

MCCOY LIGHT – Cookie Jar Lamps

By Mal Anderson

Some time ago, we were in the home of premier McCoy Collectors Joanne and Glen Lindberg and I received a black Country Stove (Pot Belly Stove) Cookie Jar Lamp from Glen. This was the first cookie jar lamp that I had ever seen or known about that McCoy Pottery produced. I thought that making lamps from cookie jar shapes was a wonderful idea and an enterprising way for the McCoy Pottery to capitalize on the interest that many people had with cookie jar collecting. If you had a favorite “cookie jar”, maybe you could find a similar lamp of the same shape and design.

In this country, pottery cookie jars became popular during the depression however up until then, “jars” were usually made from either metal (tin) or glass.

With a little modification to the lid design and by cutting open the very bottom of the “jar” before firing when the casting is in the initial bisque stage, the two lamp pieces are ready to be glazed and later fired. I am not any kind of an expert on kiln or firing operations however on examination, it appears that on some cookie jar lamps, the two pieces were glazed by dipping both pieces and marrying them together before the firing process. On some others, upon inspection inside of the jar, you can see where the lid was fired separately as was the base of the jar and then coated with what looks like a clear coat of glaze to marry them together. On these jars you can look in the jar from the bottom and see a dry bottom ring on the lid portion. Maybe the lid was run over the wax pad and then both were dipped together. On all of the jars in my collection, the inside of the jar is totally glazed just like a cookie jar would be.



During my years of collecting, the earliest cookie jar lamp example that I’ve found is a Black Kookie Kettle (With a Spout). Some other cookie jar shapes had the same name. This cookie jar shape was first produced in 1960. I have shown other examples of Cookie Jar Lamps in the photos that I’ve found. However, their cookie jar partners were all made in the 1960s except for the Boy on Baseball cookie jar which was first offered later in 1978. It appears that they were all made in the latter years of Nelson McCoy’s tenure with McCoy Pottery.

Without an order sheet surfacing or some documentation popping up regarding when these and others cookie jar lamps may have been cast, it’s really hard to tell just exactly when they were made. Who would have ordered them would only be a guess.

Don’t be fooled by someone selling a cookie jar that has been drilled and made into a lamp base. Just remember something I learned early in my collecting years — “If a piece of pottery has been drilled to use as a lamp base, it has no value as a vase, cookie jar etc. or as a lamp.



Pictured above is left to right, the Baseball Boy (1978), the Kettle (1961), Colonial Fireplace (1967) and the Cook Stove (1962).



Pictured above is left to right, the Cookie Jug (1965), Country Stove (1963 - re-issued in 1978 and again in 1983) and the Cookie Pot (1964).

I'm sure that there are unknown examples of some McCoy Cookie Jar lamps that I have not seen but maybe you have seen a couple. If you have, I would surely like to know about them.