

Fairy Lamp Club Newsletter

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WESTMORELAND GLASS COMPANY

by Lloyd and Nan

HISTORY

After a couple of false starts the Westmoreland Specialty Company started making glass in 1889 and by 1893 was selling carloads of mustard jars and paperweights (Ref. 1, p.8). In 1925 the name was changed to Westmoreland Glass Company. The company struggled through the 1930s and 40s, eliminating all cutting and engraving, reducing handwork and "not making new molds until the milk glass surge" of the 1950s. In 1962 a gift shop was opened at the plant. This quickly became profitable in its own right, helped popularize the company with tours and souvenirs and also allowed efficient test marketing of new colors, items and hand painted (HP) designs. These hand-painted items were usually signed and dated by the decorator. In the 1970s labor costs escalated and decals (D) were introduced along with hand painting to economize and for some items a decal was applied first defining the pattern and then hand colored (D/HP). These items were not signed and dated.

It was in this period that the first Fairy Lamps were produced (about 1972) and some types such as the #1972 Mini Lite can be found with either hand-painted decoration or decals in the same design. The #1976 Electric Mini Lamp used the same shade with some additional designs. Also in the 1970s the Cameo Mini Lite, Star Lite, Thousand Eye, Owl Candlelite and Irish Waterford designs were introduced, some directly in competition with those being made by the Fenton Art Glass Company during this period. Each

came with a crystal candle cup. They met with only modest success competing against the firmly established line made by Fenton (Ref. 2, p. 61). Many of these Fairy Lamps have an embossed Westmoreland logo on the bottom in the form of superimposed W and G (Ref. 3) and others may be found with an identifying paper sticker.

In March 1981 the company was sold to David Grossman who soon introduced the wooden bases for the #1972 Mini Lites (1983), the Moon Glow lamps (1980-82) and reintroduced the Wildflower and Lace pattern for the Mini Lite and the related Fireball (1983). The company stopped production in January 1984, sold off existing stock and closed its doors in 1985 (Ref. 1, p. 12).

In References 1 and 2 a different designation number than the original is given for some of the lamps (Ref. 4, 5). To avoid confusion, that number in parentheses will follow the manufacturer's number in describing the different types.

A detailed list of all known color and design combinations can be sent upon request. Also, information about errors and omissions would be gratefully received.

WESTMORELAND FAIRY LAMP TYPES

#1972 Mini Lite (#CL-1)



2-piece dome shaped glass shade sitting on a pedestal base of the same or contrasting color,

together forming somewhat of a mushroom shape about 7 1/2" tall. The shade is nearly always decorated with a hand-painted (HP) or transfer print design and the glass is either shiny opaque, clear or clear with a satin finish referred to as "mist." Lamps can be found with a wide variety of combinations of shade and base.

Mini Lite Base Colors

Almond, black milk glass, crystal, crystal mist, dark blue mist, green mist, green marble, light blue mist, milk glass, mint green, pink mist, purple marble, ruby and wood (after 1983).



Mini Lite Shade Colors and Decorations

Crystal Mist with 48 different decorations; Dark Blue Mist and Brown Mist each with 4 different; Green Mist, Mint Green and Yellow Mist each with 3 different; Milk Glass and Ruby with 2 different; Almond, Blue Mist, Pink Mist and Ruby Stain each with only one; 4 ribbed type with no decoration. (L.E. Smith Glass Company and Brooke Glass Company have the molds for the shades with the

embossed longitude and latitude lines (ribbed type, #1972-6, Ref 4). It has only been seen in frosted honey amber shade and stand, a color not made by Westmoreland).

#753 Cameo or Picture Frame Mini Lite



Two-piece similar to the #1972 and using the same bases is also about 7 1/2" tall. The shade is a stepped shape dome with a cameo style oval in the side that is usually hand painted. There are only six known variations.

Picture Frame Mini Lite Shade Colors and Decorations

Almond, Antique Blue and Mint green with the Beaded Bouquet decoration; Crystal Mist with Floral Spray and Roses & Bows decorations; Ruby with Ruby Floral decoration.

(Brooke Glass Company now has the molds, Ref. 4).

#806 Star Lite



Two-piece geometrically shaped with twelve flat pentagonal sides, 3 3/4" tall. The top and bottom fit together along edges of the

pentagons in clamshell fashion. The five oblique sides on the top are decorated usually with decals, which may not be the same on all five surfaces.

Star Lite Shade Colors and Decorations

Crystal Mist with 19 different decorations;
Crystal with 5 different decorations.

#1000 Thousand Eye (#TE-23)



Two-piece slightly barrel shaped with three rows of spherical segment eyes on both the top and bottom and a row of smaller eyes flaring out around the crest. It was made with and without a pedestal base; the one with the base is about 6 1/2" tall, the other slightly shorter.

