



# FRANCISCAN OX-BLOOD

## ABSTRACT

A 2023 update to Franciscan, Catalina, and Other Gladding, McBean Wares, Ceramic Table and Art Wares: 1873-1942, published by Schiffer Publishing, Ltd. (2001)

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# Franciscan Ox-Blood

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1934, Gladding, McBean & Co. introduced Cielito Ware, an art line modeled along pure Chinese lines. Cielito Ware was the first art ware line made by Gladding, McBean. The art ware line was made in the Glendale Plant in Los Angeles using a Malinite<sup>1</sup> body in Prouty kilns. Cielito Ware was introduced in a “brilliant Turquoise Blue emphasized by clear white lining.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1935, the Cielito Ware line shapes were made in various other glaze colors, including Ruby. “While this is not a commercial glaze due to its high cost of production, the glaze is a great ceramic achievement as it develops shades never before possible to pottery. Variations of this glaze include bright scarlets; rich, fiery rubies; and the old Chinese ox-bloods. Each piece is a ceramic gem.”<sup>3</sup> The ox-blood slip glaze number assigned by Gladding, McBean was M.P. 22 and the over-glaze ox-blood M.P. 40.

The chemists of Gladding, McBean & Co. under the direction of Ceramic Engineer Max Compton created an ox-blood glaze that could be used on the Malinite body in their Prouty tunnel kilns. Compton had experimented with an ox-blood glaze “in odd moments over a period of a dozen or fifteen years.”<sup>4</sup> “

This reduced red copper glaze at the time had never been produced in the United States except in laboratory scale. This was the first successful attempt to reproduce the red developed by Chinese masters over 500 years ago. The color comes out in the kiln. By control of heat, Compton controlled the behavior of the coloring. He obtained wood-grain effects. The standard result was to have an overall ox-blood color with a beige lip to the vessel.”<sup>5</sup>

On August 1, 1938, Gladding, McBean & Co. introduced the Catalina Art Ware line Ox-Blood Art Ware with fifteen shapes.<sup>6</sup> “The first perfect (by Max's standards) ox-blood piece, a sixteen-inch opium bowl was exhibited in the Smithsonian institute for several months. Also, in 1938 the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts selected an ox-blood piece to be included in the special Invitational Exhibition of American Ceramic Art



Figure 2 - Franciscan Ox-Blood Opium Bowl. Collection of the Grant Family.



Figure 2 - Franciscan Ox-Blood Opium Bowl. Bottom of bowl. Collection of the Grant Family.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about Malinite, see (Elliot-Bishop 2001)

<sup>2</sup> (Gladding, McBean & Co. 1934)

<sup>3</sup> (Gladding, McBean & Co. 1935)

<sup>4</sup> (Leap October 1, 1951)

<sup>5</sup> (Leap October 1, 1951)

<sup>6</sup> (Newhall June 27, 1961)

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at the Golden Gate International Exposition at San Francisco, February through December, 1939. This piece was returned with a large chip out of the font. There was no explanation and no apology and Max never authorized another piece to be sent for exhibition purposes anywhere.”<sup>7</sup>

Gladding, McBean manufactured lamp bases from 1937 to 1951. Lamp bases were sold as a special order to other companies to be made into lamps. Lamp bases were made in the ox-blood glaze from 1937 to 1942.

World War II created chemical shortages used in ceramic glazes for non-war production. Because the red of the ox-blood is dependent on copper oxide and other metals, production had to be curtailed when these metals became unattainable.<sup>8</sup> The Ox-Blood Art Ware line and all other art ware lines were discontinued December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1942. Production of ox-blood and other artware was never resumed.

Shapes from other Franciscan art ware lines not sold in the Ox-Blood Art Ware line were made for special orders, employee’s personal use, or as prototypes not put into production. Special order shapes were ink stamped Catalina Pottery, Gladding, McBean (GMcB) or with a Franciscan Ware mark. Employee projects are often found without factory marks, although they may be ink-stamped Catalina Pottery, Gladding, McBean (GMcB) or with a Franciscan Ware mark. Prototype shapes are marked on the bottom of the piece with incised numbers or ink numbers with or without being ink-stamped Catalina Pottery, Gladding, McBean (GMcB) or with a Franciscan Ware mark. Prototype ox-blood glazed shapes continued to be made in various shapes into the late 1950s.



