Oakwell Hall

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OAKWELL HALL.

OAKWELL HALL ("Fieldhead" of "Shirley") is an ancient and picturesque building, situate near Birstall. It was built in the year 1583, by Henry Batt, and takes its name from an old well in a wood of Oak trees, then growing there. Batt was an avaricious and unprincipled man, who was determined to acquire wealth at any cost, and adopted the most villainous means to accomplish his object.

Charlotte Brontë gives a very graphic description of both the exterior and interior of this building in "Shirley," where it is pictured as the residence of "Shirley Keeldar."

The house was originally surrounded by a moat, some remains of which may still be seen.

There is a real Fieldhead a short distance away from the hall, where the celebrated philosopher and scientist—Dr. Joseph Priestley—was born in March, 1733.