The Eoff ground was situated at the base of a very steep incline on Chapline Hill, and during the storm the water rushed over it in great volume and with much velocity. The result was that the earth was so washed from the western edge that first one coffin, then another, was exposed. The decayed wood work gave way and the skeleton ratted into the neighboring gutter. For several days they laid there, to the horror of the neighboring residents. A stranger might have passed them unnoticed, thinking they were animal frames, had not one or two skulls been conspicuous. Finally complaint was made to Health Officer Edwards, and yesterday Jimmy Nichols sent up a force of men to remove the bones.

The skeletons were gathered up and placed in a rough box, which was reinterred in the burial ground. The fragments of coffins were removed and the edge of ground so stoned as to prevent a repetition of the horror.

It would seem eminently proper for the council to have those grave goods removed, They have so long ago fallen into disuse that all animal matter has disappeared, and the work would be comparatively easy. It is a mere matter of time until the ground will wash away, which, from the nature of it, it must do, and the idea of having a skull and cross-bones thrown at one's front door, to there lie in the gutter, is not altogether an agreeable site.