*Figure 3 - Ox-Blood lamp base shape S-163.  
Collection of Henry Takemoto.*

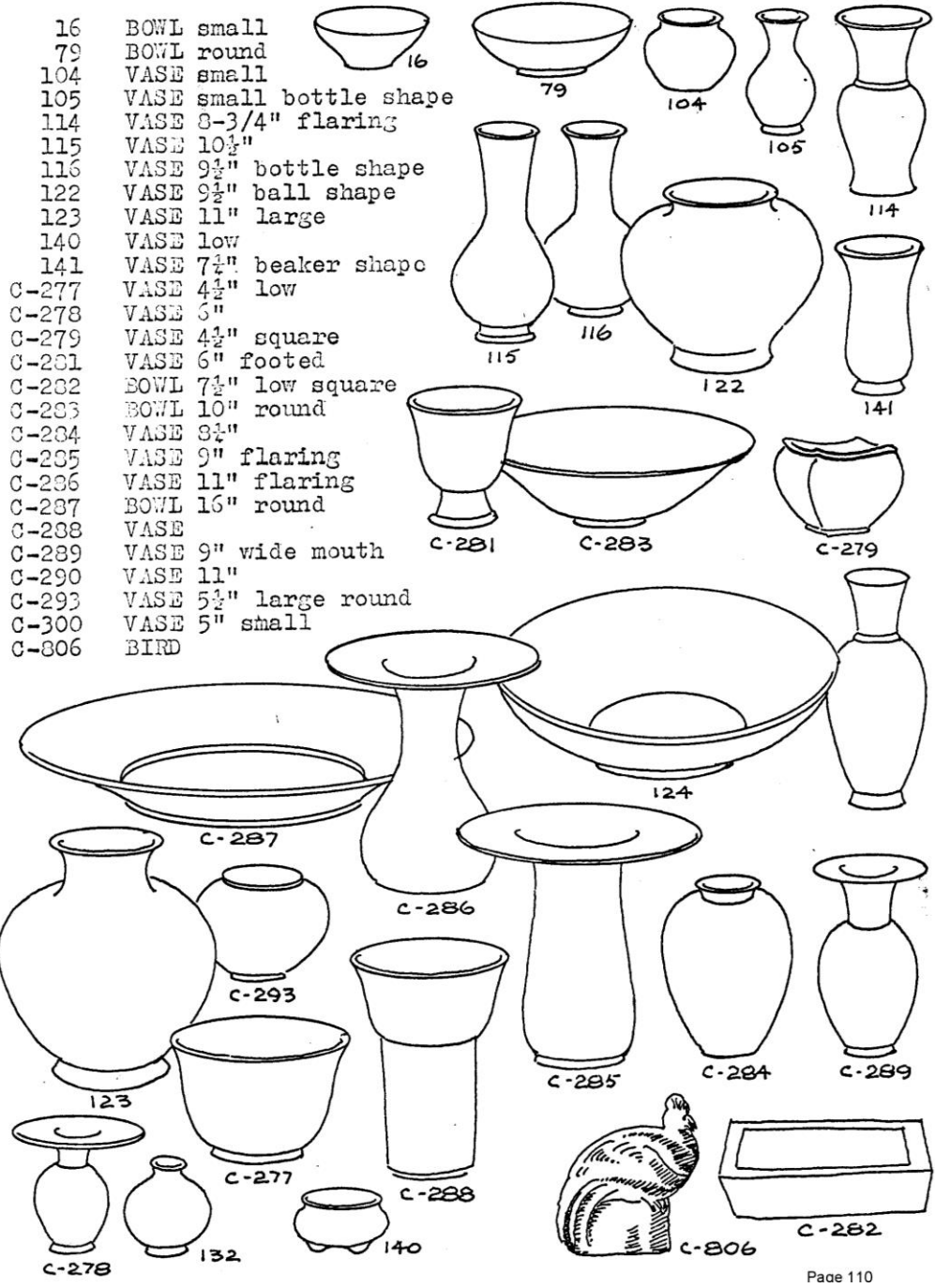
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<sup>7</sup> (Gladding, McBean & Co. 1967)

