



THE NATIONAL DEPRESSION GLASS  
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## Stretch Glass has patterns and optics, too! Part Three

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In Part One of this article we discussed how early period (1912 to mid-1930s) stretch glass is usually found without patterns or optics in the glass. Then in the second part of the article, we started discussing the 50 optics and patterns of stretch glass from the early and later periods of production. We started with Adam's rib and made it through one type of Diamond Optic in the second article. Now we will continue on through the patterns. **Diamond Optic (Northwood)**, is very similar to Fenton's Diamond Optic. Clearly the optic goes all over the item. They had a mold for a water pitcher and cover, 2 different tumblers and a mold they used to make the guest set pitcher and a variety of vases. We do not find other shapes made from the water pitcher or tumbler mold, although they could exist. Diamond Optic was made in blue, topaz, Russet and Light Jade Blue. It is more difficult to find it in Light Jade Blue.



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**Diamond Point (Fenton)** is also an optic pattern, so it is viewed through the glass, although there are examples where it is on the exterior such as this candy jar. Diamond Point is typically also found on fan vases, colognes, and powder jars. The colognes and powder jars are particularly interesting because the design is on the inside of each of these items. It also appears on the inside of fan vases. Stretch glass with the Diamond Point optic was made in a variety of colors. The Diamond Point optic was also used by Fenton during the Depression Era and beyond.



**Dolphins (Fenton)** was not only a pattern, but it was a special line of glass at Fenton. It seems the molds were created during the production of stretch glass and they were re-used during the Depression Era and then re-used again for late period stretch glass. Even slag glass is known to have been produced from some of the dolphin molds. Depression-era glass collections often include comports, plates, etc. from this line.

The Dolphin pattern or line in early period stretch glass was made in an extensive assortment of items and is found in Aquamarine, Celeste Blue, Florentine Green, Ruby, Topaz, Tangerine and Wisteria (not all shapes are known in all colors). A Fenton catalog from the early stretch glass period advertised Persian Pearl (iridized crystal glass) Dolphin items but we have yet to find a pure crystal iridized aka Persian Pearl dolphin piece. The author has several dolphin comports and fan vases in which the dolphins are colorless but there is a hint of pink in other areas. We do not know what a Persian Pearl dolphin bowl, comport or vase is supposed to look like, so we have no way of validating if these pieces with the crystal dolphins are really the Persian Pearl items or not.

Dolphin items will include 1, 2 or 3 dolphins. The mint cup has a single dolphin as the stem. The butterball tray has a single dolphin as the handle as does the larger center handled tray aka cookie or sandwich tray. The candy jars, candleholders, comports, bon bons, plates and fan vases have two dolphins which appear as handles on most items. There are a few comports known which were re-shaped to position the dolphins as other than handles but these are believed to be whimses, not production items.

There are two sizes of candy jars, comports and vases; they were all made from the same candy jar base mold and then re-shaped into comports and vases or left as candy jars and given covers. The two sizes of the same item will look to be nearly identical when being viewed individually but when side by side, there is a significant enough difference in size to make them easily distinguishable. As is often the case with glass which is re-shaped, the only reliable measurement is taken

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on the foot, as that is the only area of the glass which was not subject to re-shaping. There is also a large, footed bowl which has twin dolphins on the sides and was made with several top treatments.

Bowls included three dolphins, equally positioned on the sides of the bowls. These bowls were re-shaped extensively and are known in a variety of colors. The triple dolphin rose bowl is the crown jewel of any stretch glass collection. There are few of these in stretch glass known to exist: 4-6 in ruby, 2 in Florentine Green and 1 in Velva Rose. The Velva Rose example was discovered recently leading stretch glass enthusiasts to wonder if there are more of the triple dolphin bowls in hiding. In Depression-era glassware, the triple dolphin bowl is known in Ruby and other colors. Sometimes these later examples have a swirl interior or pattern and other times a diamond optic interior.

Bowls, fan vases and center handled servers are known with diamond optic interiors, created by using the diamond optic plunger. Interestingly, more center handled servers with the diamond optic treatment are known than are 'plain' ones. In the case of bowls and fan vases, the opposite is true.



The Dolphin line was produced during the Depression Era in typical Depression Era colors including: pink, green, aquamarine, blue, orchid, tangerine, royal blue, ruby and crystal. Dolphin items were also made in Fenton's opaque "Chinese" colors: Jade Green, Chinese Yellow, Black, Peking Blue, Lilac and others, including several colors of slag glass.