Thousand Eye Colors

Almond, Brandywine Blue, brown, crystal, crystal carnival, crystal with ruby stain, multicolored, pink, pink carnival and ruby.

#110 Owl Candlelite



Two-piece with a glass shade in the shape of an owl's head with two faces which fits into a brass base, overall about 4" tall. The glass shade is identical in shape to ones made in the 19th C. for S. Clarke in this size (Ref 6) and also in a smaller "pyramid" size with painted eyes.

Owl Candlelite Colors

Amber, amber mist, crystal mist, ruby mist, and yellow mist, all with shiny eyes and beak. It has also been found in crystal mist with satin finish eyes painted with gold and with remnants of silver paint between the feathers, and in shiny yellow; from an unknown source probably after 1985.

#1932 Thumbprint or Irish Waterford (#WF-38)



Two-piece deeply embossed with elongated "thumbprint" windows and diamond lattice patterns all around. The bottom has a broad scalloped top rim and a square footed pedestal base and with the shade is 6 3/4" tall. Some of

the shades are hand-painted, some with Coralene, with a simple floral design in every other thumbprint, others have decals applied and others have no decoration but have selective colored flashing and/or are iridized to give a carnival glass appearance.

Thumbprint or Irish Waterford Colors and Decorations

1. Antique Gold, Crystal, Ruby, Silver and Violet were made plain with no decoration;
2. Crystal was made with blue, green and ruby selective staining of raised parts of the embossed pattern;
3. Brandywine Blue, Honey Amber, Ice Blue and Lime Green were made with a lightly iridized surface called "Carnival";
4. Almond, Antique Blue, Dark Blue Mist, Light Blue Mist, Brown Mist, Chartreuse, Green Mist, Mint Green, Pink Mist and Yellow Mist were made with a hand painted flower decoration in every other window or "thumbprint" on the shade - some had a white decal of the pattern applied first and then colors added, others were completely HP including some with Coralene;
5. Crystal Mist was the only one made with a hand-painted Roses & Bows decoration. (Since 1985 the L.E. Smith Glass Company has owned the molds for this Fairy Lamp. Their 1985 Catalog shows them in crystal, ice blue, light amber and pink; Ref. 2, p.99).

#1980 Moon Glow



Two-piece almost globe-shaped crystal mist glass shade sitting on a wood base, overall 6" tall.

Moon Glow Shade Colors and Decorations

The shade is decorated with one of the following decals: Andrea West Country Floral, Andrea West Rooster, Antique Fruit, Blue Jay, Multi-color Butterfly, China Rose, Floral Spray, Owls and Strawberry.

#999 Mini Lite (#WL-3)



Two-piece half dome shaped clear glass shade like #1972 except with a crenellated rather than scalloped bottom rim. It is also ornately embossed with the classic 1920s Wildflower and Lace pattern. It sits on the same pedestal base as the #1972 except it was only offered in crystal. It is also about 7 1/2" tall.

Mini Lite Shade Colors

Blue Pastel and Lilac Opal in both clear and carnival finish; Crystal, Pink Pastel, Royal Blue and Ruby in only the clear finish (Kovar, Vol. I).

Since 1985 the Fenton Art Glass Company has owned the molds for this Fairy Lamp. Their 1990 Catalog shows the shades in crystal, dusty rose, holiday green, shell pink, petal pink, ruby and Salem blue, all on a crystal base; Ref. 7.

#999 Fireball (#WL-4)



Two-piece clear glass globe shape with the top and bottom each having a crenellated rim so that they fit together in clam shell fashion. Each half is embossed with the Wildflower and Lace pattern like the #999 Mini Lite. They are 5 1/2" tall.

Fireball Colors

Blue Pastel, Crystal, Lilac Opal and Pink Pastel in both clear and carnival finish; Royal Blue and Ruby in only the clear finish (Kovar, Vol. I).

(Since 1985 the Fenton Art Glass Company has owned the molds for this Fairy Lamp. Their 1990 Catalog shows them in crystal, dusty rose, shell pink, ruby and Salem blue; Ref. 7).

References

1. Lorraine Kovar, Westmoreland Glass 1950-1984, Antique Publications, Marietta, OH (1991).
2. Lorraine Kovar, Westmoreland Glass 1950-1984, Vol. II, Antique Publications, Marietta, OH (1991).
3. Lloyd & Nan, "Embossed Glass Logos", Fairy Lamp Newsletter, III, May 1997, p. 2.
4. Phil Rosso, Jr., Westmoreland Museum caretaker, private communication (1997).
5. Assorted unidentified pages from Westmoreland catalogs.
6. Bob & Pat Ruf, Fairy Lamps, Elegance in Candle Lighting, Schiffer Publishing Company, 1996, p. 109, R-359.
7. 1990 Fenton Catalog Supplement, "85th Anniversary Offering."