

Grape and Cable

A Guide to help distinguish between
Northwood and Fenton versions

Glen and Stephen Thistlewood

© 2019

All Rights Reserved



Northwood Grape & Cable pie crust edge bowl in aqua opal

Protected under all applicable international laws and all rights are reserved.

No image, text, or any part thereof may be copied, shared or transmitted to others without permission from the Copyright holders. Information herein may not be posted or made available, in whole or in part, on any website, social media site, FTP site, electronic bulletin board, newsgroup, or their equivalent.

FREE TO NETWORK READERS - NO CHARGE SHOULD BE MADE FOR THIS eBook

How to distinguish between Northwood and Fenton GRAPE AND CABLE



Northwood and Fenton both made the popular pattern Grape & Cable. Northwood produced it in a very wide range of shapes, while Fenton produced only plates and bowls (in several sizes). There are usually certain characteristics that enable collectors to distinguish between the two makers fairly easily, although sometimes it's a little more of a challenge: the following guide might help.

Bowls and Plates

The main confusion is with the 8" and 9" bowls and plates, made by both Northwood and Fenton. Some distinguishing characteristics for these two shapes may help to sort out the confusion.

The N Mark

The clearest way to tell if you have a Northwood item is to see if it has a N (Northwood mark). N in a circle underlined.



Be aware that Northwood's Grape & Cable has been faked, and some bowls have a large, heavy-looking N (not in a circle and not underlined). Most fakes have a ground base. Read more [about them here](#). They are not seen too often, so don't worry unduly.

Edge Treatment

If a bowl has a **pie crust** edge, then it is Northwood, not Fenton (again be aware of fakes that have been made with this edge).

Right: a characteristic Northwood pie crust edge on a Grape & Cable bowl.

Cover photo also shows a Northwood pie crust edge Grape & Cable bowl in aqua opal.

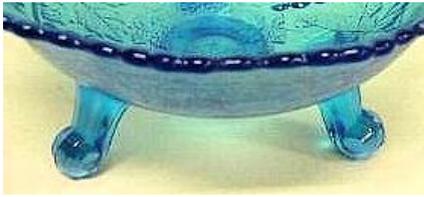


A **scallop and flute edge** will be Fenton's.

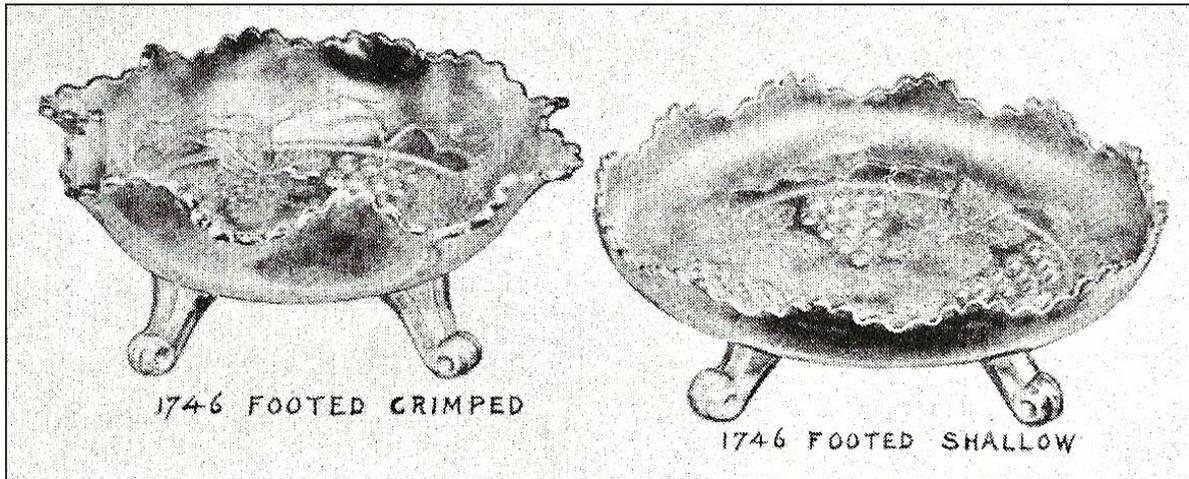
Right: scallop and flute edge on Fenton's Grape & Cable.



Both Northwood and Fenton made pieces with **spatula feet** and collar bases. **Scroll or Ball feet** on 8" and 9" bowls and plates are usually Fenton.



Above left: scroll /ball feet on a Fenton Grape & Cable bowl in celeste blue. Above right: spatula feet, also on a Fenton bowl. Note that Northwood also used spatula feet on some Grape & Cable items.



