

WILLIAM CORNELIUS VAN HORNE: ART DIRECTOR, CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

In January 1882 William Cornelius Van Horne took up residence in Winnipeg¹ and assumed the duties of General Manager, Canadian Pacific Railway, responsible for supervising the completion and operation of Canada's long-awaited transcontinental line. Van Horne was prompt to realize the need for an efficient, large-scale promotional scheme to attract world attention to the opening of the North West. He knew that the economic survival of the C.P.R. would depend upon the successful settlement and commercial development of the vast plain between Portage la Prairie and the Rocky Mountains. The demand for freight and passenger service from the existing Western centres along the proposed route (Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver) would be insignificant in relation to the huge capital outlay required for the building of the road. Settlers and the traffic their presence would generate were needed desperately.

Guided by Van Horne's foresight and with financial assistance from the Dominion government, the C.P.R. launched an extensive advertising campaign to promote immigration into the Canadian West. By 1884 the Emigration Department of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Great Britain and continental Europe, under the direction of Alexander Begg,² was distributing maps, folders, pamphlets and a settlement guide, in ten languages, entitled *The Great Prairie Provinces of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories*, to thousands of agencies in Britain and over two hundred centres in northern Europe.³ As a prominent art connoisseur/collector⁴ and gifted amateur artist, Van Horne was concerned with the pictorial side of this project. He borrowed photographs and watercolours of north-western scenery from Sir Sandford Fleming⁵ (Engineer in Chief of the transcontinental survey expeditions, 1871-77), and had these images displayed in any hall or agency distributing the settlement guide. In order to assure an adequate future supply of visual documentation to support the

Company's mushrooming publicity plan, Van Horne decided to commission photographers William McFarlane Notman, Alexander Henderson and Oliver Buell⁶ to make photographic records of the C.P.R.'s progress and of the abundance of opportunities available in the new frontier. To this end, he adopted a policy of offering free transportation to the West Coast and back to any artist whose work would serve the Company's interests. Favourable illustrated reports published in the journals of Europe and the United States endorsed the C.P.R.'s campaign by providing apparently objective accounts of the North West's potential prosperity and the Railway's efficiency. Non-commissioned parties lent an air of credibility to the Company's often boastful and perhaps overstated advertisements.

Among the first to take advantage of Van Horne's free pass program were illustrators, the most widely published of whom were William Daniel Blatchly (1838-1903) and F.W. Curzon (act. 1885). Their notoriety, however, had little to do with their skills as draughtsmen, but rather with the nature of the scenes they drew. They had been dispatched by the *Illustrated London News* and the *Canadian War News*, respectively, to follow the exploits of the Middleton Expedition, a Kingston militia garrison which was rushed to the Manitoba Territory to put down the 1885 Riel Rebellion.⁷ Blatchly's and Curzon's illustrated reports, citing the swiftness and success of the police action, were picked up and carried by most international magazines. This proved to be of substantial benefit to the C.P.R. campaign. People world-wide read about the reliability of Canada's transcontinental railway, tested and proven in a crisis situation. Would-be tourists or immigrants were assured that they could place their security in the able hands of the Canadian military and the Northwest Mounted Police.

After this highly publicized event, and with the completion of the Canadian Pacific line in November of 1885⁸ allowing easy access to the Pacific Ocean, the Company was deluged with requests from artists for free transportation. Van Horne, who had been recently promoted to Vice-President (1884), played an increasingly active role. He showed a preference for Canada's prominent landscape painters, particularly those who were members of the Royal Canadian Academy. In many instances, the Company's sponsorship of the landscape artist went far beyond a free rail pass as Van Horne moved from the role of patron to that of mentor.

His decision to sponsor Academicians and other landscape artists of repute was in fact dual-purposed. Publicly, he attempted to justify the C.P.R.'s substantial expenditures in the area of fine art patronage by claiming that the works of art served as part of the Company's advertising campaign to promote immigration to the North West. It is dubious, however, that the work of R.C.A. members had any direct impact on the influx of settlers to Western Canada. Most pioneers of this country's prairie were land-poor emigrants from the agriculturally sterile regions of England, Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, Germany and the Ukraine. It is doubtful that they moved in the right circles of society to attend or patronize fine art exhibitions. Their only exposure to work by prominent Canadian painters would have been through the wood- and steel-engraved reproductions appearing in penny magazines and in C.P.R. promotional brochures. The breathtaking vista of a rugged mountain peak, the landscape painter's most sought-after subject matter in the North West, would have offered little inducement for homesteaders to emigrate compared to the promises made by the C.P.R. and the Dominion government of free or inexpensive farmland.

It would be more realistic to speculate that fine art patronage was principally aimed at serving the vanity and aesthetic tastes of the C.P.R. directors and their business associates. Exhibitions by C.P.R.-sponsored artists tended to promote the Company's image as a "nation-builder" and as a contributor to the development of Canadian cultural affairs. Though some paintings were utilized in the C.P.R. advertising campaign, many more found their way into the private collections of Company officials and their friends. The founding members of the Canadian Pacific Syndicate, George Stephen, Richard B. Angus, Donald Smith and James Hill, together with Van Horne, Charles Hosmer (Manager of C.P.R. Lines, a company working closely with the C.P.R. in its immigration efforts), and James Ross (President of the Dominion Bridge Company, a firm constructing many bridges and trestles for the transcontinental railway), ranked among the foremost art collectors and patrons in North America.⁹ Profits in the hands of these railroad magnates and corporate leaders went into the building of private art collections rarely surpassed even in Europe.

It was Van Horne who often influenced his colleagues in matters of taste. His art purchases included old and recognized masters,¹⁰ as well as works by Courbet, Daumier, Pissaro, Cézanne, Cassatt, Ryder, Toulouse-Lautrec and El Greco, often before other North American collectors had

come to appreciate their worth.¹¹ His convictions on the subject of art proved so strong that even his closest friends feared to advise him.¹² As an amateur artist, his sketching companions included C. J. Way, James A. Aitken, George Horne Russell, John Hammond, William Brymner, Robert Harris, Homer Watson, Horatio Walker, Lucius O'Brien and Frank Darling. Through these associations Van Horne was kept abreast of the most recent developments in Dominion art.

It should be noted that the Academicians were not attracted to the North West due wholly to offers of free transportation. The R.C.A. had been officially charged with representing Canada's nationalistic interests in the arts, and its members were therefore in search of subject matter that would be interpreted as being uniquely "Canadian" by its patrons and the Dominion government. In particular, the landscape painters sought a new, largely apolitical image which would not be associated with the interests or philosophies of either of its parent societies, the Toronto-based Ontario Society of Artists, or Montréal's Society of Canadian Artists or the Art Association of Montreal. The Rocky Mountains seemed the ideal solution. Being beyond the geographical boundaries of both former Upper and Lower Canada, the Rocky Mountains could not be viewed in a partisan light by any party concerned. As the most forbidding physical barrier between Canada's East and the populated centres of British Columbia, the rugged alpine terrain symbolized the struggle to unite the Dominion, as well as the strength of that bond. The C.P.R. line would allow the Royal Canadian Academicians more readily to explore and to exploit this national theme.

It would be less than honest to state that Academicians looked to the North West solely for aesthetic or patriotic reasons. Granted, uniquely Canadian subject matter would have created a vital and stimulating atmosphere at Academy exhibitions while promoting the C.P.R.-federal government plan for Western settlement and development. It is equally important to note, however, that, following a decade of depression and exiguous art sales, the artists were eager for a change. They hoped that the presentation of Rocky Mountain landscapes would prove as commercially rewarding in Canada as it had been in the United States two decades earlier for artists such as Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, William Keith and John Frederick Kensett.

