

CWMAVON

To the south of Blaenavon is the village of Cwmavon. During the early 1800s a forge was constructed in the village, linked with Blaenavon Ironworks, probably employing the puddling process. Its first phase of activity appears to have been quite short, but it was revived in the 1820s, from which time it was linked with the Varteg ironworks to the west. Forge buildings were usually insubstantial, and there are no remains above ground at Cwmavon, but the site has remained undeveloped and the remnants of the forge's water supply are intact. A terrace which originally consisted of twelve dwellings, built for the forge workers c.1804, was repaired by the British Historic Buildings Trust in 1987-88, and has been described as the finest surviving terrace of early workers' housing in the South Wales Valleys (These are now in private ownership). A more substantial dwelling, Cwmavon House, was built for the ironmaster who revived the forge in the 1820s. At this time the Varteg Company operated a foundry and engineering works on the site at Cwmavon capable of boring steam engine cylinders. The important beam engine displayed on the Pontypridd campus of the University of Glamorgan was made there in about 1840.