

Currier & Ives

Active Dates: 1857-1907¹

Location:

2 Spruce Street, N.Y? ²

115 Nassau Street, N.Y(?)³

Garden City, New York(?)⁴

Specialty: Currier & Ives was a lithography firm. The enterprise both produced and sold prints which were considered reflections of American life. ⁵

Gallery History

The Currier & Ives enterprise was a joint effort run by Nathaniel Currier (1813-1888) and James Merritt (1824-1895). Currier founded the company in 1834, and he hired Ives to join the enterprise in 1852. In 1857 Ives became a partner and the business became known as Currier and Ives. ⁶

Some designs were more literal in their reflection, more matter of fact, and others were more satirical. The expansive subject matter featured in these prints had much to do with the wide range of artists involved in the creation process. The most frequently appearing names include: Louis Maurer who produced genre scenes and Fanny Palmer who produced landscape scenes. Arthur F. Tait most remembered for his sporting and western scenes and George H. Durrie for his winter scenes are two additional names whose existing works became lithographs as well. ⁷

Much contemporary press and recognition still exists in memory of this company. Some prints continue to reappear in contemporary exhibitions both to honor and commemorate this shop for recording American life prior to photography. ⁸ Prints that ranged from five cents to three dollars in price have increased in value, now being sold for thousands of dollars. ⁹

¹ The Editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica, ed., "Currier & Ives," Encyclopædia Britannica, last modified February 19, 2020, accessed 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Currier-and-Ives>

² Gene Gable, "Scanning Around With Gene: A Picture Print from Currier & Ives," Creative Pro, last modified 2018, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://creativepro.com/scanning-around-gene-picture-print-currier-ives/>

³ Gable, "Scanning Around," Creative Pro.

⁴ Gable, "Scanning Around," Creative Pro.

⁵ "Currier and Ives," New World Encyclopedia, accessed April 20, 2020, https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Currier_and_Ives; Robert K. Newman, "BRIEF HISTORY OF N. CURRIER AND CURRIER & IVES," The Old Print Shop, last modified 2010, accessed April 20, 2020, <http://oldprintshop.com/brief-history-currier-ives>

⁶ The Editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica, "Currier & Ives," Encyclopædia Britannica.

⁷ Currier and Ives," New World Encyclopedia; Newman, "BRIEF HISTORY," The Old Print Shop.

⁸ Grace Glueck, "Art in Review; Currier & Ives," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), August 4, 2006, accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/04/arts/art-in-review-currier-ives.html>

⁹ David L. Shirey, "Currier & Ives Again in Fashion," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), January 4, 1946, 86, accessed April 20, 2020,

https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1976/01/04/121532509.pdf?pdf_redirect=true&ip=0

Illustrations



Fig 1. Currier & Ives “Evening” print showing sleighs arriving to a wintertime party, 1854. Via Ohio Memory ¹⁰

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Author’s Initials: CP

Primary Sources:

Glueck, Grace. "Art in Review; Currier & Ives." *The New York Times* (New York, NY), August 4, 2006. Accessed April 20, 2020.

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Shirey, David L. "Currier & Ives Again in Fashion." *The New York Times* (New York, NY), January 4, 1946. Accessed April 20, 2020.

https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1976/01/04/121532509.pdf?pdf_redirect=true&ip=0.

¹⁰ "Like A Picture Print by Currier and Ives," Ohio Memory, last modified December 2013, accessed April 23, 2020, <https://ohiomemory.ohiohistory.org/archives/1481>

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Illustration Sources

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