Thus, when the C.P.R. began its "full service"¹³ operations in the summer of 1886 there was a large number of professional artists anxious to

seek fame and fortune in the North West, a well-informed art connoisseur at the helm of the Company's free pass program, and a prominent group of art patrons ready and willing to extend their corporate hospitality to the most gifted painters. The stage was set for the beginning of the most extensive corporate patronage campaign of the fine arts in the history of this country.

The awarding of free passes and commissions to artists was part of Van Horne's daily business activities. An examination of his business correspondence¹⁴ yields many references to art and artists. Unfortunately, the record is incomplete. Several volumes of correspondence have deteriorated to the point that they can no longer be read.¹⁵ The responses by artists to Van Horne's letters were not preserved intact. Some may have been redirected to Van Horne's personal residence. Most have been lost or discarded. Due to the shortage of paintings by C.P.R.-sponsored artists available for study in public institutions, and the inaccessibility of private collections, the scant remaining documentation becomes indispensable in the study of Company patronage and Van Horne's role as art director.

From the outset Van Horne was discriminating in his selection of artists. First among the Royal Canadian Academicians to receive C.P.R. sponsorship were Lucius O'Brien (1832-1899), the country's most celebrated landscape painter and President of the Academy; John Arthur Fraser (1838-1898), O'Brien's closest rival; and John Colin Forbes (1846-1925), O'Brien's favourite sketching companion. Van Horne's decision to sponsor these artists was based on their membership in the R.C.A., their previous acquaintance with northwestern landscape scenery, and their close ties to American art. O'Brien, Fraser and Forbes were the only artists active in the Dominion who had shown interest in Rocky Mountain subject matter prior to the completion of the transcontinental route in 1885.

As art editor of the monumental two-volume *Picturesque Canada* (1882), O'Brien would have overseen the selection of photographs of British Columbia (some of them by Notman¹⁶) which were reproduced as half-tone engravings. The artist had also planned to include in the book "full illustrations of the Rocky Mountains and British Columbia" (presumably drawings after photographs), but found that the publishers had devoted "so much space to the older parts of the country"¹⁷ that the northwestern scenes had to be omitted. In 1883 Fraser had ventured as far west as Calgary via the incomplete C.P.R. line.¹⁸ There appears to be no confirmed

reason for this trip, but it may have had something to do with illustration work he had undertaken for an article published in Chicago's *Outing* magazine in 1885.¹⁹ Unlike Fraser, Forbes had not actually seen the Rocky Mountains prior to 1886. Working from Notman and Son photographs, he painted a number of Rocky Mountain landscapes which were exhibited at the Art Association of Montreal in the spring of 1884 and 1885, and at an exhibition in the Parliamentary Library (Ottawa) in May of 1885.²⁰

A further reason for Van Horne's early support of O'Brien, Fraser and Forbes involved their knowledge of specific aspects of contemporary American painting. In the early 1880's Fraser and Forbes had been regular contributors to, and members of, several art societies in the United States.²¹ O'Brien had painted with the celebrated American artist Albert Bierstadt in Québec City in 1880 and had worked closely with Thomas Moran on his illustrations for *Picturesque Canada* in 1882. As an American citizen, Van Horne would have been well aware of the impact that the painters of the Rocky Mountains had had on the opening of the western United States. He felt that a sound knowledge of this American landscape "movement" (an offspring of the Hudson River School) was a valuable prerequisite for his earliest sponsored painters.

Examples of Van Horne's near absolute control over C.P.R.-related art activities are numerous, but perhaps the best early example was his association with, and supervision of, Fraser. The success of Fraser's 1883 sojourn westward had secured for him the first C.P.R.-related sale of a work of art. Two paintings resulting from that trip, *The River Kaministiquia at Fort William* and *On the Prairie near Calgary*, found their way into the private collections of Van Horne and C.P.R. board member R.B. Angus, respectively.²² These purchases paved the way for a November 1884 offer from Van Horne to undertake the illustration of a proposed Company guide book. However, it was not until October of 1885 that Fraser agreed to engage in the assignment. He was forwarded a series of photographs by Alexander Henderson to supplement his collection of Notman and Son scenes.²³ Incomplete documentation eliminates the possibility of determining the precise nature of Fraser's commission, though vague reference is made to a British Columbia guide book entitled *The Golden Northwest*, published in November of 1886.²⁴ The issue contained four wood engravings after watercolour sketches of Castle Mountain, Canmore, Mount Stephen and the Kicking Horse Pass, all presumably from the hand of Fraser.



fig. 1 **Oliver BUELL** (1844-1910), *Beaverfoot Mountains* 1886. Albumen print, 24.0 x 19.0 cm. Coll.: Canadian Railroad Historical Association Archives, Delson-St. Constant, Québec, C.W. Spencer Collection.

It is certain that Fraser completed his contract to the satisfaction of Van Horne, since his business relations with the C.P.R. continued.

In January of 1886 Van Horne was in correspondence with Fraser, suggesting that he accept a second, more ambitious, Company commission:

Mr. Stephen our President, is anxious that some large water-colour views of our mountain scenery should be exhibited at the Colonial Exhibition, which is to be held in London next May. We have a quantity of photographic views here, new ones, which I presume would have to be depended upon for material, as nothing could be done otherwise at this season of the year and Mr. Stephen will undertake to buy the pictures himself, if no better sale is made before the exhibition closes.²⁵

Fraser did not hesitate to accept the commission. An opportunity offered to exhibit paintings in England and a guaranteed sale was one very few artists would refuse. Once more Van Horne supplied Fraser with a

collection of photographs, this time by Oliver Buell²⁶ as well as by Alexander Henderson.²⁷ Fraser promptly prepared an engraving based on Buell's photograph *Mountains at Leancoil*. The engraving was published in the February issue of *Century* magazine.²⁸ Later that spring another Fraser view, *Beaverfoot Mountains*, appeared in the same publication.²⁹ It, too, was based on a Buell photograph (fig. 1). Illustrations of this sort served as advance publicity for the artist's participation in the upcoming Colonial Exhibition.

By March 24 Fraser had completed three major watercolours and had placed them in the hands of Williams and Everett of Boston for framing and fitting for a packing case.³⁰ Early in April the three views, *Summit Lake* (fig. 2), *Mount Stephen* and *Mount Hermit*, the first two painted from Henderson photographs and the third from a Buell, were shipped to Montréal for Van Horne's inspection.³¹ Fraser valued Van Horne's criticism highly and was most anxious to meet his expectations, writing that "there will be plenty of time to make any alterations that you may suggest on seeing them."³² Interpretations of the photographic image had caused Fraser a considerable degree of difficulty. In correspondence with Van Horne during the execution of these watercolours Fraser had expressed a concern that the photographs he had been obliged to draw from could not provide him with adequate information to paint accurate renditions of the scenes:

I am treating the Summit Lake view as a sunrise, the mountains illuminated, the west in shadow and I am keeping the light in the same direction as in the photo – and am anxious to know if such treatment is consistent with fact.³³

Van Horne provided Fraser with Henderson memos referring to the atmospheric conditions existing at the time the photograph had been taken. The artist was further advised that Henderson had used a wide-angle lens,³⁴ creating the impression that the mountains were less grandiose in stature than they would appear on location. This dilatory information did not advance Fraser in his efforts. He responded with conciliatory remarks and further enquiries:

I am sorry that I did not know that the view was taken with a wide angle lense as the picture is about half done and of course my labour is lost. I see nothing in the other views to indicate that such a lense has been used and I certainly hope I am right for the pictures are well along on the proportions



fig.2 John Arthur FRASER (1838-1898). *Summit Lake near Lenchoile, Bow River, Canadian Pacific Railway* 1886. Watercolour over graphite on wove paper, mounted on canvas, 65.8 x 92.3 cm. Coll.: National Gallery of Canada/Musée des beaux-arts du Canada.

