Nestled among the hills in Upshur County along the Buckhannon River about twelve miles from Buckhannon is the little village of Ten Mile, the trading point for Ten Mile Community. The unobservant traveler passing through may see only the unsightly poles and lumber piles around the station, yet these are necessary for the lumber industry by which many people earn a living. Even these do not hide the beauty of the rippling streams coming down from the surrounding hills--streams fringed with over-hanging pines and clumps of rhododendron; woodlands rich in spring with ferns, mountain laurel, and numerous wild flowers; and farther back the ferns on the ridges where one may view the surrounding country for many miles in every direction.

This community geographically subdivides itself into four parts: Upper Ten Mile, Lower Ten Mile, Laurel Run, and Big Bend. Each part contains one school district.

How The Community Was Named

There seems to have been a double reason for the naming of the village. The old settlers thought that the little stream flowing into the river was ten miles long so they named it Big Ten Mile Creek and its main branch they called Little Ten Mile Creek. They estimated the distance from the mouth of the stream to Buckhannon at ten miles so they named the village Ten Mile.

About the year 1888 a post office was established near the mouth of Big Ten Mile Creek and named Sellars in honor of Colonel Sellar's from Ohio who was a pioneer in the lumber industry in the community and at that time was operating one of the first saw mills in that section. A few years later the people had the name of the post office changed to Ten Mile.

First Settlers

The first settler on Laurel Run was John White. He employed Ambrose Radenbacker who had emigrated from Germany to Virginia to manage his farm for him. Bringing some slaves and their families these settlers came over the mountains in a wagon from Winchester, Virginia, their faithful dog following all the way. This first wagon in the community for many years served a very useful purpose -- a means of taking the peoples products to the distant market of Clarksburg and bringing them salt and other necessities in return. Among the early settlers were John Spiker from Maryland, James Kelley, John Nick Tenney, Asbury Reeder, Lafayette Koon, and George Beer.
In the fall of 1850 Robert C. Wingfield with his family came in a wagon from Nelson County, Virginia. He purchased a tract of about 500 acres of land on Upper Ten Mile. They found a family of Herndon's who had previously emigrated from Nelson County, Virginia, already living here. How long they had been here the writers of this history have not been able to ascertain but they had, at the time the Wingfield's came, a fair sized farm cleared and under cultivation. The Wingfield's spent their first winter in a cabin that had been deserted by an earlier settler. This cabin did not satisfy their desire for a better home, more in keeping with the one they had left behind; so the following spring they began the erection of the large log house which still stands on the farm owned by Robert Shaw. In order to make this cabin home as comfortable and attractive as possible they made lath by hand and hauled lime from Rich Mountain to make plaster.

A little later John L. Tenney bringing his family in a wagon drawn by an ox team left New England in search of a new home. Upon arriving at Ten Mile, he decided to cast his lot here and he settled on the farm now owned by his grandson J. L. Tenney. 

(Note: This reference to John L. Tenney is incorrect. It should be James Tenney. See "History of Sago Community," the paragraph titled "The James Tenney Story.")

About the year 1869 Clark Goodwin moved from another section of this state to Ten Mile. His cabin was the first house where the village now stands. For a few years he was alone but when the lumber industry began he was joined by several other settlers.

Many indeed were the hardships endured by these old pioneers in their struggle to conquer the wilderness. The story is handed down to us of how the oldest settlers on Laurel Run would frighten the savage panther by throwing live coals at him as he waited in the darkness to pounce upon them while they were boiling sugar water late at night.

Social Life

In those old days people were very hospitable. When a stranger came into the community he received a warm welcome. For pastimes, there were husking bees and quiltings. The main attraction for old and young alike was the religious service held each Sunday. There was much visiting, especially among the women.

Schools

Seeing that the community could not grow and prosper if the younger generation grew up in ignorance these early settlers manifested a great interest in education. Soon after he built his house Robert C. Wingfield taught a subscription school of a few months each winter, his own and his neighbors children using an old cabin for a school house. When John L. Tenney came he, too, taught school.

