

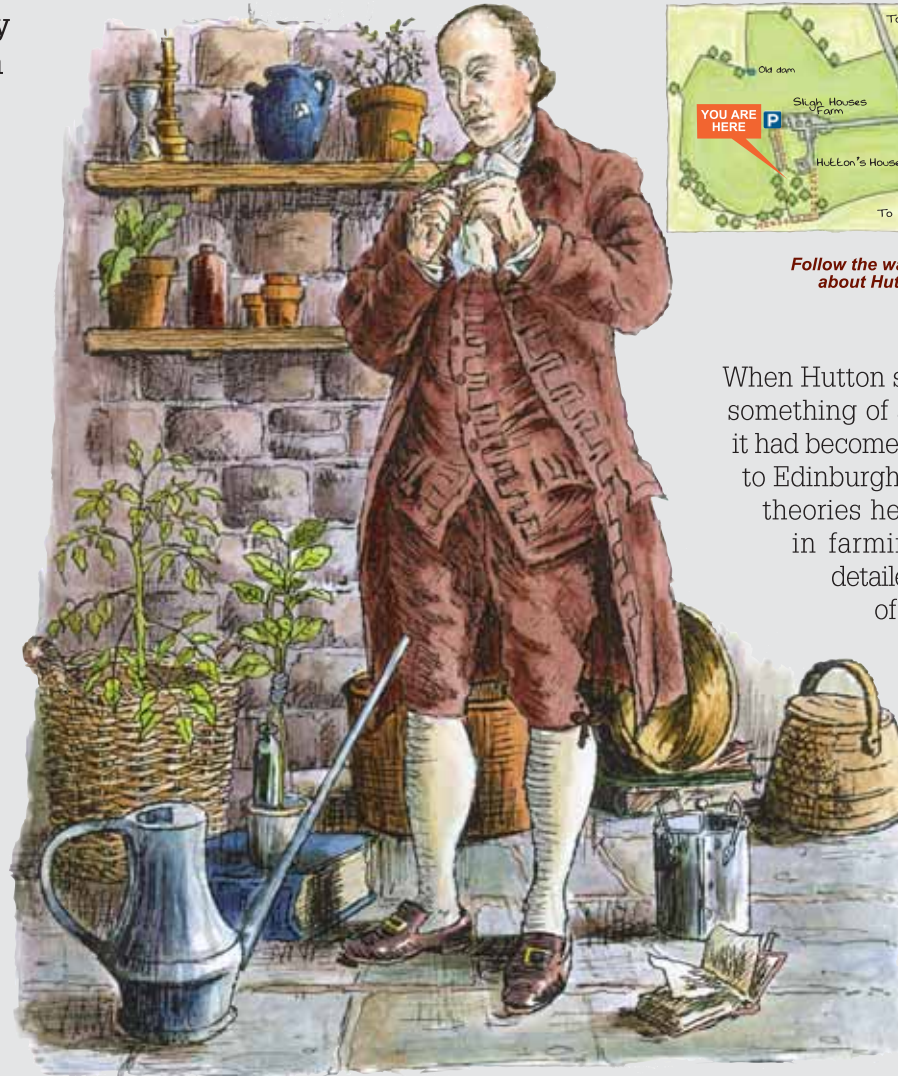


JAMES HUTTON *A man of genius*

First studying law followed by medicine, and with a fascination for chemistry, James Hutton then turned his attentions to farming. Today we recognise him as the founding father of modern geology. But his time as a pioneering farmer sowed the seeds of his interest in geology. Spending two years studying agricultural methods in East Anglia and the Continent he took over the family farm here at Sligh Houses in 1754 where, for thirteen years, he experimented on natural processes and put his ideas into practice.

A true experimenter – Hutton found plenty of scope in this new venture. A commentator at the time describing his endeavours *“The doctor began in earnest to improve a very wild and uncultivated piece of land: all of it was an open field, stones were to be split, fences were to be made at great expense... Drains also innumerable”*.

The field in front of you has many humps and hollows; these are all that remain of the old buildings where the farm labourers and their families probably lived. Hutton built new houses for them and himself through the trees to your left. At the bottom of the field are the remains of one of the gate pillars he built that marked the new carriage drive up to his house.



Follow the way marked trail and find out more about Hutton and his farming methods.

When Hutton started farming, geology was something of a hobby, but ten years later, it had become his great passion. Returning to Edinburgh to expand on his geological theories he also continued his interest in farming; and the writing of his detailed commentary the ‘Elements of Agriculture’.

To find out more about Hutton take a trip to the James Hutton Exhibition located at the Reiver Country Farm shop in Auchencrow. Also visit Siccar Point and Jedburgh, (just in front of the Abbey).

**James Hutton (1726-1797)
at his experiments**