shown in the photos and I must ask you to learn, how that is, in the case of Mr. Henderson's view of Mount Stephen – the time of day and aspect of the mountain, as regards point of the compass (I have somewhat raised the mountains, here, above the proportions of the print). I am certain that the view of Hermit Mt. was not made with a panoramic lense and I have given the same treatment to the mountains. By the way, can you remember whether the impression you got of the purple colour was due at all to having seen it at, near or after sunset or sunrise, and I would like to know how these mountains face also.³⁵

Despite further Henderson notations forwarded by Van Horne, and Fraser's most sincere attempts to utilize them to his advantage, *Mount Stephen*³⁶ suffers from weaknesses that can be attributed to the photographic source. "Filled in" areas of the foreground are particularly distracting, the result of moving from a small-scale photograph to a large-scale hand-drawn sketch, and the colouring, of course, is not at all naturalistic. Nonetheless, Van Horne was sufficiently impressed to per-

suade Sir George Stephen to purchase all three paintings prior to their departure for London.³⁷ He himself acquired a smaller-scale Fraser water-colour, *Fraser River and the C.P.R. Line*, for his private collection.³⁸

In a note dated April 15, 1886, Van Horne alerted Alexander Begg, the C.P.R.'s overseas Emigration Agent, that *Summit Lake*, *Mount Stephen* and *Mount Hermit* were *en route*:

These paintings which are the property of the President have been sent by him for exhibition at the "Colonial" and I have had them consigned to you in order that the proper care of them may be assured and so that they will receive the position in the Canadian Gallery of Art at the Exhibition which their merit entitles them to. I mention their being hung in the Art Gallery particularly because to place them with the exhibition pertaining to the Railway would give them the appearance of an advertisement and possibly detract from their success.³⁹

The fact that Van Horne placed Begg in charge of bypassing and/or influencing the selection/hanging committee of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition was the first sign of his considerable power over, and organizational role in, Dominion art-related events. An arrangement was reached with Sir Charles Tupper, the Dominion government's official representative at the Exhibition, to have Fraser's paintings hung in one of the best positions in the Canadian Art Gallery.⁴⁰ Van Horne was most cautious. He was determined that Sir George Stephen's paintings should receive maximum exposure. He further advised Begg:

Mr. [John William Hurrell] Watts [1850-1917], R.C.A. of Ottawa has been appointed by the Government to superintend the hanging of the pictures in the Canadian Art Gallery of the Colonial Exhibition. I understand that Mr. Watts is a disciple of O'Brien whose pictures he will incline awards as regards the selection of good places and being a disciple, as I said of O'Brien's it is fair to suppose that his teachings will have prejudiced him against Fraser's work.

It will be necessary for you to keep a sharp lookout when the day arrives for arranging the Gallery and see that justice is done to our pictures.⁴¹

As predicted by Van Horne, Watts proved to be obstinate. He disregarded Sir Charles Tupper's express instructions and chose to hang two of

Fraser's watercolours on a screen and the third in a position which, according to Begg, was "neither prominent nor befitting the character of the picture."⁴² Tupper was forced to intercede once more, the result being that more satisfactory positions, "better almost than those of O'Brien,"⁴³ were afforded Fraser's works.

At the close of the exhibition, Begg hinted that favouritism had been shown toward Fraser's watercolours not because of outstanding artistic merit, but because of the influence of Van Horne and his C.P.R. associates in the organization of the show. With reference to the fine placement that had ultimately been given Fraser's pieces, Begg wrote: "... Fraser has to thank in large measure, the fact that three of his works have been painted for the President."⁴⁴ It further appears that the C.P.R. played a role in soliciting favourable exhibition reviews for Fraser. J.E. Hodgson, Professor of painting at the British Royal Academy, was "commissioned" by Canada's Governor-General Lansdowne to complete a report on the standard of achievement in the Canadian section of the exhibition.⁴⁵ Hodgson was probably chosen for his bias toward a Ruskinian concept of truth to nature, and thus tended to favour the landscape art of Fraser and O'Brien over that of other Canadian painters who had been trained in Paris and who usually exhibited figure works (e.g.: William Brymner, Paul Peel, Robert Harris, Percy Woodcock). Hodgson hailed O'Brien as "a very considerable and accomplished artist"⁴⁶ and singled out his Rocky Mountain landscapes for highest praise. It is significant that Hodgson's critique was published in Sir Charles Tupper's general *Report on the Canadian Section of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition*, appended to the *Report of the Minister of Agriculture* of 1886.⁴⁷ Tupper's partiality toward C.P.R.-related subject matter was well-known. Since signing the C.P.R. contract on behalf of the Dominion government in 1880, he had become a close friend of both Van Horne and George Stephen. It was Tupper, as has been indicated, who was responsible for Fraser's paintings receiving exceptional hanging positions, and he had already procured C.P.R. passes for O'Brien's 1886 summer tour of the North West. It was the Governor-General's office and the Ministry of Agriculture which primarily assisted the C.P.R. lobby for immigration. The Tupper/Lansdowne/Hodgson/Fraser association was wholly C.P.R.-orchestrated in support of Van Horne's "publicity" plan.

During the summer of 1886, Fraser travelled on the C.P.R. to the Rockies. The trip did not prove very productive, his venture being plagued

with hardships from the outset. In early June he departed from Boston,⁴⁸ where he had taken up residence a few months before, and travelled straight through to Burrard's Inlet on the West Coast, where it rained almost continuously throughout his stay.⁴⁹ By mid-July he was working his way inland. At North Bend bush fires began in earnest⁵⁰ and through the irritating smoke only rare glimpses of the superb mountain scenery could be had. According to the artist, accommodations were "filthy," transportation was irregular, and telegraph service was difficult to obtain.⁵¹ Consequently, Fraser returned to the East in the fall with little in the way of finished sketches. Once more he was obliged to rely on photographs in the preparation of three C.P.R. advertising illustrations for *Century* magazine. *Mount Stephen* (the namesake of the Company President), *Mount Sir Donald* (so named to flatter C.P.R. founding member Sir Donald Smith), and *Syndicate Peak* (titled after the corporate group itself – the Canadian Pacific Syndicate) were drawn and engraved under the supervision of Van Horne himself. Once more Fraser encountered technical difficulties. In referring to the preliminary sketch of *Mount Stephen*, Van Horne informed Fraser:

The black and white sketch will hardly answer our purpose, the mountain not being sufficiently imposing. I made last night a rough sketch in lamp-black which will illustrate my idea. . . . I have taken a great deal of license but I do not think that any one going to the spot without picture in hand to compare will ever accuse us of exaggeration. . . . I hope you will preserve the scale.⁵²

In response Fraser praised Van Horne's conception as a "grand one" but stressed the difficulty of following the other man's exact design "on account of the great mass of mountain without anything to contrast against it."⁵³ As a solution Van Horne suggested that the image of a train be added to the foreground. Fraser made the alterations, forwarded the drawing to Montréal for Van Horne's appraisal, and wrote that "though you are the manager of the greatest railway in the world, Art has lost an able practitioner."⁵⁴ After further reflection, Fraser came to the realization that Van Horne's contribution to the sketch was significantly greater than his own:

I fear that in my anxiety to get away the *Mount Stephen* I mechanically and without due thought signed it with my name. If so it was a mistake as whatever credit is due, is to you alone. I have merely interpreted your idea for the engraver.⁵⁵