From Fenton's Trade Catalogue c. 1915

Colors

The colors may tell you which maker produced your Grape & Cable piece. Vaseline, red, amberina, moonstone or celeste blue are all typically from Fenton. Ice blue, ice green and aqua opal (see cover picture), on the other hand, are all typically from Northwood. But there can be exceptions (see the following section on the large fruit bowls, for ice green).



Fenton's celeste blue



Fenton's red – courtesy Seeck Auctions

Exterior Patterns and Stippling

Northwood's Grape & Cable sometimes has a Basketweave or Meander exterior design. Northwood also used stippling sometimes on the Grape & Cable pattern (tiny raised dots over the background, that reflect the iridescence and give a textured effect – you can see them in the aqua opal bowl with the pie crust edge, above right).



Northwood's Basketweave exterior



Northwood's Meander exterior



Note: some Grape & Cable fakes also have Basketweave exterior (see left). This fake has several clear characteristics that show it is indeed a fake! The collar base is ground; it has a large letter N in the middle (not underlined and not in a circle). Crucially, compare the pie crust edge on the fake with the genuine article above. The genuine Northwood pie crust edge is deeper and extends further into the bowl, going right into the basketweave pattern. On the fake, it is shallow and hardly touches the basketweave.

Fakes are not seen too often, fortunately. You can [read about them here](#).

Above left: **Fake** Grape & Cable bowl showing the Basketweave exterior

Count the Grapes

If the above characteristics have not already determined whether your 8" - 9" bowl or plate is Fenton or Northwood, then you most likely have a plain backed bowl or plate with no clues from the edge or color as to the manufacturer. At this point, it's necessary to count the grapes! Fenton's pieces usually have four bunches of grapes neatly arranged rather like "pool balls in a rack." There are usually fourteen grapes per bunch (though fifteen in one bunch is also possible). Northwood's bunches usually have more grapes to the bunch (twenty one to twenty four) and the grapes are more randomly set out, in a more naturalistic manner.

The Large Footed bowls



Grape & Cable large footed fruit (or orange) bowl, courtesy Seeck Auctions

These beautiful, showy bowls have three scroll feet and come in two sizes of the large bowl, from both Northwood and Fenton (see photo below). The regular large versions are approximately 10" across - a little more or less depending on how much the large flutes (also called flames) are flared outwards or up – and are 4" or 5" high. The extra-large versions are around 11" across and stand taller, around 6" or 7" high. A small (6" approx.) sauce was also made by Fenton, matching the master bowls, however it is very seldom seen (see the end of this section for further information).

So, is it possible to tell if the maker was Northwood or Fenton? There are some easy-to-spot characteristics that will help (and of course, if you have an N mark, then it's "job done").

Right: two sizes of fruit bowl from Fenton – each has the Persian Medallion interior. Photo courtesy Dave Doty. The ice green on the left is the typical size, around 10" across. The green one on the right is larger, at around 11" across.



Stippling or Banding

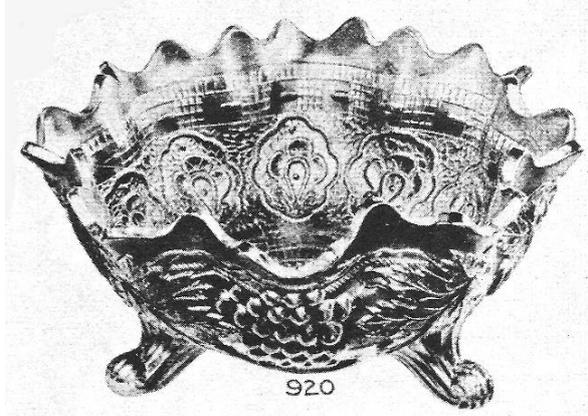
Northwood's version sometimes has stippling, or a band around the top, or even both. The example on the right has both – it is stippled and banded.

Photo right, courtesy Seeck Auctions.



Patterns

Fenton's version often has Persian Medallion inside the bowl (see immediately below), although it is also found plain. Rarely, a Blackberry interior can be found – this is very probably Fenton's. Fenton's bowls are also found with advertising for "Pacific Coast Mail Order" on a plain interior.



From Fenton trade catalogue c. 1915



Photo courtesy Seeck Auctions



Grape & Cable with Blackberry interior, courtesy Seeck Auctions

Color

Aqua opal is Northwood's, but only one example is currently known! Ice blue is Northwood's but ice green could be either maker (the Fenton version is on the right).

Right: ice green Grape & Cable fruit bowl from Fenton with Persian Medallion interior. Courtesy Seeck Auctions.