Dolphins were re-introduced by Fenton in the late period of stretch glass production and remained popular right up to the end of Fenton's production of glassware. Most of the late period stretch glass dolphin items have the Fenton logo. The exception seems to be a number of ruby stretch glass square comports (a square comport is one with 4 flared sides).



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These late period comports (pictured on the left) are often mistaken for early period comports (pictured on the right) but they are not. The key to differentiating early and late period dolphin comports and fan vases is the thickness of the foot: a thicker foot is from the early period and a thinner foot from the later period. There are many dolphin whimsies so be on the lookout for them.



Serving shrimp cocktails in dolphin glass is a great way to utilize vintage glass on your buffet table. Here it is presented in stretch glass; it would be equally inviting in Depression-era glassware.



**Double Scroll (Imperial)**, is descriptive but not an OMN.

Console sets were produced in Ruby Ice, Green Ice, Blue Ice, Iris Ice and other colors of stretch glass. In the Depression Era, these bowls and candleholders are found in Vaseline glass and other colors; some have wheel cuttings.

**Lincoln Inn** – Depression-era collectors are quite familiar with this line of dinnerware, which is known in several colors and an expansive array of items, including some whimsy items. Fenton did not produce Lincoln Inn during the early period of stretch glass production, but they did make a pitcher and tumbler set which appears in the 1995 catalog in Celeste Blue stretch glass.



The 5 pc. water set (pitcher and 4 tumblers) and the individual tumblers were available. There is also a sample of a Velva Rose stretch glass sugar made during the late period. There is no evidence this item was put into the line of Velva Rose stretch glass at any time. Fenton also made a water set for LeVay in dark amethyst or black stretch glass. The stretch glass items are quite attractive when used with the Lincoln Inn dinnerware from the Depression Era.

**Melon (Fenton)** is hardly a pattern as it consists of only 1 known item. The name “Melon” is a contemporary name. Fenton probably had a number for it, as was likely the case when Northwood owned the mold. If you are familiar with Northwood glass, you are thinking, “wait a minute, that is a Northwood bowl.” Yes, it is a Northwood shape, but Velva Rose is a stretch glass color unique to Fenton. Fenton acquired this mold from Northwood when Northwood went out of business in 1925 and used it to make a few of these bowls in Velva Rose stretch glass. They are very heavy,



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made from a lot of glass and are very rare. Depression-era glass collectors may recognize this bowl in the colors in which it was produced by Northwood: Jade Green, Black, Amber, Vaseline and Blue. Northwood offered twisted candleholders with their bowls; there is no evidence that Fenton acquired the candleholder mold, so other candleholders are used with the Velva Rose bowl.

**Melon Rib (Fenton)** is a fun pattern and it is the best illustration of what could be done with a basic piece of stretch glass. Two sizes of a very similar mold existed for Melon Rib; let's call them the larger size and the smaller size. They have mold numbers: 857 for the larger one and 847 for the smaller one. The "normal" shape aka as it comes out of the mold, is a bowl with straight up sides. Sometimes Fenton made a cover to go on this – a very nice cover with a molded flower or a nipple finial.



From the normal bowl, which exists in both the larger and smaller sizes, were made an almost unending array of shapes ranging from a plate on one extreme to a fan vase on the other. The same re-shaping was not always done for both the large and small sizes. Fenton seems to have focused on making bowls in various shapes and fan vases from the larger mold but was much more creative with items from the smaller mold. The most interesting



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item known in Melon Rib is a lamp, made from the same mold as the larger vase.



Melon Rib was made in both the early and late periods of stretch glass production, including in the color Velva Rose. It can be difficult to tell the period when the Velva Rose items were produced but with careful examination there should be a Fenton logo on the late period items. Late period items are also generally thicker glass.

While there is an abundance of Melon Rib in stretch glass, there is much less of it in Depression-era 'crystal' glass in any color. The author has examples of non-iridized Melon Rib in ruby, amber, green, black, Jade Green, crystal, Lilac, Moonstone and other colors, providing evidence that it can be found with diligent hunting.



**Open Work (2 varieties) (US Glass)** is also referred to as **Ribbon Edge**. Produced in both stretch glass and Depression-era glass, these really were for ribbon – we've seen ads showing them with ribbon in the edge. Here is another great example of what you can do with a piece of glass after it comes out of the mold.

