

# The Shuttle-Craft Guild

## HANDWEAVING



Mary M. Atwater

Box 31  
BASIN MONTANA.

June 4, 1934

My dear Mr. Gilmore:--

I am sending you some shuttles today and prefer to have them returned to me rather than have you keep them and send me the price.

I have no suitable cotton warp at present for the "Town by the River" panels. The silk roving I have in stock could, however, be used for the pattern weft. In fact some of our members are using this material now for this very purpose. I am enclosing samples of the silk roving as you may have mislaid those sent you. The blue shades are not just right for the panel as one is too dark and the other too light, I have, however, some blue spun silk that is a good shade for the "town."

I am perfectly willing to give you what information I have on prices of looms. The enclosed folder lists the prices of the looms supplied through the Guild. I do not know the prices at which the Burchard looms are sold, though I did have their price-list. I seem to have mislaid it. I do not know of any four-harness looms for sale at from \$35.-- to \$45.-- except very small looms. The Burchard people make a hand-lift loom that may sell at these prices. The Burchards, by the way, are members of the Guild.

The MacKay loom, jack-type, is supplied equipped with a fifteen dent reed, a full complement of heddles, and two shuttles of the rug-shuttle type. The Lane looms are also supplied with a pair of throw-shuttles and a dozen bobbins in addition to the equipment above. A price of \$80.00 for a 42" six-harness jack loom with this equipment is not high.



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The Lane loom with this equipment sells for \$125.00. I do not list it as the MacKay loom is less costly and is perfectly satisfactory.

You are correct in thinking that a loom -- particularly a large loom, -- must be made of hard wood to be worth anything. The large looms supplied through the Guild are all made of maple. Even a small loom is better if made of hard wood, of course. A stretched warp exerts a surprising strain even in 20" width, and the constant beating soon wracks to pieces any flimsy construction.

It is very difficult to get a patent on a loom -- a patent, that is, that means anything. Weaving is so ancient that there have been no basic changes for hundreds of years and the only patentable features are special gadgets of one kind and another, mechanical features, etc.. The Structo people, for instance, hold a patent on the catch used on their loom.

I do not build looms. I merely supply as an agent those looms that seem to me most satisfactory. The MacKay loom was designed at my suggestion, to meet the growing demand for looms of the jack type which we had been forced to import from Sweden. The Swedish looms were not exactly suited to our needs as they are all built for string-heddle equipment which American weavers do not like. I have, however, no interest in the MacKay loom other than the small commission allowed the Guild on sales of this loom. My idea in asking for a picture of your loom was the possibility that I might wish to offer it for sale on a commission basis to western weavers, if it compared favorably with the MacKay loom in price and design. What I should like to see is a clear photograph. Mr. MacKay is sometimes very slow in filling orders and another source of supply for this type of loom would be welcome.

An eight-harness loom is much more useful than a six-harness and when people want a jack loom they usually prefer the eight harness or ten-harness equipment. The ten-harness MacKay loom with a sectional warp-beam costs \$115.00 in 42" width. This includes a 15% selling commission.

Wooden shuttles you could no doubt turn out in your



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plant, and there might be a sale for these if you could make them cheaper or better than those we now have. The Burchard people make shuttles which some people find very satisfactory. Personally, I do not like them as well as any of the shuttles I am sending you.

By the way, may I have these back as soon as convenient. I am doing quite a bit of weaving and these are from my personal equipment. I do not keep shuttles in stock for sale.

Sincerely yours,

*Mary M. Alwater*