Despite the flattery, Fraser's view failed to satisfy Van Horne. By March 1, 1887, Fraser had completed two new drawings of Mounts Stephen and Sir Donald.⁵⁶ He informed Van Horne:

I felt much hurt at my failure to realize your ideal and set to work determined to "do or die". If I have succeeded this time it is due to our recent interview when I got a better idea of what your aim was. I have not signed them, if you think it would be better for them to carry my name please sign them for me.⁵⁷

When *Mount Stephen*, *Mount Sir Donald*, and *Syndicate Peak* (all bearing Fraser's name) finally appeared in *Century* that April they coincided with the close of a major C.P.R.-financed Fraser exhibition in the Broadway Avenue gallery of Erastee Wiman, New York, and with the artist's departure for London, where yet another Company-promoted show was to take place in May. Van Horne played no part in the organization of the former exhibition. He was, however, so pleased with the favourable reviews forwarded to him by Fraser that he wrote to the art dealer expressing his thanks for "making our magnificent Canadian scenery known," and insisted upon being sent the account concerning all expenditures in the matter.⁵⁸ Fraser's London show was an entirely different matter. Van Horne furnished the artist with letters of recommendation to Harry Moody (the C.P.R.'s overseas promoter), Mr. Boissivain (an art connoisseur/collector), and Mr. H. Koekkoek (a successful art dealer). Together they made arrangements for the display of Fraser's Canadian subjects at rooms in Piccadilly. On April 16, Van Horne supplied Moody with a prospective guest list for the *vernissage*. The list included the names of many prominent politicians, dignitaries and members of London high society. Among these were Sir Edward Watkin, Lord Burham, Count Gleichen, Lord Lorne, Lord Wolseley, Lord Revelstoke and Sir Richard Temple, all of whom held key interests in the activities of the C.P.R. and had encouraged the growth of settlement in the Canadian northwest.⁵⁹ Van Horne further advised Moody:

In so much as the Company will profit by the success of his [Fraser's] Exhibition as an advertisement, it is most desirable that we should do what we can to contribute to his success . . . [;] ours is to seek through Mr. Fraser's works prominence for the attraction of the Railway, but beyond a sum which I have agreed to contribute towards the expense of the journey,

the Company must not be at any expense in effecting Mr. Fraser's desires.⁶⁰

Fraser, however, was not satisfied with this degree of sponsorship and pressed Moody for further funds, insisting that the Company should pay his expenses in full so long as he served its cause. In an unprecedented move Van Horne placed Fraser on the temporary payroll of the Company. Records indicate that no less than three vouchers of one hundred dollars each were made payable to Fraser in late April and early May of 1887. The duration of these weekly payments is unknown, but funding was sufficient for Fraser's name to be placed on the 1887 employment roll. The very profitable association Fraser was enjoying with the C.P.R. and its associate businesses climaxed in September of that same year when Van Horne purchased six large Fraser watercolours for his private collection.⁶¹ A seventh, smaller sketch, *Siwash - Klootch Man*, was also forwarded to Van Horne with the artist's compliments.

C.P.R. patronage of Fraser between 1884 and 1887 came very close to what some seventeenth-century Italian writers referred to as *servitù particolare*. The patron, in this case Van Horne, was very much involved in the production of the artist. Not only did Van Horne commission Fraser to complete illustrations for such specific purposes as guide books and magazine advertisements, but he also provided the artist with photographic source material, detailed suggestions as to composition, free transportation to the West Coast and back, free accommodation where Company hotels existed, free telegraph service, letters of introduction to C.P.R. superintendents instructing them to assist the artist in every way possible, and promises for the purchase of paintings that met with his approval. Furthermore, Van Horne arranged for the exhibition of Fraser's work (with the exception of the New York exhibition), underwrote the expenses incurred in mounting the shows, supervised the installation and selection of paintings, and solicited favourable reviews. C.P.R. sponsorship of Fraser was exceptional. No other artist was to receive such extensive assistance.

Lucius O'Brien's association with the Railway began in October of 1885 when Van Horne learned from Sir Charles Tupper that the artist was contemplating a western tour. Realizing that few artists in this country held attitudes on art more closely aligned with the interests of the Company, Van Horne was prompt in extending the full hospitality of the line to O'Brien.⁶² The latter departed for the Rocky Mountains on June 19 of the

following year in possession of a free rail pass good for station-to-station stopovers in the Rockies. He also carried letters of introduction to C.P.R. Western Superintendents Harry Abbott (Vancouver) and R. Marpole (Donald), and the promise of assistance in finding a reliable camp assistant *en route*. J.C. Forbes followed on June 26 with similar pass privileges and letters. The two artists met in the Mountains and passed the months of July and August sketching together in the vicinity of the Glacier House Hotel. As Van Horne apparently had no immediate or precise plans for the use of O'Brien's and Forbes' paintings he did not supervise their activities as closely as he had Fraser's. He suggested only that O'Brien and Forbes confine their sketching activities to the area in close proximity to the Hotel. The C.P.R. had taken great care to locate Glacier House so as to take advantage of neighbouring natural attractions: the glacier (situated just to the right of the Hotel entrance), Syndicate Peak (directly in front of the building), Rogers' Pass (to the near left), and the Valley of the Illecillewaet (to the extreme left).⁶³

O'Brien followed Van Horne's instructions closely. In a letter dated November 22, 1886, the C.P.R. General Manager was invited to the artist's Toronto studio to view the results of his summer's efforts, and to discuss a series of black and white drawings completed near the Glacier House Hotel.⁶⁴ It was probably during this visit that Van Horne saw a monochrome watercolour of a bridge spanning the Kicking Horse Pass. The artist had sketched from a vantage point as far back from the trestle crossing as the confines of the valley would allow. From here he had drawn a vista of the valley with two steam engines labouring to pull a train up a steep incline, with a foaming torrent of water channelling far below and mist-shrouded mountain peaks pressing in from above. A battered tree stump in the foreground and the diminutive proportions of the train in comparison to the gigantic scale of the mountain landscape seemed to represent man's triumph over staggering odds in bringing an industrialized civilization to the wilderness. Van Horne was so impressed by both the masterful technical execution and by the symbolic content that he commissioned a large full-colour watercolour to be worked up from the study. *Bridge – Kicking Horse Pass – Second Crossing* was completed in the early months of 1887⁶⁵ and was forwarded to Van Horne in Montréal. It became a banner piece for the C.P.R.'s advertising campaign and was prominently exhibited throughout Great Britain until as late as 1892.⁶⁶ Van Horne also purchased six black and white watercolour drawings, in-



fig.3 Lucius Richard O'BRIEN (1832-1899). *Mountain Scene - Loop at Glacier* 1886. Monochromatic watercolour, 54.6 x 35.6 cm. Coll.: Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives Collection, Montréal.

cluding *Glacier House and the Great Glacier*, *Valley of the Illecillewaet from Glacier House*, *Mount Sir Donald*, *A Bridal Path - Descent to Glacier House*, *Glacier Mountains from Summit Pass*, and *Rogers' Pass*⁶⁷ (all, location unknown). *Mountain Scene - Loop at Glacier* of 1886 (fig.3), a small monochrome watercolour presently in the Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives collection (Montréal), may well be one of the aforementioned drawings - quite possibly *A Bridal Path* . . . It shares several compositional elements with *Bridge - Kicking Horse Pass - Second Crossing*. In this instance, not one but two trains are being hauled up steeply inclined gradings by locomotives to the extreme left and right in the horizontal format, and male and female horseback riders have been sketched into the near foreground. They create a romantic image of lovers standing at the gateway to some exotic paradise. The sublime view of nature is reminiscent of earlier American landscapes.

