

ENDORSEMENTS

I am still hoping that Ucluelet and District Historical Society are going to publish my book in Canada. However, we have met a hitch. So, in the meantime, I want to share the amazing endorsements for my book. I cannot stress how delighted I was and am to receive these comments, not least because they are from experts in their field.

Diane Elphick
Committee Member, Sedbergh & District History Society
Editor, Sedbergh Historian

“This narrative of the lives of Richard, William and William John Sutton provides a fascinating insight into the lives and adventures of those who left the Yorkshire Dales to seek better lives.

Did William John Sutton find inspiration to pursue a career in geology from family recollections of life in Dent? Richard Sutton, his grandfather, was a contemporary of, and well acquainted, with, Professor Adam Sedgwick, a famous son of Dent, Woodwardian Professor of Geology at Cambridge University. To mark the bi-centenary of Adam’s birth a geological trail was created in the Yorkshire Dales along the river Clough where the rocks of the Dent Fault System are visible. Geology was interesting to the people of Dent. Adam Sedgwick, like many local farmers, grew up reading the landscape, the best grazing, where to quarry the best stone for a particular purpose, the variety of rocks exposed as streams gushed down the fells. William Sutton would have seen Adam Sedgwick on his visits to Dent and may have passed his story to his children.

Richard Sutton is also a ‘rags to riches story’ that can capture the imagination, but may also have bred envy. His character has been the subject of speculation over recent years. It was customary, in Dent, to ‘go a sitting’, gathering with neighbours to sit, knit and tell stories or gossip. In the 1980s some of these stories were grasped and used to construct ideas about the local Sill family, connections with Jamaica and Richard Sutton. The Sills were hosiers and became rich, by Dent standards, through trade between Liverpool and Jamaica where John Sill owned a plantation. Richard’s family were neighbours of the Sills for the first years of his life. When he was about 10, they moved to a nearby parish, where his father died, Richard was then about 13, leaving his wife and two children destitute. Richard was taken in by the Sill family, probably as a farm servant. This was not unusual children worked on family farms or went to other farms, poor children or orphans were apprenticed to minimise costs of poor relief. Why let facts get in the way of a good story? It was suggested, in the 1980s, that Richard Sutton was the model for Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*. The Brontes knew the area from their schooldays and may have known about events in Dent but there were many other inspirations for their stories. The idea, however, has developed even more over the past decades.

Richard received a legacy in the will of Ann Sill, the surviving member of the family. The executors of her will were Adam Sedgwick and a local solicitor James Davies. William Howitt was not complimentary about the local solicitor and implied that Ann Sill was credulous. Again the facts seem to be perverted to make a story that would appeal to the urban middle-classes. In a similar way that today people enjoy the books, TV adaptations and series about the Yorkshire Dales. At the time, in most newspaper reports Richard Sutton was described as a respectable member of the community. He was a Conservative landowner and his sons who stayed in the local area became gamekeepers, tradesmen and churchwardens. When Richard Sutton died the newspaper notice said he was “much and deservedly respected by all who knew him”.

William Sutton left Dent but he took skills honed in Dent with him to Canada: the use of water to power mills, the ability to read a landscape, the education gained in Dales schools and an independent spirit. He could pass these characteristics on to his son William John.”

Diane Hinkley
First Nations Researcher

“This engaging story of an early settler to Vancouver Island is sure to appeal to those interested in the early historic period on our Island. The author’s research clearly tracks Will Sutton’s footsteps through time, giving the reader a closer look at the values and social mores of the time. Bridget recognizes those as controversial ideas today, and acknowledges the difficulties which resulted, some of which we are still dealing with presently.

A good read, full of adventure that anyone will enjoy.”

Dave Florence
Editor
Forest History Association of British Columbia Newsletter

“I read several chapters, and believe that forest history researchers will find your book an important resource in areas such as early forestry practices and economics, river transport of logs, and early conservation policy.

Thank you for creating this excellent book.”

David Brownstein
Principal
Klahanie Research Ltd

“Sutton was among the first proponents of forest conservation on Vancouver Island. He perceived BC forest resources as comparatively limited, at a time when most others saw only an inexhaustible resource.”

Jan Ross
Director/Curator (retired)
Emily Carr House National and Provincial Historic Site
Victoria, B.C. Canada

“Despite numerous books about internationally renowned artist and author, Emily Carr, many of which that are autobiographical; countless scholarly papers and academic theses; dozens of journalistic articles and reviews; immeasurable numbers of prestigious exhibitions and catalogues there is always something new and significant for the serious researcher to uncover about this still enigmatic creative genius. In this book, through painstaking research and determination, author Jan Bridget has done just that.

Ms. Bridget’s careful study of primary source documents, ephemera, historic photographs, and archival materials has not only led to a more accurate renaming of a key Emily Carr painting; it has brought about a more accurate and valuable understanding of timeline in the life of this remarkable Canadian icon.

On behalf of Carr scholars, curators and aficionados everywhere, thank you.”

Shirley Martin,
Secretary
Ucluelet and Area Historical Society

“Jan Bridget has succeeded in writing a book that shines a light on the early history of Vancouver Island, and has done so in a captivating style that keeps the reader eagerly turning the pages. Her book is fastidiously researched. It is also made even more intriguing through the author’s own musings and

insights about the reasons for the actions of the book's leading players. Jan Bridget examines the dark, contentious topic of colonialism with a keen and critical eye. She also makes a clear case for the importance of Will Sutton's diverse interests and career paths, and of his significant role in the development of not only Vancouver Island, but of all of British Columbia. And we, the Board of the Ucluelet and Area Historical Society, have gained new knowledge about the Sutton brothers, two of our earliest settlers."

Phil Hood
The Westcoaster
Ucluelet,
Vancouver Island,
British Columbia.

"It's not often a local historical society has opportunity to 'discover' something, especially involving their town's first colonial settler. As a guy who is a little obsessive about Vancouver Island history, I can't overstate how much fun it's been to discover Jan's book about Will Sutton.

Jan Bridget has not only meticulously researched and documented every step but also pulled off a good read.

Jan has introduced our historical society to something new: our first resident was also an important figure in the development of Vancouver Island and influential to all of British Columbia.

There is a significant reason why this book is important. Colonialism. Nothing justifies the destruction of Indigenous culture or the near-fatal destruction of our environment. The prosperity of our area today can be traced to our early settlers and pioneers. Wow, contradictory statements that reflect the truth and complexity of our post-colonial world.

Thank you Jan Bridget. Your book presents a balanced personal glimpse into who, what, when, why and where of Colonialism."

Kirsten F Hodge, Ph.D.
Director, Pacific Museum of Earth

"In 1924, the University of British Columbia purchased fossil and mineral collections from Will Sutton. It was these specimens that laid the foundation for the original Geological Museum at UBC. Over the next several decades the museum's collections slowly expanded and eventually became part of the present day Pacific Museum of Earth.

UBC's purchase of Will's specimens was the spark from which the Pacific Museum of Earth would eventually emerge."