This bowl is as close as we get to "Normal," but I think even this bowl was re-shaped a little bit.

Then the finisher begins to work this bowl and look what he does to it – the sides come down and it starts to flatten out, then the edge goes from nearly straight up to flat out. And then to facing down, beginning to give the look of a flip bowl, and then it becomes a plate. And the finisher does all that without damaging the glass in the reticulated edge.



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The second open work variety is even more complicated. They must have had two sizes of molds for this pattern as we find larger ones and smaller ones. This second pattern is like lace.

Here is the vase and a footed bowl in this pattern. Just imagine being the finisher and having to work with this while it is still red hot and pliable. US Glass, or Tiffin Glass (which was part of US Glass for a period of time) continued to produce these in various Depression-era colors.



**Plymouth (Fenton)** is a pattern used only for baskets in stretch glass. Apparently not very many were made because they are very rare today. There is one basket known in Persian Pearl and one in Aquamarine. Fenton went on to make an extensive line of Plymouth in the Depression Era, including the basket in various colors.



**Ring (Fenton)** is a very simple 'pattern' but a pattern never the less. It was only used for creamers & sugars in the early stretch period. These otherwise plain sugars and creamers are known in Aquamarine, Celeste Blue, Florentine Green, Grecian Gold, Persian Pearl, Tangerine and Velva Rose. They may exist in other colors unknown to the author.



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A plunger with a diamond optic design was sometimes used in place of the plain plunger creating a highly desirable stretch glass sugar and creamer. With the diamond optic plunger, they are known in Celeste Blue, Florentine Green, Tangerine and possibly other colors. The ring pattern is in the mold whereas the diamond optic pattern is added by the plunger, so it is on the inside of the glass, making it a true 'optic' pattern – one which is viewed through the glass. These creamers and sugars were made in many colors during the Depression Era. With or without the diamond optic, they make wonderful companions to Depression-era glass. Tea/Coffee cups and saucers are also known in stretch glass but are rare and seldom found.

Our next stretch glass optic or pattern is **Twist (not OMN) by US Glass**.

There are two different patterns which utilize a mold in a twist design. First, we have a candleholder with a built-in bobeechee. This one happens to have black paint around the edges. US Glass painted and stenciled on some of their stretch glass using black, dark blue and green paint. Their second twist is in their bell candleholder. This is a popular candleholder but is only available in blue and topaz. Both of these 'bell' candleholders are known without iridescence, presumably made after stretch glass was out of vogue.



**Wide (or Smooth) Panel (Imperial)** is well-known as a pattern of Imperial's swung vases. These were produced with three sizes of bases and in many heights; they also made other pieces in this pattern during the early stretch period and again during the Depression Era.

**#310 and #314 (US Glass)** are best known by their line numbers. These are similar and easily confused until you get the lines and points figured out. On #310, the lines which are raised in the glass come to the edge of the glass and form the point of the curved edge. In the #314 Line, aka Rays & Points, the edge is smooth, so the lines come to the edge but don't push the glass out into a point. These two lines are found in a variety of the US Glass stretch glass colors. They were also made in the Depression Era in the typical pink, green and crystal glass. They may exist in other non-iridized colors.

If you have been counting, we are over 20 different optics and patterns in stretch glass, nearly all of which were also made in the Depression Era. We have barely scratched the surface of the patterns made by Fenton during the late stretch glass period. Clearly, there is a great variety of stretch glass made with optics and patterns and many of those molds and plungers were used during later glass production. In some instances, we have more stretch glass items in a pattern or optic but in other cases there are far more Depression-era glassware items in a pattern or optic. Together, we have an extensive array of glass with optics and patterns, all of which can, and should, be used together to present colorful, extraordinary tables for dining, serving buffets or just admiring. I hope this 'tour' will encourage you to consider incorporating stretch glass as you use and enjoy your Depression-era glassware. I routinely combine Depression-era glassware with stretch glass when entertaining guests at my table and they are always amazed at the range of colors, shapes, optics and patterns in which glass was produced.

For more information about stretch glass and The Stretch Glass Society, please visit [www.stretchglassociety.org](http://www.stretchglassociety.org) or contact the author at [president@stretchglassociety.org](mailto:president@stretchglassociety.org).

**Photos by Dave Shetlar, past co-President and 'official' photographer of The Stretch Glass Society. Thank you, Dave!**