From a commercial point of view O'Brien's involvement with the C.P.R. proved more rewarding than had been the case even for Fraser. Company officials could not resist the purchase of O'Brien watercolours. In early 1887 Sir Donald Smith acquired *Mountain Landscape*,⁶⁸ which is so nearly identical in size and composition to *Bridge - Kicking Horse*

Pass . . . that it is tempting to speculate that both paintings derive from the same field study. On April 12 O'Brien extended an invitation to Van Horne to attend the opening of the R.C.A.'s 1887 exhibition, held in Montréal.⁶⁹ Eleven full-colour watercolours by O'Brien, illustrating the Canadian highway through the mountains, were on display. These had been painted for exhibition at the Dudley Gallery, London, an institution to which the artist had been invited to contribute works.⁷⁰ Advised by Van Horne, Sir George Stephen purchased all eleven paintings prior to their departure for Great Britain late the following month. The sale netted more than two thousand dollars for O'Brien.⁷¹ He was much pleased that his Rocky Mountain landscape paintings were gaining acceptance, and was indebted to Van Horne for the latter's generous support. In an act of appreciation O'Brien nominated Van Horne as an honorary member of the R.C.A.,⁷² finally establishing a strong and lasting link between the nationalistic aspirations of the C.P.R. Syndicate and those of the Academy.

From this point onward, Van Horne increasingly sought O'Brien's counsel concerning Academicians requesting Company sponsorship. He forwarded to O'Brien letters of application from R.C.A. members Forshaw Day (1837-1903), Frederic Marlett Bell-Smith (1846-1923), Marmaduke Matthews (1837-1913), and Thomas Mower Martin (1838-1934) for "opinions in confidence."⁷³ All were given O'Brien's heartiest recommendation and were granted pass privileges by Van Horne beginning in the summer of 1887. Though there is no evidence that any of these artists became directly involved in Van Horne's publicity campaign (there being no record of them receiving C.P.R. commissions or of their work being utilized in Company advertisements), they did make a significant contribution to the cause. For example, Martin and Bell-Smith made a combined total of not less than twenty-four trips to the Canadian Rockies as part of the C.P.R.'s free pass program, thus keeping northwestern subject matter on display at R.C.A.-O.S.A. exhibitions well into the twentieth century. They surpassed even Fraser and O'Brien in the quantity of their production of Rocky Mountain scenes. Bell-Smith went on to be hailed as "the Premier Painter of the Rockies."⁷⁴

In the summer of 1887 O'Brien also acted as something of an artist-ambassador to the Mountains on behalf of the Company. Following requests by Van Horne, he collaborated in a photographic venture organized by William Notman; provided Gaston Roulet, an artist commissioned by the Marine Department of France, with some helpful hints about painting

the Canadian Rockies; and sketched in the company of Scottish landscape painter James Alfred Aitken (1846-1897), a long-time friend of Van Horne.⁷⁵ While at Laggan, near the head of the Kicking Horse Pass, O'Brien oversaw the work of Forbes, who had failed to produce a single noteworthy painting as a result of his previous summer's activities, and he introduced Matthews and Bell-Smith to the magnificent mountain scenery. In reward for his services O'Brien became the recipient of a number of Company-related favours. In March of 1887 Van Horne purchased six black and white drawings from O'Brien,⁷⁶ and a full-colour watercolour in March, 1888.⁷⁷ Again following Van Horne's example, Sir George Stephen acquired two O'Brien watercolours from a special exhibition held by the artist in Montréal that month, and two more from the annual *Spring Exhibition* of the A.A.M. in April.⁷⁸ In the fall of 1888 the C.P.R. commissioned O'Brien to furnish Toronto's *Globe* with a black and white illustration of the Vancouver vicinity. He was paid sixty dollars for the drawing. Two other sketches of the trees in Stanley Park were sent to Van Horne for appraisal and disposal.⁷⁹ They were probably a personal commission from Van Horne, there being no record of Company payment for them. On April 17, 1889, Carter H. Harrison, a Victorian author and adventurer, published the account of his world tour in a 569-page volume entitled *A Race with the Sun*, featuring two wood-engravings of northwestern landscapes after O'Brien's *Mount Hermit*, *Summit of the Selkirks* and *Great Glacier from the Road*.⁸⁰ Both watercolour drawings were supplied to G.P. Putnam's Sons Publishers by Van Horne, and the four hundred dollar charge for their interpretation as woodcuts was paid by the C.P.R.⁸¹ *Great Glacier from the Road* had the distinction of being selected as the frontispiece. Finally, Van Horne played an organizational role in staging a major O'Brien exhibition at the McLean's Gallery, Haymarket, London. The show consisted of twenty-seven Rocky Mountain and West Coast scenes, and opened on June 22, 1889.⁸² Like the Fraser-Piccadilly venture two years earlier, the guest list provided by Van Horne was most impressive. Distinguished dignitaries attending the opening included the Marquis of Lorne, Princess Louise, Sir Charles and Lady Tupper, and Sir Donald Smith.⁸³ All had been involved with the C.P.R. during some stage of Van Horne's publicity drive.

By 1889 the Canadian art market was flooded with northwestern landscape watercolours. Since the joint R.C.A.-O.S.A. exhibition in the spring of the previous year, critics had been calling for an end to the monopoliza-



fig.4 Thomas Mower MARTIN (1838-1934). *Train in the Mountains* n.d. Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 137.7 cm. Coll.: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary.

tion of exhibition space by "mountaineers."⁸⁴ Van Horne responded to this growing discontent by altering the character of his publicity scheme. He would no longer stress quantity, but quality. Commencing in the summer of 1889 he sent artists westward with instructions to paint large oil compositions of specific landmarks along the C.P.R. line. These paintings were intended for installation in Company hotels or destined for the private collections of Syndicate members. Some were to be photo-mechanically reproduced in portfolios of C.P.R. scenery.

Celebrated American artist Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) was the first painter to be so commissioned. In August through November of 1889 he was in the North West making sketches in the regions of Banff and Glacier House. He was provided with free pass privileges, letters of introduction to C.P.R. Western representatives, first-class reservations at the C.P.R.'s Banff, Glacier House, and Vancouver Hotels, exclusive use of a caboose car in which to paint, a hand-car for short excursions along the line, and unrestricted train-stopping authority.⁸⁵ On April 26, 1890, he informed Van Horne of the completion of three large canvases: *Mount Sir Donald*,⁸⁶ which he boasted was one of the "finest pictures" of his career, *Lake Louise*,⁸⁷ (the study for which is reproduced as fig.5), and *Sunrise from*

Glacier Station.⁸⁸ This resulted in a May 22 visit by Sir George Stephen to Bierstadt's Broadway Avenue studio in New York. Stephen was impressed by *Sunrise* . . . , and managed to charm the artist into giving it to him free of charge. No purchase agreement was made for either *Mount Sir Donald* or *Lake Louise*, but Stephen did commission the artist to paint a companion picture for *Sunrise* . . . on the condition that Van Horne be permitted to supervise the assignment. Later, Van Horne advised Bierstadt that neither the C.P.R. nor its associated concerns could make use of *Mount Sir Donald* "owing to its size," or *Lake Louise* because there was "too much water in it." He was very precise in dictating a topic for the Stephen commission:

Paint Mount Baker from the first little bridge west of our Stone River bridge. . . . I think it the finest natural composition I have ever seen. The point indicated is the nearest one on our line from which a good view of Mount Baker can be had. The Fraser River, very broad here, stretches away toward it, the centre cone of Mount Baker rises apparently directly from the river and is frequently reflected in it with great distinctness. The bridge I refer to is, I think, number 118 ⁸⁹

