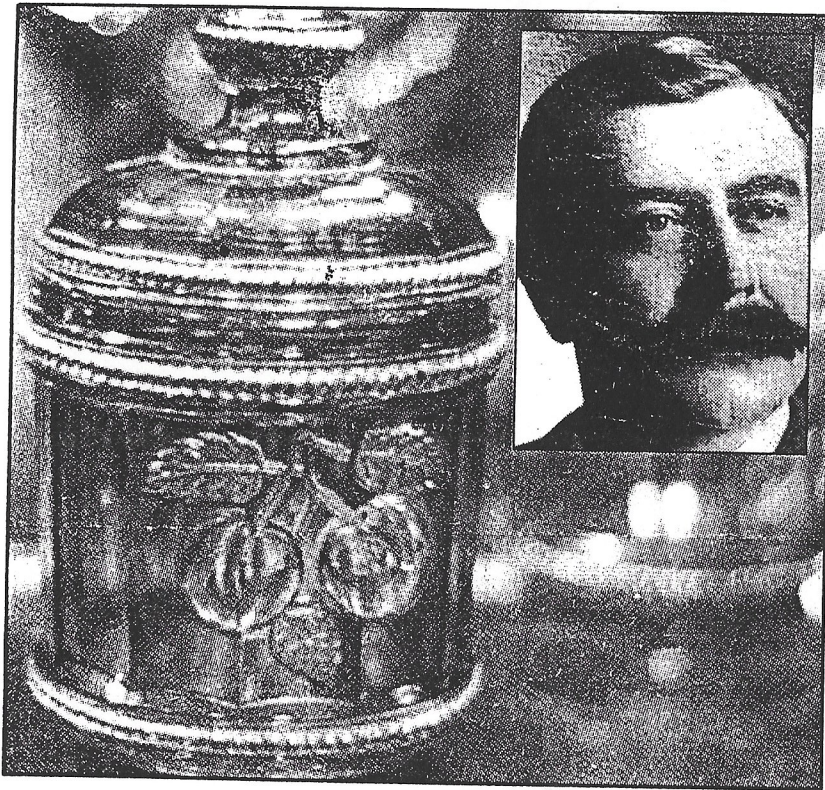


Hall of Fame to Induct Northwood



N-R Photo/Scott McCloskey

This sparkling piece in the Cherry and Cable Pattern is among the more than 300 pieces in the Northwood glass collection at the new Oglebay Institute Glass Museum at Carriage House Glass in Oglebay Park. The creator of the glassware, Harry C. Northwood, insert, will be enshrined next year in the Wheeling Hall of Fame at the Wheeling Civic Center.

By **BILL VAN HORNE**
News-Register Sports Editor

Harry C. Northwood, who established one of the premier glass tableware plants in the United States in Wheeling shortly after the turn of the century, has been elected to the Wheeling Hall of Fame.

He is the first person selected for membership in what will be the Class of 1994, with induction ceremonies tentatively set for the autumn of next year at the Wheeling Civic Center.

The Hall of Fame has enshrined 59 members since the board was organized, through ordinance of Wheeling City Council, after construction of the Wheeling Civic Center in the late 1970s. Plaques noting the achievements of the inductees are displayed along the center's concourse walls.

Northwood was nominated by the committee on business and industry.

"Harry Northwood died at his Wheeling Island home in 1919 but his name lives on through his glassware, which is highly sought-after, not only in this country but worldwide," said James J. Haranzo, chairman of the Wheeling Hall of Fame board. "We believe he is a notable addition to our hall of fame, of which we are very proud."

Northwood's glassware is prominently displayed at the new

Oglebay Institute Glass Museum at the Carriage House Glass center in Oglebay Park, as well as at other glass museums throughout the United States. Glass experts have pronounced the 300-plus pieces of the Oglebay Northwood collection as "the best anywhere."

Described at the time of his death by the Wheeling News-Register as "one of the pillars in Wheeling's industrial growth," Northwood employed 300 people and produced 1,000 barrels of glass each week during his peak period of operation and thus made a significant impact on the local economy.