As other settlers came and the population grew large enough they established a school. About the year 1867 "Jimmy" Logan donated one acre of ground on which the Upper Ten Mile school, No. 5, in Washington district is located. This building stood for more than 56 years. In it the first school was taught by G. W. Beer a citizen of the community at that time who is still living and until 1921 was actively engaged in school work. From this old teacher's family has gone forth Dr. O. B. Beer of Buckhannon, Blanch Beer, a graduate of Wesleyan College and for the past 28 years a teacher in the public schools in several towns of this state, Gipsy Beer, a graduate nurse of St. Joseph's Hospital, in Maryland, Mrs. Essie Smith, stenographer, and Mrs. Dorthy Greer, now a stenographer in Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1923 the old Upper Ten Mile school building was torn down and replaced by a modern one in which the first school was taught by Artie J. Norvell

In those days people came for many miles to attend school. From among the citizens of the community are many who have helped to fill the ranks of many professions outside their own
community. Ten Mile may claim Dr. F. F. Farnsworth for many years a successful physician and later a member of the State Board of Health; Edna Howard, now Extension District Home Demonstration Agent at Beckley; Fred Hollen and Tom Wingfield, railroaders; Fred Grimm, dentist of Philippi; Glenn Norvell, railway mail clerk, Kanawha County; Maud Maloney teacher, matron at Wesleyan College and graduate nurse; and Floy Debarr and Isabel Tenney, stenographers.

Among those who have done work in Upshur County are C. S. Debarr and Forest Snyder, ministers; Wilson Grimm physician; and Creta Hollen, nurse.

The teaching profession of Upshur County can claim from Ten Mile at the present time V. M. Snyder, Maud Maloney, Clara Debarr, Mellie Wingfield, Marley Tenney, Ted Tenney, Artie J. Norvell, Vada Tenney, Ada Norvell, and Hazel Daugherty. Others who have been enrolled in the teaching profession in the past are; A. W. Tenney, John V. Tenney, S. M. Tenney, Rae DeBarr-Scott, Isabel Tenney, Wilma Fletcher-Huffman, Stacie Snyder-Tenney, Laura Tenney-Neely, Jessie Spiker-Dilley, John Spiker, Shirley Hollen-Tenney, W. E. Ashburn, and Floy DeBarr.

The people of Ten Mile seem to be trying to keep up the educational standards of the early settlers. Within the five years previous to 1924 Ten Mile sent to Wesleyan College four students, one of them, Dennis Tenney, received his degree in 1924, to Buckhannon High School eight students, four of whom had graduated by 1924.

Laurel Run school house was built in 1884 on land donated by Granville Marple. In 1924 the building was torn down and replaced by a modern one in which the first school was taught by Floy DeBarr. Some years later the Lower Ten Mile school was established. In 1924 the building was moved to a better location the work being donated by the people of the community. It was then remodeled and another room established.

Another school is maintained in the community know as Big Bend school.

**Industries**

When the settlers first came to Ten Mile they cleared the land, using the timber they needed to make rails and piling the remaining logs in heaps and burning them in order to begin farming. Their clothing was all made by hand and from every cabin could be heard the merry hum of the spinning wheel and the pounding of the loom as the wives and daughters spun yarn and wove cloth.

As settlements in the community grew saw mills began to move in and lumbering became an important industry. The first saw mill in the community was one at the mouth of Ten Mile creek owned by The Buckhannon Lumber Company. They constructed a boom across the river which caught the logs as they floated down, and built a tramroad from Ten Mile to Buckhannon over which they trucked their logs or lumber. Within a few years they sold their right of way to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company and about the year 1890 the whistle of the locomotive could be heard in the little village.

About the beginning of the twentieth century the coal industry began to grow in this section of the state and although it has never been extensively developed in this immediate community sufficient coal has been sold to furnish material aid for many a farmer.

Another industry is that just now in its infancy is the oil and gas. In 1924 one test well had been drilled in the community and practically every farmer had leased his land and was receiving rent for it.

