

The broken rock is still angular showing it was transported rapidly.



The catastrophe was vast because the Old Red Sandstone covers a huge geographical area—400 km (250 miles) from Siccar Point to Northern Ireland in the west, and 100 km (60 miles) from the Southern Uplands to the Grampian Mountains in the north. Although it is more than 7 km (23,000 ft) thick, the beds are amazingly uniform and parallel over huge distances. It was no normal river that deposited these sediments.

The Old Red Sandstone contains well preserved fossils of fish (above) and plants. Rapid burial prevented decomposition and scavenging.

Most strata show large-scale cross bedding (previous page) and plane bedding, indicating deep, fast-flowing water.

The successive beds of the Old Red Sandstone were deposited one after the other without significant time breaks. There are no ancient soil layers or canyons cutting across the beds as there would be if the beds had been exposed to the weather. Some horizons contain animal tracks, which had to be covered quickly to preserve them.

### A geological icon?

So, Hutton did not find immense geological time in the rocks at Siccar Point. The long ages came from a wrong belief about how the rocks formed—from a philosophy that willfully overlooks the geological effects of the worldwide Flood (2 Peter 3:3–7).

Hutton's ideas on the age of the earth are a return to the old Greek way of looking at things. As people have increasingly accepted these ideas, we have seen social decline in Western culture. Where Christianity once held such moral influence on the culture, society is falling apart with endemic drug abuse, sexual immorality, abortion, divorce, violence and suicide.

If only Hutton had believed the Bible and looked at the rocks more closely, he would have seen that Siccar Point is excellent evidence for catastrophe and Noah's Flood.



DAVID TYLER

For further information see: Walker, T., Unmasking a long-age icon, *Creation* 27(1):50–55, 2005; also at [creation.com/siccarpoint](http://creation.com/siccarpoint).



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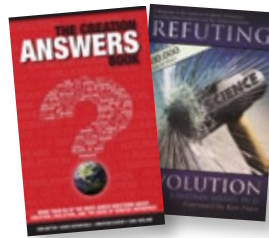


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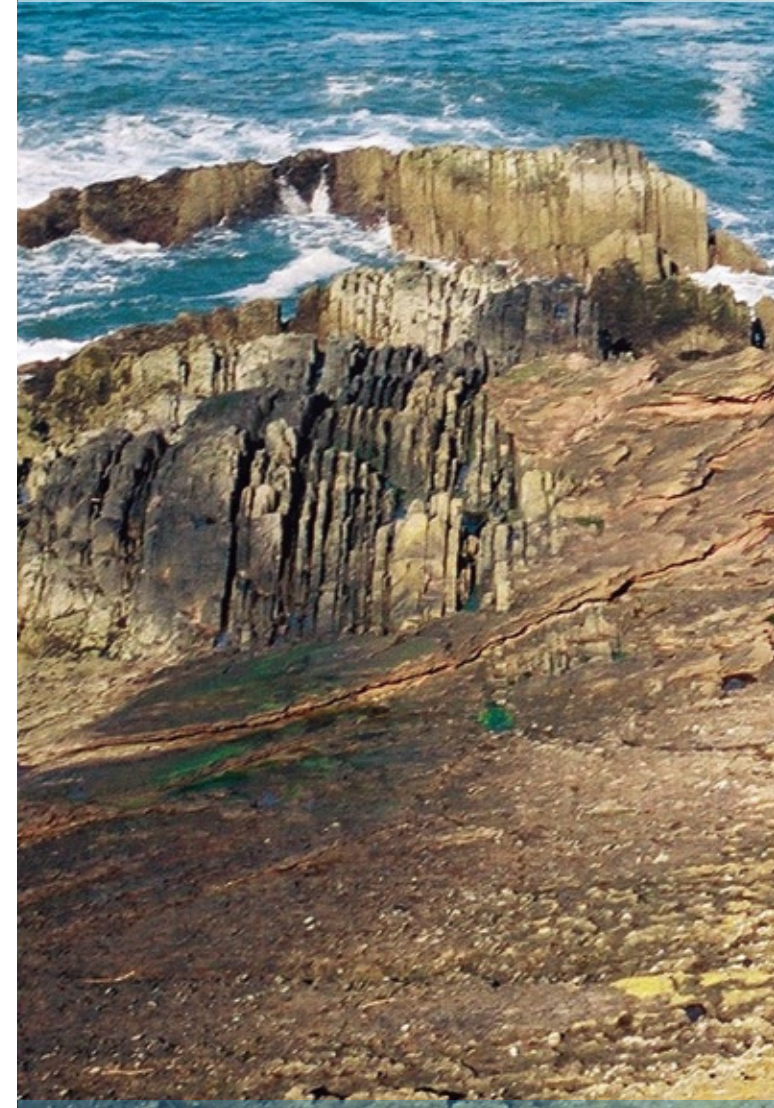
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# SICCAR POINT SCOTLAND UNMASKING A LONG-AGE ICON