Northwood glass was shipped all over the country and his firm became a household word throughout America. The company produced a wide variety of tableware, novelty items and even lighting fixtures in an array of opaque, translucent and highly-colored hues.

Glass collectors say that Northwood glass prices now range from \$20 to \$30,000 or higher, with some of the rare pieces being especially prized.

Northwood was born in Wordsley, Staffordshire, England, on June 30, 1860. The eldest son of a renowned glass artisan, John Northwood, he began an appren-

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ticeship in the glassware business when only 14 years old.

Emigrating to the United States in 1881, at age 21, Harry Northwood settled in Wheeling, where he was employed at the Hobbs-Brockunier Plant as a glass etcher for a few years before going to the LaBelle Glass Co. in Bridgeport. He later headed glass plants in Martins Ferry (1888-1893), Ellwood City, Pa., (1894-95) and Indiana, Pa., (1896-1899).

He returned to England in 1899, but the Board of Trade in Wheeling induced him to return to the city where he founded H. Northwood & Co. in 1901. The new company took over the by-then-closed Hobbs-Brockunier factory at 36th and McColloch streets and remained in business until December of 1925.

When H. Northwood and Co. became a corporation in 1905, some of the investors (George E. House, Stephen Hipkins and George Lutz) were prominent members of the Wheeling Board of Trade. House became the company president.

In business with Harry Northwood was his brother, Carl, who was head of sales and also the decorating department. The brothers died within a year of each other — Carl in 1918 and Harry in 1919.

Harry Northwood was survived by his wife, Clara Elizabeth, of Handsworth, Staffordshire, England, and a son and daughter. A grand-daughter, Elizabeth N. Robb, of Wheeling, is still living. Other relatives in the area include Robert R. Hamilton of Wheeling and family, Millie (Mrs. Johnson C. Hamilton) McKinley of Wheeling and family and William Gilleland, of Pittsburgh, and family.

Glass collectors have learned much about the Northwood company from Dr. James Measell, of Wayne State University at Detroit, co-author of two books on the history of the man and his enterprises, and also a lecturer on Northwood glass. Measell — who collaborated with William Heacock and Berry Wiggins in the publication of the books — is also director of glass history research for Antique Publications.

Holly Hoover McCluskey, curator of education at the Oglebay Museum, is also recognized as a glass expert and has lectured on the the great artisan that was Harry Northwood.

There were dozens of glass manufacturers in the Ohio Valley at the time of the Northwoods' success and competition was fierce. However, Northwood's recognized genius for his business kept the company prospering, McCluskey said.

After the death of the brothers, the plant remained open for six years but without Harry's know-how, the factory ultimately failed.

Much of Northwood Glass was pressed, rather than blown, McCluskey said. She added that the majority of what the company produced were "utilitarian items."

The most famous Northwood product was carnival glass, an iridescent ware that was of a type once sold to carnivals to be used as prizes on the midway. However, that glass has become more desirable and more expensive down through the years.

Easell said that at the time the Northwood firm was enjoying its greatest success, "Harry Northwood revived glassmaking designs and techniques from his past and also broke new ground with innovative patterns and decorating treatment."

CUSTARD GLASS PARTYLINE

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Northwood in Elwood City

Glass Maker at Age 32 Built Second Plant in Small Town Where He Became Well-Known and Respected, Serving as Mayor and Also as a Realtor.

By O. Joe Olson

Harry Northwood and family moved to Elwood City, Pennsylvania, in 1892 where he built his second glass plant.

In the small resort town of about 5,000 population, the glass maker found himself free from many pressures and problems of the glass industry in the Ohio river valley.

Labor conditions were more settled and life moved at a more placid pace. Employees were recruited and trained. The plant soon attained a good level of production glass that sold readily. Northwood's family and friends moved in the best circles. It was nearly an idyllic situation. The rewards were moderate but guaranteed.