**Churches**

Even the life in the wilderness did not lessen the religious zeal of the early settlers. About the year 1857 Robert C. Wingfield; J. R. Wingfield; R. E. Wingfield and wife of Adile Baptist Church of Nelson County Virginia; George T. Herndon of Walnut Grove Baptist Church of Nelson County, Virginia; and H.
H. Leigh organized the Ten Mile Baptist Church. Once each month Rev. George Brown of Buckhannon came and preached at either the home of the Wingfields or Herndons. He always found his faithful congregation waiting for him unless kept away by some good reason. Money being scarce, stores far away, and travel inconvenient the people paid the minister no salary but shared their food and clothing, many times they paid him with buckwheat flour, or home made sugar. One old settler says he distinctly remembers when a boy seeing his father give Rev. Brown a cake of homemade sugar moulded in a dishpan. As the needs of the community grew the need of a church building was seen. Records of the church show that in 1873 they began planning to build a place of worship. Many indeed were the sacrifices that had to be made to build it. In 1882 it was begun and completed in a few years after a long, hard and patient struggle by the little band of workers. Their splendid cooperation might well be an example for any community today.

When the church was finished it was far better than any home in the community, it was in fact the only frame building. It is still standing and used. Flavius Wingfield and A. W. Tenney were the carpenters. Flavius Wingfield furnished the timber and made the shingles by hand for the whole building.

When several settlers had come to live near Mr. Goodwin at Ten Mile a Rev. Archer from Buckhannon came up and held a revival meeting in a school house. From this meeting grew the Ten Mile Methodist Episcopal Church. At that time Clarence Howard had a saw mill on Laurel Run. He gave the lumber which was hauled to Buckhannon, to a planing mill and then hauled back to Ten Mile. The church is still standing a memorial to the early settlers who did so much for it.

Roads

Ten Mile community cannot boast of her roads, partly due to the fact that many of them are improperly located having started from an old foot path or bridle path or perhaps even from an Indian trail. An Indian trail passed through near Laurel Run. Many Indian relics have been found along this trail.

A great many of the citizens earn a living by farming and on the ridges, and in the valleys may be found some beautiful farms and homes.

Part in Wars

At the time our country was torn asunder by the Civil War several settlers were in the community. Small as it was, it was divided. Those who had emigrated from Virginia joined the Confederate army while those who had come from New England enlisted with the Union forces. Four young men answered the call to the *****. None of the four returned. Richard Wingfield was killed in the battle of Gettysburg. William Wingfield, John L. Tenney, and George Herndon died of disease while in the army.

When the World War broke out in 1917 the boys answered the call cheerfully. Many of them saw service in the thickest of the fight. Those who remained at home toiled bravely in the fields giving of their means to the Red Cross and other organizations. Every one who had money enough purchased Liberty bonds and made every possible sacrifice for the sake of their country, for the sake of humanity and the boys "over there". When the ships returned it was found that not one of the stars on the service flag must be changed to gold. Those who saw service in France are Charles Tenney, Bernard Tenney, Wilbert Hollen, Fred Hollen, Don Smith, Dennis Tenney, Bert Tenney, Homer Reed, Oden Dilley, Albert Spiker, Marley Tenney, James Cunningham, and Gay Reeder.

Ten Mile had had four sailors in the service of the United States, namely: "Bud" Tenney, Dick Hollen, and Floyd and Francis Zirkle.

Recent Organizations
Although the different branches of extension work were not organized in Ten Mile community very early the interest in the work is still growing. There is a Farmers' Club which was organized about 1920 by County Agent J. Earl Romine, a Farm Women's Club was organized in 1922 by Home Demonstration Agent, Mary McMorrow-Brown. A four-H club was also organized the same year. Although these clubs do not have a large membership there are many signs of growth. In 1924 every member worked on a project. The Four-H club had a good exhibit at the fair which won thirteen premiums. Each year some of the club members have attended the County Four-H Camp. One member, Causbie Norvell, has been at every county camp since the organization of the club, has attended one state camp, won her Four-H's in her first test, and has won ten premiums in the country fair and one first premium in state fair. Lillian Harlan and Lena Debarr have won premiums in county fairs.