<sup>8</sup> (Gladding, McBean & Co. 1967)

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## Ox-Blood Art Ware Line Drawings



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Figure 4 - Line drawings from Tropico to Interpace, a Documentary Review of Products Made by the Franciscan Dinnerware Division, compiled by Otto J. Lund, November, 1973. Missing from list of shapes are numbers 124 Opium Bowl and 132 Round Vase, 4.25", although illustrated. The line drawing for C-300 is missing from the page and is illustrated below.



# Franciscan Ox-Blood

## Ox-Blood Art Ware List of Shapes

29 shapes

16 Bowl Small, 2"	1938-1941
79 Bowl Round, 2.75"	1938-1941
104 Ball Shape Vase, 4.25"	1938-1940
105 Vase Small Bottle Shape 6"	1938-1942
114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top	1934-1942
115 Vase 10.5"	1934-1942
116 Vase 9.5" Bottle Shape	1934-1942
122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape	1934-1942
123 Vase 11" Large	1934-1942
124 Opium Bowl 16" x 3.5"	1934-1939
132 Round Vase 4.25"	1934-1942
140 Vase Low, footed 3"	1934-1940
141 Vase 7.25" Beaker Shape	1938-1942
C-277 Vase 4.5" Low	1940-1941
C-278 Vase 6"	1940-1942
C-279 Vase 4.5" Square	1940-1942
C-281 Vase 6" Footed	1940-1942
C-282 Bowl 7.5" Low Square	1940-1941
C-283 Bowl 10" Round	1940-1941
C-284 Vase 8.25"	1940-1942
C-285 Vase 9"	1940-1940
C-286 Vase 11"	1940-1942
C-287 Bowl 16"	1940-1941
C-288 Vase 8.25"	1940-1941
C-289 Vase 9" Wide Mouth	1941-1942
C-290 Vase 11"	1941-1942
C-293 Vase 5.5" (Rose Bowl)	1941-1942
C-300 Vase 5" Small	1938-1942
C-806 Bird on Base, 8.5"	1938-1940

## Specials – Lamp Bases List of Shapes and Line Drawings

12 known shapes

105 Vase Small Bottle Shape 6"
114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top
115 Vase 10.5"
122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape
123 Vase 11" Large
C-284 Vase 8.25"
C-289 Vase 9" Wide Mouth
C-290 Vase 11"
S-91 Lamp Base
S-92 Lamp Base
S-97 Lamp Base, Spirit of India 9.5"
S-163 Lamp Base

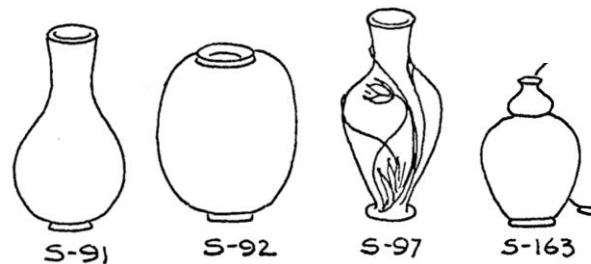


Figure 5 - Specials, Lamp Bases line drawings from *Tropico to Interpace*, a Documentary Review of Products Made by the Franciscan Dinnerware Division, compiled by Otto J. Lund, November, 1973.