The move to Elwood City, about 35 miles south of Pittsburgh and 25 miles from the Ohio line, came about when Northwood was offered a free site and reduced taxes for the first few years of manufacturing. Northwood also found investors there to help finance construction of the plant, the first of its kind in the area.

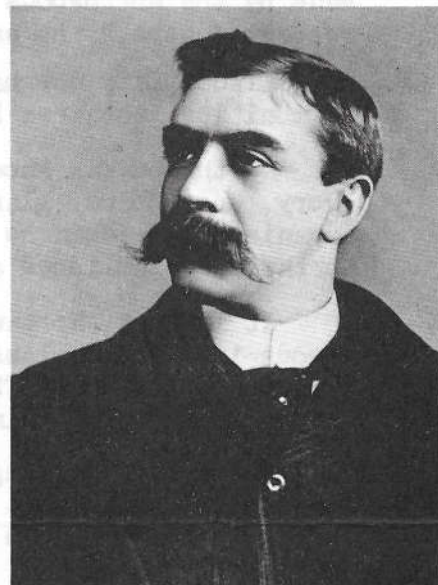
In addition, there was cheap fuel to operate the furnaces. The Elwood City area had plenty of deep natural gas wells.

Northwood was accompanied from Martins Ferry to Elwood City by several experienced administrators and glass makers. These included Thomas

Dugan, James A. Powell, Henry I. Eiselen and Charles Helling.

Charles Helling was a brother to Henry Helling who was the chief investor with Northwood in the first Northwood Glass company plant in Martins Ferry, Ohio, in 1887. This was where the "decorated opaque Ivory" or custard line was made in 1888, named Chrysanthemum Sprig in pattern. Henry Helling remained in Martins Ferry to continue production there for a time. The factory was gradually phased out.

All Northwood moulds in Chrysanthemum Sprig and Argonaut Shell patterns were taken to Elwood City where opaque Ivory was pressed and decorated by a corps of women workers on the factory site. The glass works made "fancy table and household glass ware" and also some cut glass, according to the Elwood City history.



HARRY NORTHWOOD
About 1885, Age 25

The plant caught up with the heavy demand for Chrysanthemum Sprig ware and about 1895, it is believed first pressings of 12 items were made in a pattern Northwood called Beaded Circle. This featured an intricate design of Forget-me-nots in blue, red and yellow, with foliage in green and much gold trim.

From all information, this pattern had a relatively short production run and from the experience of collectors and dealers, the supply that has survived is perhaps as small as that of any major Northwood custard pattern.

Harry Northwood came to Elwood City in one of its most progressive periods of expansion. He found the city had a need of housing so Northwood purchased a choice site and contracted to have a row of ten houses built. The properties were behind the town hospital and the section of new homes came to be known as "Hospital Hill."

The Northwood home at 719 Park avenue was one of the ten new houses built. When the Northwoods moved to Indiana, Pa., the house was sold to Northwood's uncle, Thomas Dugan.

Northwood made many friends in Elwood City and they insisted that he allow his name to be submitted to the voters for the office of Burgess, or Mayor. Northwood was elected and served one term.

Memory of the Northwood family is still green in Elwood City. R. J. Schill, the executive secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, recalled the "great contribution" made by the Northwoods in industry and civic affairs. "They were well-liked and respected here," he said.

Elwood City now has a population of nearly 13,000 and with surrounding smaller communities, the area has a population of nearly 36,000.

Northwood was known industry-wide as the inventor and producer of decorated opaque Ivory, or custard, glass. His four years at Elwood City were years of planning and re-organization. When he moved in 1896 to Indiana, Pa., about 100 miles further East, Northwood established a third plant known as the Northwood Glass Works.

At Indiana, Northwood manufactured and distributed several patterns that became famous in custard glass including Intaglio, Louis XV, Geneva and, probably, the Everglades pattern. The glass found favor with housewives throughout the East and Mid-West, especially in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

The poet, writing of man's pilgrimage, noted that "the perfect arc in heaven mends." Be that as it may, Harry Northwood traveled the full circle in his 38-year career in the American glass industry.

