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HISTORY OF
Greater Wheeling and Vicinity

*A Chronicle of Progress and a Narrative
Account of the Industries, Institutions and People of the
City and Tributary Territory.*

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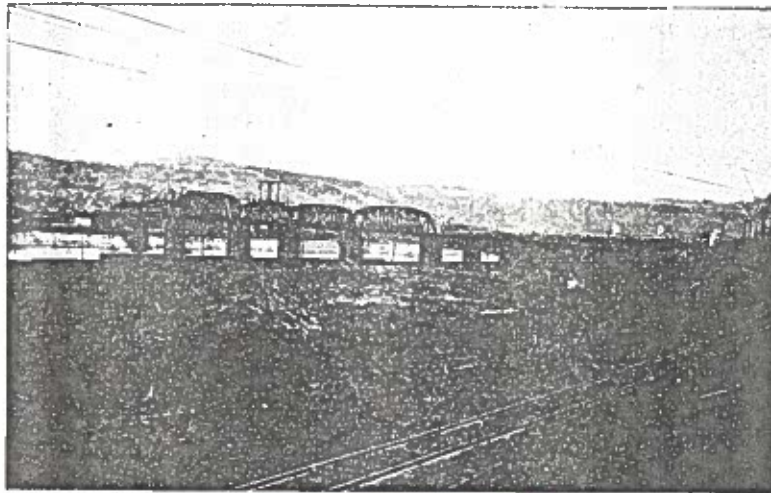
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as far as Maysville, Kentucky, the first shipment of coal made on the Ohio river for any considerable distance. This humble performance was the forerunner of the enormous coal traffic which now sweeps down the majestic waterway from Pittsburgh to New Orleans. But John Fink did not stop with shipments to Maysville. He pushed his trade down the Ohio and Mississippi until he reached New Orleans, thus establishing his record as the pioneer river coal man in the matter of long-distance shipment. Soon after embarking in the coal business Fink was joined by the Heatheringtons, whose name was destined to become most prominently identified with the coal business of Bellaire. The name Heatherington and the coal business league are synonymous terms.

The great factor in the development of Bell Air was the coming



Bellaire Railroad Bridge.

of the railroads and these great modern highways made it the most important point west of the Ohio river in the Greater Wheeling district. In 1852 the Baltimore & Ohio railroad was completed to Wheeling. It had no western connection until 1854 when the Central Ohio was built to Bell Air and is now a part of the Baltimore & Ohio system, but it was many years after 1856 before the river was bridged and the two lines connected. John Sullivan, a pioneer business man and promoter, deserved and is given credit for bringing the Central Ohio to Bell Air and this is only one of the many good things which he did for the city. The building of the big railroad bridge over the

Ohio river from Benwood Junction and welding the Baltimore & Ohio and Central Ohio into one road was begun in 1865 and completed in 1870. It is three-fourths of a mile long and cost \$1,250,000. It contains 30,000 yards of masonry and is one of the substantial railroad bridges of the country. The steel superstructure was renewed and made modern about fifteen years ago; the change being made without any change or delay in the running of trains. For fifteen years prior to the building of this bridge all freight and passenger traffic was transferred to or from the Baltimore & Ohio and Central Ohio by ferry boats. The great inconvenience and congestion that must have resulted from this primitive method of transfer may easily be imagined. Think for a moment what confusion would be created by an effort to transfer in that manner the tremendous traffic which sweeps over that bridge today. The Cleveland & Pittsburgh railroad was extended to Bell Air in 1856, adding to the importance and progress of the city.

John Sullivan had not closed his career of usefulness in the railroad development of Bell Air when he caused it to be made the eastern terminus of the Central Ohio. Later he promoted the Bellaire, Zanesville & Cincinnati railroad, a narrow gauge line from Bellaire to Woodsfield, where connection is made to Zanesville. This line is unique in many ways. It cost but \$11,500 a mile to build and its trestles and grades and curves are marvels even in this age of remarkable railway construction. But it is the only rail outlet for a great scope of territory and is a great feeder for Bellaire business. The "B. Z. & C." has been made the subject of innumerable jokes, and is commonly referred to as the "Bent, Zigzag & Crooked."

After the completion of the Central Ohio railroad to the town in 1854 the name was changed to the form Bellaire instead of Bell Air. The change was made at the suggestion of John Sullivan and Moses Sarchett, who were held in the highest esteem by the citizens. The former had been the strong factor in making Bellaire the eastern terminus of the road and the latter was a director in the company and a warm friend of the town. A move to have the town incorporated was made in 1857 when a petition was presented to the county commissioners and by them favorably acted upon. But like all other communities Bellaire possessed an element that was at enmity with progress and the incorporation proceedings were attacked in court. Unfortunately owing to some technical irregularity a decision was obtained declaring the incorporation null and void. Similar opposition was encountered in 1860 when another effort for incorporation was made,