Bierstadt acknowledged Van Horne's recommendations as being "good" and departed for the North West via Montréal on October 15, 1890.⁹⁰ He visited briefly with Van Horne on the 16th and was on his way westward later that same day. Bierstadt was fortunate enough to capture the image of Mount Baker on a clear November morning. His field sketch (fig.6) was utilized in the execution of a large *Mount Baker* oil painting, which was "well under way" in New York by January of the following year.⁹¹ On January 27, when Van Horne visited the artist's studio, *Mount Baker* was very near completion. It met with his approval and was shipped via steamer from New York to Stephen's residence in London not later than February 21. Here again is a fine example of Van Horne's control over a C.P.R.-related commission. Not only did he arrange the commission on behalf of his colleague, but he instructed the artist as to the precise subject and vantage point, scheduled the artist's trip, arranged for transportation and accommodation, and ultimately judged the result, all this despite the fact that Albert Bierstadt was one of the most reputable of all Rocky Mountain landscape painters and Sir George was himself a connoisseur and patron of fine art.



fig.5 Albert BIERSTADT (1830-1902). *Victoria Glacier at Lake Louise* 1889. Oil on canvas, 40.6 x 53.3 cm. Private coll., Washington, D.C. (Photo: Adams Davidson Galleries, Washington, D.C.)

Looking at Bierstadt's rather unsophisticated sketch of *Mount Baker* it is difficult to assess what Van Horne envisioned in his instructions to the artist. It is probable that the large studio rendition was more like the impressive *Mount Baker at Sunset* by William Brymner (1855-1925) (fig.7), commissioned and executed in 1892 for Van Horne's personal collection. It was photo-mechanically reproduced in a C.P.R. portfolio of mountain scenes entitled *Glimpses Along the Line* (1894) (fig.8). The artist's *Lake Agnes* was also illustrated in this publication, along with works by John Hammond (1843-1939) and George Horne Russell (1861-1933). The former was represented by *Above the Clouds*, *Lake Louise*, 1892,⁹² and *The Three Sisters*, 1892 (fig.9). Russell contributed *Beaver Valley*, *Selkirk Mountains* of c.1893, the latter being dissimilar to his *Hermit Range*, *Selkirk Mountains* of 1896 (fig.10). Van Horne supervised every phase of the production of this publication.

Both Hammond and Russell had long been associated with Van Horne and the C.P.R. In 1870 Hammond had crossed Canada on the first successful survey party, mapping out the proposed route for the transcontinental railway through the Rocky Mountains.⁹³ From 1871 to 1882 he had been employed by Notman and Son as a painter of photographs,⁹⁴ and

would probably have worked on northwestern subjects in this capacity. Between 1889 and 1901 he travelled extensively in the Far East, on several occasions sponsored by Van Horne as a promotion for the new C.P.R. steamship connections from Vancouver to the Orient. When Hammond travelled to the North West in the summer of 1892 it was his first attempt at painting a large series of canvases dealing exclusively with Canadian subjects. His venture was a stunning success. Van Horne was so impressed by Hammond's Rocky Mountain oil paintings that he purchased seventeen scenes (among them the aforementioned *Above the Clouds*, *Lake Louise* and *The Three Sisters*), and arranged for their exhibition at the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. This was the largest single purchase of paintings by any one artist, at any one time, in the history of the Company. It also represented the largest collection of paintings exhibited by a Canadian artist in Chicago. Other painters sponsored by the R.C.A. were permitted to submit a maximum of three works.⁹⁵

As early as 1889 Russell was also colouring photographs in the Notman studio in Montréal.⁹⁶ Van Horne seems to have been influential in persuading Russell to emigrate from England to take up the position in that year.⁹⁷ Russell and Van Horne kept close company throughout the 1890's,



fig.6 **Albert BIERSTADT** (1830-1902), *Mount Baker, Washington, from the Fraser River* 1890. Oil on canvas, 36.0 x 32.0 cm. Coll.: Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N.Y.



fig.7 William BRYMNER (1855-1925). *Mount Baker* 1892. Photo-mechanical reproduction, 22.2 x 13.3 cm, after *Mount Baker at Sunset* 1892 (oil on canvas, 152.4 x 106.7 cm., location unknown). (Photo: Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives, Montréal.)



fig.8 *Glimpses Along the Line of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (cover) 1894. (Photo: Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives, Montréal.)



fig.9 **John HAMMOND** (1843-1939). *The Three Sisters* 1892. Photo-mechanical reproduction, 15.2 x 22.9 cm., after *The Three Sisters* 1892 (oil on canvas, dimensions and location unknown). (Photo: Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives, Montréal.)

sharing the small village of St. Andrews, New Brunswick, as their choice location for summer retreats. Russell was commissioned by Van Horne to paint on behalf of the C.P.R. on at least two occasions: in 1892 or 1893, and in 1896. The precise nature of these commissions remains unknown.

Van Horne maintained extremely close ties with Canadian art activities during the remainder of his career with the C.P.R. Not only did he frequent annual R.C.A. meetings and openings as an honorary member of that society, but he became actively involved in the functioning of the Art Association of Montreal. Commencing in 1891 he and his business associate Robert Reford sat on the A.A.M. Gallery Committee. In that same year Syndicate members Sir Donald Smith and R.B. Angus served as President and member, respectively, of the Advisory Council. It is therefore not surprising that a record of Dominion artists directly or indirectly involved with Van Horne and/or the C.P.R. reads like a nearly complete list of significant personalities in late nineteenth-century Canadian painting.⁹⁸ Existing documentation reveals that before the turn of the twentieth century Van Horne issued free passes or reduced-fare tickets to not less than thirty-three prominent artists (all regular contributors to the R.C.A., O.S.A. or A.A.M. exhibitions) on more than one hundred occasions.⁹⁹ He



fig.10 **George Horne RUSSELL** (1861-1933). *The Hermit Range, Selkirk Mountains* 1896. Oil on canvas, 153 x 214 cm. Coll.: Concordia Art Gallery, Concordia University, Montréal.

commissioned and/or purchased at least fifty-six landscape paintings on behalf of the C.P.R. during the same period. Company Directors Van Horne, Stephen and Smith acquired a minimum of forty-eight works by C.P.R. pass recipients for their private collections. At least fifty other Canadian artists were awarded C.P.R. executive portrait commissions, produced Rocky Mountain "potboilers" or had become involved in such art-related activities with Van Horne as sketching with him in his capacity as a member of Montréal's Pen and Palette Club.

Van Horne's free pass program and his decision to offer corporate commissions was so successful in attracting painters to the North West that by 1887, only two years after the completion of the transcontinental line, Rocky Mountain landscapes dominated Canadian art. So many artists reserved their best works to flatter their C.P.R. patrons in Montréal that the city displaced Toronto as the Dominion's most important art centre.¹⁰⁰ The C.P.R., Canada's largest and most powerful privately owned corporation, brought substantial economic advantages to Montréal, allowing the city's businessmen/art collectors to continue to extend their patronage to a core of established landscape artists while fostering the growth of a new generation of Canadian painters, most of them Paris-trained.

Not only did Van Horne's art patronage program offer financial incentives for artists to paint uniquely Canadian subjects, but it promoted the northwestern landscape as being "national" in character by sponsoring major exhibitions in Europe and the United States. The Company supported one-man shows by Fraser in Piccadilly and New York, by O'Brien in Haymarket, and by Hammond at the Columbian Exposition. These were the first instances in Canadian art history of Dominion artists featuring exclusively Canadian subject matter in solo exhibitions outside this country.