After three years at Indiana, Pa., the Northwood company joined the National Glass Company merger and Harry Northwood spent the year 1900 as manager of the London office of the combine.

When the merger faltered, Northwood returned to Wheeling, W. Va., where he had started his career in 1881 as designer and etcher in Hobbs, Brockunier & Company. The plant had been closed since 1891. Northwood bought the factory and spent \$100,000 on new furnaces and other equipment.

Here Northwood truly became the dominant figure in American custard glass. In rapid order, he designed and pressed such great patterns in custard as Inverted Fan & Feather, Maple Leaf, Wild Bouquet, Northwood Fan, Grape and Gothic Arches, Northwood Grape and Grape Arbor.

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RESIGNATION OF SECRETARY-EDITOR

This note to all members of the custard glass association is to announce that I have resigned as secretary-editor effective September 1, 1974. The CPL issue dated August 20, 1974 (Vol. IX, No. 4) will be my last issue.

A notice to this effect was mailed to Charles M. Brehm, acting president, and to the directors late in February. They have been working since on the selection of my successor.

The decision to step out was not an easy one. It was dictated in part by a heavy work load and declining strength. It is time, in my opinion, for new thinking and writing for and about our beloved hobby of custard glass collecting.

We hope to publish a roster of members. A complete financial report, with a breakdown, will be made to Mr. Brehm and the directors.

Among important tasks that will face Mr. Brehm, the directors and the new secretary-editor will be planning for the second national custard glass convention to be held somewhere in the Mid-West in 1975.

-- O.J.O. --

Then, with the popularity of mass-produced iridescent (carnival) glass, Northwood entered this field and in a short time became the major manufacturer of this ware. His untimely death at the age of 52 occurred in 1919. The Northwood plant closed in 1922.

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PICTURES OF HARRY NORTHWOOD

The eye and inspiration of an artist are evident in the panoply of patterns from which Northwood glass in every conceivable color and type was manufactured.

Harry Northwood designed many of the patterns which were his favorites including Argonaut Shell, Inverted Fan & Feather and the Northwood Grape patterns. He also designed other patterns and faithfully supervised work of staff artists on all the Northwood designs.

Treasured by his granddaughter, Elizabeth Northwood Robb in Wheeling, W. Va., are an oil painting and two water colors done by her grandfather.

Another prized family piece is a beautifully cut cameo head of Shakespeare on a brooch. It is signed in Harry Northwood's full name in script on the back of the glass. He completed this before he left England at the age of 21 to come to America. One of the British Royal Societies for the Arts honored Northwood's artistry on the cameo by conferring a large heavy medal inscribed with his name.

Recalls Move From Family Home in 1923

Miss Robb was a small child but remembers when the Northwood family home was sold and she, with her mother and father and grandmother, moved to 6 Rockledge Road in 1923, Miss Robb's present home.

"Grandmother gave away literally barrels of glass so as not to have to bother moving them," Miss Robb wrote. Mrs. Northwood also later gave the Mansion Museum of Oglebay Institute, at Wheeling, "a number of pieces of custard glass, in fact, all she had, when the museum was established in the early thirties.

"For years it was not displayed, and then when they built a new wing and had room for it, the name of the donor did not appear with the glass."

Miss Robb loaned the editor the picture of her grandfather, Harry Northwood, that appeared in the November 1971 CPL special issue that offered a probable chronological order for Northwood's 15 major custard patterns.

She was pleased with the article and the interest it stimulated, being reprinted in several antique publications.

We wrote that several collectors had asked whether a picture of Harry Northwood could be obtained. Miss Robb was unable to assist at that time on account of the illness of her mother, Mrs. Mabel Northwood Robb, who died July 27, 1972.

However, remembering the request, Miss Robb loaned the editor two negatives from which she suggested that some prints be made. The negatives were from the Northwood family historical files. One picture shows Mr. Northwood about 1885, at the age of 25 (See page 1), and the second, about 1912, at the age of 52.