by Tas Walker, Ph.D.



A rocky peninsula near Cockburnspath, 60 km (37 miles) east of Edinburgh, Scotland, has been called the birthplace of modern geology. Here James Hutton supposedly found “proof” that the earth was unimaginably old.

In Hutton’s day, most people in Europe and North America believed God created the world in six 24-hour days about 4000 BC, and judged it 1,700 years later with Noah’s Flood.

So, Hutton’s theories in 1785 challenged the authority of the Bible. Indeed, his ideas inspired Darwin with the eons of time he needed for his theory of evolution.

Yet, the rocks at Siccar Point show powerful evidence for catastrophe and the Genesis Flood.

### What Hutton saw

Two kinds of sandstone meet at Siccar Point (below). The lower, older strata are tilted nearly vertically, and sliced off abruptly, almost horizontally. The upper, younger strata are deposited on top. It’s an “angular unconformity”.

James Hutton saw that rainfall gradually eroded the Scottish hills, and rivers carried the sediment to the sea. He envisaged it would take many thousands of lifetimes before the hills eroded away.

So, Hutton reasoned that the lower, older rocks at Siccar Point had eroded down, producing the sand that forms the upper rocks. In the same way, he thought there must have been even-older rocks which eroded away to produce the sand for the lower rocks. In his mind, Hutton saw “no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end”—that, contrary to the Bible, the earth must be unimaginably old.

Most people believe radiometric dating proved the earth is billions of years old, but radiometric dating was not invented until 100 years after Hutton died. No, the idea of an old earth is an assumption. Hutton assumed the same slow

processes eroding the Scottish highlands today formed the rocks in the past.

Yet Siccar Point testifies to extraordinary different catastrophic processes.

### The lower rocks

The lower rocks (inset, below) consist of grey vertical beds of alternating shale and greywacke—a sandstone with particles ranging from very coarse sand to fine clay. This means the sediment was transported and deposited so rapidly that it had no time to sort into its different sizes (as occurs in rivers and on beaches today).

Also, the sediment was transported so rapidly that the grains are still jagged. Slow transport in a river would have worn the sharp edges smooth.

In some beds of greywacke the sand is coarse at the bottom and fine at the top (a graded bed), indicating the bed deposited from one pulse of water. Other beds show cross bedding, also pointing to fast-flowing water.

The fact that the beds are so flat for such large distances shows that the water flowed over a large area. And the flat strata sit one on top of the other without any break in deposition, indicating that deposition was fast and continuous.



CLIFF FORD **Vertical lower rocks**

### Folding and eroding

The lower rocks were folded soon after they were deposited, while still plastic and full of water. There is no sign of rocks fracturing, but evidence of metamorphism with minerals like mica. Just as your car battery needs water to work, water is



CLIFF FORD **Cross-bedding in Old Red Sandstone**

needed to chemically produce metamorphic rocks.

Also, the flat contact between the upper and lower sandstones was eroded catastrophically. Hutton thought the contact indicated a long time-break but there is no soil layer or differential weathering. Where the lower rocks are exposed to weather today the greywacke beds stand out like ribs with the softer shale eroded away. Not at the contact.

### The upper rocks

The upper sandstone beds (the “Old Red Sandstone”, previous page) also shout catastrophe. A 1-m- (3-ft-) thick layer at the base consists of broken rocks, called a breccia (over)—evidence that fast-flowing water eroded the contact. The large clasts (broken pieces) of greywacke tend to face the same direction (imbricate) indicating strong currents.



**James Hutton**