# Franciscan Ox-Blood

## Shapes Produced by Year

1935-1937

Cielito Ware known in ox-blood glaze – 8 shapes

- 114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top
- 115 Vase 10.5"
- 116 Vase 9.5" Bottle Shape
- 122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape
- 123 Vase 11" Large
- 124 Opium Bowl 16" x 3.5"
- 132 Round Vase, 4.25"
- 140 Vase Low, footed 3"

1938

Ox-Blood Art Ware – 15 shapes

- 16 Bowl Small, 2" \*
- 79 Bowl Round, 2.75" \*
- 104 Ball Shape Vase, 4.25" \*
- 105 Vase Small Bottle Shape 6" \*
- 114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top
- 115 Vase 10.5"
- 116 Vase 9.5" Bottle Shape
- 122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape
- 123 Vase 11" Large
- 124 Opium Bowl 16" x 3.5"
- 132 Round Vase, 4.25"
- 140 Vase Low, footed 3"
- 141 Vase 7.25" Beaker Shape \*
- C-300 Vase 5" Small \*
- C-806 Bird on Base, 8.5" \*

\* New shape added in 1938

Discontinued 12/31/1939:

124 Opium Bowl 16" x 3.5"

1940

Ox-Blood Art Ware – 25 shapes

- 16 Bowl Small, 2"
- 79 Bowl Round, 2.75"
- 104 Ball Shape Vase, 4.25"
- 105 Vase Small Bottle Shape 6"
- 114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top
- 115 Vase 10.5"
- 116 Vase 9.5" Bottle Shape
- 122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape
- 123 Vase 11" Large
- 132 Round Vase, 4.25"
- 140 Vase Low, footed 3"
- 141 Vase 7.25" Beaker Shape

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C-277 Vase 4.5" Low \*  
C-278 Vase 6" \*  
C-279 Vase 4.5" Square \*  
C-281 Vase 6" Footed \*  
C-282 Bowl 7.5" Low Square \*  
C-283 Bowl 10" Round \*  
C-284 Vase 8.25" \*  
C-285 Vase 9" \*  
C-286 Vase 11" \*  
C-287 Bowl 16" \*  
C-288 Vase 8.25" \*  
C-300 Vase 5" Small  
C-806 Bird on Base, 8.5"

\* New shape added in 1940

Discontinued 12/31/1940:

104 Ball Shape Vase, 4.25"  
140 Vase Low, footed 3"  
C-285 Vase 9"  
C-806 Bird on Base, 8.5"

1941

Ox-Blood Art Ware – 24 shapes

16 Bowl Small, 2"  
79 Bowl Round, 2.75"  
105 Vase Small Bottle Shape 6"  
114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top  
115 Vase 10.5"  
116 Vase 9.5" Bottle Shape  
122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape  
123 Vase 11" Large  
132 Round Vase, 4.25"  
141 Vase 7.25" Beaker Shape  
C-277 Vase 4.5" Low  
C-278 Vase 6"  
C-279 Vase 4.5" Square  
C-281 Vase 6" Footed  
C-282 Bowl 7.5" Low Square  
C-283 Bowl 10" Round  
C-284 Vase 8.25"  
C-286 Vase 11"  
C-287 Bowl 16"  
C-288 Vase 8.25"  
C-289 Vase 9" Wide Mouth \*  
C-290 Vase 11" \*  
C-293 Vase 5.5" (Rose Bowl) \*  
C-300 Vase 5" Small

\* New shape added in 1941

# Franciscan Ox-Blood

Discontinued 12/31/1941:

16 Bowl Small, 2"  
79 Bowl Round, 2.75"  
C-277 Vase 4.5" Low  
C-282 Bowl 7.5" Low Square  
C-283 Bowl 10" Round  
C-287 Bowl 16"  
C-288 Vase 8.25"

1942

Ox-Blood Art Ware – 17 shapes

105 Vase Small Bottle Shape 6"  
114 Vase 8.75" Flaring Top  
115 Vase 10.5"  
116 Vase 9.5" Bottle Shape  
122 Vase 9.5" Ball Shape  
123 Vase 11" Large  
132 Round Vase, 4.25"  
141 Vase 7.25" Beaker Shape  
C-278 Vase 6"  
C-279 Vase 4.5" Square  
C-281 Vase 6" Footed  
C-284 Vase 8.25"  
C-286 Vase 11"  
C-289 Vase 9" Wide Mouth  
C-290 Vase 11"  
C-293 Vase 5.5" (Rose Bowl)  
C-300 Vase 5" Small

## References

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