

Shuttlecraft Bulletin: Weaving for Profit

While last month's bulletin article dealt with weaving for pleasure, this one is on weaving for profit. To Mary Meigs Atwater, the two were so different, that she wrote, one must choose "definitely" between them. The topic is taken from the January 1930 Bulletin, in which Mary described what it takes to weave for profit. Consider this, if weaving for profit:

- ❖ You must be willing to weave articles that people are willing to buy and weave them with the least possible cost in materials and time.
- ❖ You should plan for commercializing your work; this may take a good deal of experimentation that may be costly and laborious.
- ❖ You need to determine your cost to weave an article and to sell it, including a commission if required, and advertising.

A quantity of goods for sale would be required. Mary suggested a number on the order of 50 dozen items/week are needed and stated that the Shuttle-Craft Guild membership may be able to supply such a quantity. In fact, she proposed that the Guild members join resources to weave such a quantity for sale. She recommended a list of items, to include rugs, yardage, towels, table runners, scarves, blankets and coverlets. She instructed anyone who is willing to enter into this agreement to have looms ready to weave items to replace those that are sold, stating: "Amusements and temporary lapses of interest should not be allowed to interfere with these agreements". She considered this a serious commitment and included a questionnaire with the Bulletin to evaluate interest.

Mary provided 2 options for an organized selling agency to handle the stock of handwoven items. This selling agency is something she placed a high importance on to be a successful weaving business. Option 1 would be made up of a minimum of 20 guild members who would fund a professional salesman and supply handwoven articles worth a minimum of \$200. Sales would be made on a 10% commission basis. Mary even discussed the option of organizing as an incorporate stock company. Option 2 would be a Shuttle-Craft Guild Selling Group that would hold several sales during the year, to be conducted by Guild members themselves. She stressed the importance of holding the sales in a favorable location and again the sales would be on a 10% commission basis.

The weaving drafts included were for a Summer & Winter rug and a variation. Several treadling options are included.

