

“DAN THE DOG”

By I. M. Wonderin

This cute little Dog Cookie/Snack Jar has been a popular “McCoy” piece with collectors for years. As many collectors are aware, there are two distinct styles of this cute piece that were made. These are pictured right. Best estimate of timing is about 1987.

What is not as commonly known is that technically neither was made by Nelson McCoy Pottery. The one on the left was made by Designer Accents under their Nelson Ceramics division (the original Nelson McCoy Pottery Company that they purchased in 1985). As to the one on the right, unfortunately to date, no documentation has surfaced confirm the maker.



The picture left is from a promotional piece for Liva Snaps. Notice the Dog style. There was also a cartoon TV ad for the product that included the same Dog in animated form.

Both styles were contract pieces for the same company, Alpo so documentation is truly hard to come by. Dan the Dog is not listed in the Designer Accents price lists for Nelson McCoy Ceramics production. But this piece has been found with an original box and in addition to the “Dan the Dog”

name on the box, Nelson McCoy Ceramics is also printed there, confirming them as the maker of the Alpo marked style.



As a side note, Billie McCoy had one of the “Alpo” marked examples in her collection and that specific piece is in the photo to the left. So, was this a design she had started when they sold some of the McCoy Ltd lines to Designer Accents as the timing would fit? .. or just an example she happened to acquire during the period?

So, let’s examine the difference in the two pieces.

1. The Collars have a different design; One has Alpo in the front of the collar and Liva Snaps is on the back

right of the collar on the other.

2. The heights are almost identical
3. The Alpo one’s nose is slightly higher and also a little longer.
4. The freckles on the Alpo are located higher.
5. Looking at the detail of the dog, there are several areas that are not the same.
6. The bottoms are marked very different. The Alpo one is all dry bottom and has a USA mark and an



7. Alpo mark and then Dan the Dog below that – hard to see in photo. The Liva Snaps one has an outer dry bottom surface but the inner portion is glazed and just has a USA mark.



So, as we review and consider all of these points as a group, what are the most likely conclusions to be drawn from them?

We know Designer Accents made the Alpo marked style so with that fact alone, we can say that is a McCoy Pottery product.

We know Alpo was the contract customer for both styles.

If Designer Accents, made both pieces, why would they not have just changed the color? And why would they have made the bottom a different style configuration. While we do not have any supporting documentation, these thoughts would seem to make it hard to say they made both pieces.

It was also not unusual for a contract customer to use more than one supplier for a similar product so that would also be consistent with that scenario for these pieces.

But regardless, they are both wonderful and can be a fun part of any collection!!