Definition on the Scroll Feet

An often-expressed opinion among collectors is that the Fenton feet have well defined ribbing all the way from top to toe. The ribbing on the Northwood feet tends to be less defined, and seems to fade out at the ends. You can see this loss of definition on the Northwood fruit bowl right (courtesy Seeck Auctions). However, please note that this is not always the case. Some large bowls with well-defined ribbing are known with N marks (and thus are Northwood).



Small Footed Sauces



Small, footed sauces, approx. 6" across, that match the large bowls, were made by Fenton. They have the Persian Medallion interior and a Grape & Cable exterior. The marigold example shown here (left and below) is courtesy of Seeck Auctions. They are very seldom seen.



Other Shapes in Northwood's Grape & Cable

Previous thinking was that Northwood had introduced the Grape & Cable pattern in 1910 – however, our research ([Carnival Network ezine #10, 2016](#)) proved that it was actually introduced earlier, in 1909. A Golden Iris (marigold) Grape & Cable punch set was featured in a November 1909 newspaper; a multitude of other shapes followed, and by 1911 the market was full of Grape & Cable. The last ad we can find in Butler Brothers' catalogue for Northwood's Grape & Cable pattern was in 1918. Fenton introduced their version of the Grape & Cable pattern in c. 1911-12; however, they produced it for far longer, with the last Butler Brothers' ads we can see, appearing in the late 1920s.

"EXPOSITION" METALLIC ASST—(Iridescent)
Radiant, showy display makers, as well as profit payers.



<p>1C1653 — Heavy glass, mammoth art shapes, all over relief grape bunches and leaves, burnished metallic violet iridescent, golden sunset hues.</p> <p>1 only 10 1/4 in. mammoth punch or orange bowl, 3 feet.</p> <p>1 only 6 1/4 x 7 1/4 cord. cracker jar.</p> <p>1 " 12 1/4 x 7 deep oval fruit bowl, 4 feet.</p>	<p>1 only 19 in. mammoth rustic embossed vase.</p> <p>1 only 9 1/4 in. high foot deep bowl.</p> <p>1 " 11 in. deep salad dish, 3 feet. 6 in. hbl., lbs. Each, 67c</p>
--	--

Except for the bowls and plates detailed in the main sections above, all the other shapes in Grape & Cable were made by Northwood – and what an amazing range of shapes they were! Pitchers, tumblers, humidors, cookie jars, compotes, bonbons, sweetmeats, punch and whiskey sets, dresser sets, table and breakfast sets, cups and saucers, candle sticks, candle lamps and hatpin holders.

Left: 1910 Butler Brothers' ad with a range of Northwood Grape & Cable shapes.

Right: purple master punch set in Northwood's Grape & Cable. Courtesy Seck Auctions.



Berry Sets

Special mention should be made of the berry sets (comprising six small berry bowls and one large master berry) in Northwood's Grape & Cable pattern, as there are two distinctly different representations and forms. One version has Grape & Cable inside and (usually) Basketweave outside – the other has a plain interior and Grape & Cable with Thumbprint exterior.

On the right (and shown in a Butler Brothers 1910 ad below) is the version where the Grape & Cable pattern is featured on the inner (or top) side of the bowls. The Basketweave pattern is usually seen on the exterior.

Photo right courtesy Seck Auctions.



The other version of the berry sets has a plain interior and the Grape & Cable pattern on the exterior with a distinctive thumbprint pattern encircling the lower part.

Right: green master Grape & Cable berry bowl by Northwood, showing the thumbprint pattern around the lower part. The individual berry dishes also have the thumbprint. Photo courtesy Seck Auctions.



Right: two of the many wonderful shapes in Grape & Cable made by Northwood. Far right is the tobacco humidor (distinguished from the similar cookie jar by having three prongs inside the lid – they held a sponge which kept the tobacco moist.) Photo courtesy Seeck Auctions.



Near right is the exotic-looking sweetmeat. The shape of the lid adds a touch of elegance to this beautiful shape.

We have only touched on the wide range of shapes made by Northwood in the Grape & Cable pattern. Here (right) is one of our favourites, the splendidly showy banana bowl.



Hatpin Holder

The Grape & Cable hatpin holder has been faked and can be found in several Carnival colors including red and blue. But it is very easy to spot the fake! Just look at the prongs at the top. They are pointed upwards and rather tall on the fakes – but the genuine version is much lower at the top and the prongs are flattened.

Right: the red and blue examples shown are the fakes.



[Read more on our website.](#)

Fake

Fake

Genuine Northwood