While Van Horne's scheme may have made no significant or direct contribution toward inducing immigration, it was extremely effective in bringing about the first widespread acceptance in Canada of the myth of the land as a basis for a national art.¹⁰¹ The C.P.R.'s sponsorship of northwestern landscape art as initiated and supervised by Van Horne played a role of paramount importance in the foundation of what must be considered the first uniquely Canadian school of painting – a truly national vision which served as a touchstone for future generations of landscape artists in this country.

Allan Pringle
Montréal.

Notes

¹ Van Horne was persuaded by fellow American citizen James J. Hill, an original incorporator of the C.P.R. Syndicate, to emigrate to Canada. He had formerly been General Superintendent of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad and consultant for the Union Pacific transcontinental line.

² Alexander Begg reported directly and regularly to Van Horne in Montréal.

³ James B. HEDGES, *Building the Canadian West* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1939), pp. 95-101.

⁴ Martin CONWAY, "Sir William Van Horne's Collection in Montreal," *Connoisseur*, XII (July 1905), pp. 135-42.

⁵ It was Sandford Fleming who first realized the potential of visual images as a means of promoting the opening of Canada's North West. His employment of photographers Charles Horetzky and Benjamin F. Baltzly in 1871, Alexander Henderson commencing in 1872, and watercolourist William Armstrong in 1877 launched the C.P.R.'s future as an art patron. The work of these men provided inspiration to many young artists in the new Dominion. It proved to be the invitation to artistic adventure that helped draw many artists into the service of the C.P.R. during the "Van Horne campaign."

⁶ David W. MONAGHAN, *Oliver Buell: Photographer* (Montréal: Concordia Art Gallery, 1984), p. 4.

⁷ J. Russell HARPER, *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1970), pp. 35, 81.

- 8 Two construction crews worked on the C.P.R. line. One started on the West Coast and worked its way eastward. The other began in northern Ontario and proceeded westward across the Prairies. They met at Craigellachie, British Columbia, on November 7, 1885.
- 9 Observations from various sources, including: R.H. HUBBARD, *European Paintings in Canadian Collections* (Toronto: 1956), Vol. 1, pp. xxii, xxiii, Vol. 2, pp. xvii, xxii; *Arcadia* I (No. 21, 1 Mar. 1893), pp. 453-54; *Canadian Magazine of Politics* I (No. 2, 1892), pp. 156-62; *Dominion Illustrated News* I (No. 1, Aug. 1888), p. 94; II (No. 41, 13 Apr. 1889), p. 227; II (No. 42, 20 Apr. 1889), p. 252; *Toronto Saturday Night* VIII (No. 47, 12 Oct. 1895), p. 9; IX (No. 19, 28 Mar. 1896), p. 9; IX (No. 23, 25 Apr. 1896), p. 9; IX (No. 31, 20 June 1896), p. 9; IX (No. 34, 11 July 1896), p. 9; IX (No. 37, 1 Aug. 1896), p. 9.
- 10 CONWAY, pp. 135-42.
- 11 HUBBARD, Vol. 2, p. xvii.
- 12 HUBBARD, Vol. 1, p. xxii.
- 13 "Full service" included regular and efficient passenger and baggage service to Port Moody and return, as well as modern hotel facilities *en route*.
- 14 Van Horne's business correspondence is kept in the *Van Horne Letterbooks* of the Canadian Pacific Corporate Archives, Montréal. All subsequent references to letters written to or by Van Horne refer to this collection.
- 15 Duplicates of Van Horne's correspondence were made, utilizing the copy press process. Acidic ink has eaten through the aged and brittle onion-skin paper. Today these copies literally disintegrate at the touch.
- 16 Dennis REID, *Our Own Country Canada* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1979), p. 302.
- 17 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 21 Oct. 1885.
- 18 "Affair with the Land," *Weekend Magazine* (25 Nov. 1978), p. 11.
- 19 In conversation with Dennis REID, 15 Aug. 1984.
- 20 FORBES to VAN HORNE, 22 May 1886.
- 21 Fraser belonged to the American Watercolour Society, the Salmagundi Club of New York, the New York Watercolour Society and the Boston Watercolour Society. Forbes exhibited in Philadelphia and New York prior to his involvement with the C.P.R. Fraser took up full-time residence in Boston in 1885, and Forbes in New York in 1893.
- 22 Kathryn L. KOLLAR, *John Arthur Fraser, 1838-1898* (M.F.A. thesis, Montréal: Concordia University, 1981), p. 75.
- 23 Fraser had previously been Notman's Toronto-based partner.
- 24 VAN HORNE to T.H. LEE of the Herald Printing Company, N.Y., 6 June 1886.
- 25 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 6 Jan. 1886.
- 26 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 12 Feb. 1886.
- 27 REID, p. 385.
- 28 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 12 Feb. 1886.
- 29 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 26 Nov. 1886.
- 30 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 24 Mar. 1886.
- 31 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 2 Apr. 1886.
- 32 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 24 Mar. 1886.
- 33 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 16 Feb. 1886.
- 34 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 19 Feb. 1886.
- 35 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 20 Feb. 1886.
- 36 *Mount Stephen*, 1886, watercolour on paper, 66.0 x 91.4 cm. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Baxter, Kingston, Ont. REID, p. 387.
- 37 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 1 Jan. 1893.
- 38 *Fraser River and the C.P.R. Line*, 1886, watercolour on paper, 46.3 x 66.8 cm. Collection of the Art Gallery of Hamilton. REID, p. 395.
- 39 VAN HORNE to BEGG, 15 Apr. 1886.
- 40 BEGG to VAN HORNE, 1 May 1886.
- 41 VAN HORNE to BEGG, 27 Apr. 1886.
- 42 BEGG to VAN HORNE, 15 May 1886.

- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 REID, p. 382.
- 46 J.E. HODGSON, "Review of the Canadian Art Gallery," *Report of the Minister of Agriculture* (Ottawa: Dominion Government, 1887), pp. 66-67.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 16 June 1886.
- 49 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 20 July 1886.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 VAN HORNE to FRASER, 8 Dec. 1886.
- 53 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 22 Dec. 1886.
- 54 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 23 Dec. 1886.
- 55 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 8 Jan. 1887.
- 56 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 1 Mar. 1887.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 VAN HORNE to Erastee WIMAN, 16 Apr. 1887.
- 59 VAN HORNE to Harry MOODY, 16 Apr. 1887.
- 60 *Ibid.*
- 61 FRASER to VAN HORNE, 24 Sept. 1887. These works included *A Glacier Stream on Mount Stephen*, *Beaver Foothills – Morning Mist*, *Hermit Peak After Snow Storm*, *Near Vancouver (Showery)*, *Rock Slide and Debris from Glacier*, and *Sunset on Mount Stephen*. Both REID and KOLLAR contend that Fraser did not visit the Rockies in the summer of 1887. I believe he made the trip westward, for several reasons. First, he kept Van Horne informed of his every move overseas and there is correspondence between the two men referring to preparations underway for a summer "campaign" (18 June 1887). Except for *Rock Slide*, the titles of the watercolours sent to Van Horne had not previously appeared in the artist's *oeuvre*. The works had been forwarded from Boston, indicating the artist had returned to North America sometime during the summer. There is no record of Fraser's involvement in any other project during the month of August. Finally, it is dubious that Van Horne would place Fraser on the C.P.R. payroll, let the artist abandon his proposed sketching activities in the field, and then purchase studio works (either from 1886 sketches or, recalling the difficulties Fraser had had with these works, from photographs) for his personal collection. Van Horne was both too rigid in his business principles and too much of an art connoisseur to allow this to happen.
- 62 VAN HORNE to O'BRIEN, 19 Oct. 1885.
- 63 VAN HORNE to Harry ABBOTT, 23 Aug. 1886.
- 64 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 22 Nov. 1886.
- 65 *Bridge – Kicking Horse Pass – Second Crossing*, 1887, watercolour on paper, 103.0 x 69.2 cm. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. F. Schaeffer, Toronto. It was titled *Through the Rocky Mountains, a Pass on the Canadian Highway* in REID, p. 415.
- 66 VAN, "Art and Artists," *Toronto Saturday Night* VI (No. 13, 18 Feb. 1893), p. 15.
- 67 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 10 Mar. 1887.
- 68 *Mountain Landscape*, 1886, watercolour on paper, 101.0 x 53.3 cm. Collection of Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.
- 69 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 12 Apr. 1887.
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 REID, p. 410.
- 72 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 12 Apr. 1887.
- 73 VAN HORNE to O'BRIEN, 2 May 1887.
- 74 John E. STALEY, "The Premier Painter of the Rockies," *Macleans* XXV (No. 2, Dec. 1912).
- 75 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 12 May 1887.
- 76 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 10 Mar. 1887.
- 77 REID, p. 419.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 419.
- 79 O'BRIEN to VAN HORNE, 22 Oct. 1888, 21 Jan. 1889.

