

clays and sands were left in their native state, partly forming those broad forests and furze-clad heaths that covered almost the whole of the Wealden area. Hence the name Weald or Wold (a woodland), a Saxon, or rather Old-English term, applied to this part of England, though the word does not now suggest its original meaning, unless to those who happen to know something of German derivatives.

In the memory of our fathers and grandfathers, these wild tracts were famous as resorts for highwaymen and bands of smugglers, who transported their goods to the interior from the seaport towns of Kent and Essex by means of relays of pack-horses.

The Chalk strata of the South Downs stretch far into the centre and west of England in Hampshire and Wiltshire. South of the valley of the Thames the same strata form the North Downs, and this Chalk stretches in a broad band, only broken by the Wash and the Humber, northward into Yorkshire, where it forms the well-known Yorkshire Wolds. Most Londoners are familiar with the Downs of Kent and Sussex. In their wildest native state, where the ground lies high, these districts were probably, from time immemorial, almost bare of woods, and 'the long backs of the bushless downs,' are still often only marked here and there by 'a faintly shadowed track' winding 'in loops and links among the dales,' and across the short turf of the upper hills. Yet here, also, cultivation is gradually encroaching.

On the steep scarped slopes overlooking the Weald, chalk often lies only an inch or two beneath the grass, and the same is the case on the western and north-western slopes of the long escarpment which stretches in sinuous lines from Dorsetshire to York-