- 80 G.P. PUTNAM to VAN HORNE, 22 May 1889.
- 81 VAN HORNE to PUTNAM, June 1889.
- 82 REID, p. 423.
- 83 "Review of O'Brien's Haymarket Exhibition," *Toronto Saturday Night* II (No. 36, 17 Aug. 1889), p. 6.
- 84 "Review of the Spring 1888 Exhibition of the R.C.A./O.S.A.," *The Week* XXIV (24 May 1888), p. 417.
- 85 VAN HORNE to BIERSTADT, 30 July 1889.
- 86 *Mount Sir Donald*, 1889, oil on canvas, 146 x 212 cm. Collection of the New Bedford Public Library, New Bedford, Massachusetts. Presently bears the title *Rocky Mountains in the Selkirk Range near the Canadian Border*.
- 87 *Lake Louise*, 1890, oil on canvas, 95.3 x 149.9 cm. Collection of Haussner's Restaurant, Baltimore, Maryland.
- 88 *Sunrise from Glacier Station*, 1890, oil on canvas, 75 x 105 cm. Collection of the Mount Stephen Club, Montréal. This painting was referred to as *Sunset with Railroad* in REID, p. 436. It was not a commission, but a gift.
- 89 VAN HORNE to BIERSTADT, 23 Aug. 1890.
- 90 BIERSTADT to VAN HORNE, 15 Oct. 1890.
- 91 BIERSTADT to VAN HORNE, 6 Jan. 1891.
- 92 *Above the Clouds, Lake Louise*, 1892, oil on canvas, 282 x 216 cm. Location unknown. This work hung in the lobby of the Royal Alexandra Hotel, Winnipeg, until the demolition of the Hotel in the 1960's.
- 93 HARPER, p. 246.
- 94 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- 95 "Chicago Worlds Fair Selection," *Toronto Saturday Night* VI (No. 8, 14 Jan. 1893), p. 14.
- 96 Ann THOMAS, *Canadian Painting and Photography, 1860-1900* (Montréal: McCord Museum, 1979), p. 94.
- 97 HARPER, p. 276.
- 98 Most of the very few artists active between 1885 and 1900 who can be excluded from such a role are omitted for one of three reasons: they chose to live and work outside of this country (e.g.: Allan Edson, Henry Sandham, F.A. Verner, Paul Peel), they were regionalists or isolationists (e.g.: Daniel Fowler), or they were young French Canadian artists (e.g.: Ozias Leduc, Henri Beau, Marie-Joseph-Georges Delfosse, Joseph-Charles Franchère, Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Côté) who were neither inclined toward, nor interested in, the painting of northwestern landscapes.
- 99 These figures do not include free passes awarded to artists' families, friends and servants, nor do they indicate the number of photographers, journalists, writers, scientists or dignitaries involved in sketching activities.
- 100 REID (pp. 196-202) maintains that, during the 1870's, Torontonians had increasingly come to see their city as the cultural centre of Canada. Yet, in 1887, when Toronto and Montréal were approximately equal in population, Montréal was able to support two successful art galleries, A.J. Pell's and William Scott's, as well as the Art Association of Montreal. In an article dated 3 Dec. 1887, Jimmie REMBRANDT, art critic for *Toronto Saturday Night*, noted that the Ontario Society of Artists was struggling to survive, and that the city's last commercial gallery had been obliged to close its doors due to a lack of support and of an "educated" clientele.
- 101 REID, p. 6.

WILLIAM CORNELIUS VAN HORNE, DIRECTEUR ARTISTIQUE, CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

Au début des années 1880, d'importants paysagistes du Dominion, la plupart desquels étaient membres de l'Académie royale des arts du Canada, recherchaient un sujet qui traduirait le nationalisme de leurs protecteurs, le gouvernement du Dominion et l'Académie. Ils tentaient de trouver des paysages qui pourraient symboliser la prospérité future du pays et qui donneraient à la nation un nouveau sentiment de fierté. Pour une grande partie de la population canadienne, la magnificence légendaire des montagnes Rocheuses représentait déjà la nationalité mais les peintres pouvaient difficilement atteindre ces régions éloignées.

Au cours de cette période, le Syndicat des chemins de fer du Canadien Pacifique lançait une campagne de publicité de grande envergure qui visait à attirer l'attention sur le recul de la frontière nord-ouest. C'est pour cette raison que le Canadien Pacifique a jugé nécessaire d'avoir à sa disposition des oeuvres illustrant ces régions de l'Ouest qui devenaient accessibles.

William Cornelius Van Horne, directeur général du Canadien Pacifique, a brillamment conçu une façon de répondre aux besoins des peintres et de la Société. Dès 1882, il offre aux artistes, dont les oeuvres feraient office de véhicule publicitaire pour la Société, de voyager gratuitement à bord de ses trains. Un groupe choisi de peintres s'est même vu offrir à titre gracieux, en sus du transport, l'hébergement, la nourriture et des services télégraphiques, le secours d'un aide de camp, des wagons-stations privés, des promesses d'achat pour leurs oeuvres, des commandes et de l'aide concernant l'organisation d'expositions de tableaux représentant le Canadien Pacifique et le Nord-ouest. Toutefois, en échange de tous ces avantages les artistes tels John Arthur Fraser, Lucius Richard O'Brien, William Brymner, John Hammond, George Horne Russell et Albert Bierstadt devaient se conformer aux goûts esthétiques de Van Horne, qui veillait à chaque étape du programme. Van Horne voyait à toutes les commandes ayant trait au Canadien Pacifique: il fournissait des photographies aux artistes, leur donnait des suggestions précises concernant la composition et la taille de l'oeuvre, exprimait un jugement critique sur celle-ci et en dernier lieu l'acceptait ou la rejetait. De fait, nous pourrions même dire que le rôle que jouait Van Horne auprès des artistes était plutôt celui d'un mentor que d'un protecteur.

Le programme de protection des arts mis sur pied par Van Horne a attiré tellement d'artistes dans le Nord-ouest qu'en 1887 les paysages des montagnes Rocheuses dominaient dans l'art canadien. Le programme a très bien réussi à faire accepter, pour la première fois, à la population canadienne le mythe de la terre en tant que fondement de l'art national. La protection du Canadien Pacifique sous la gouverne de Van Horne a exercé une très grande influence sur la fondation de la première "école" de peinture entièrement canadienne, en instaurant une véritable vision nationale qui a servi de base aux générations futures de paysagistes canadiens.

Traduction: Marianne Thomas