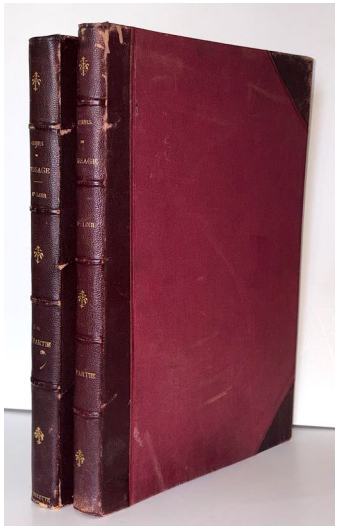
Gerald W. Cloud
Rare Books • Manuscripts • Archives
410 Hauser Blvd, #10J, Los Angeles, CA 90036

Loir's 2-vol. textbook, an important precursor to his own printed weaving manuals



VALETTE, Joseph. ***Cours de Tissage, Mr. Loir, Tome [I-II].***

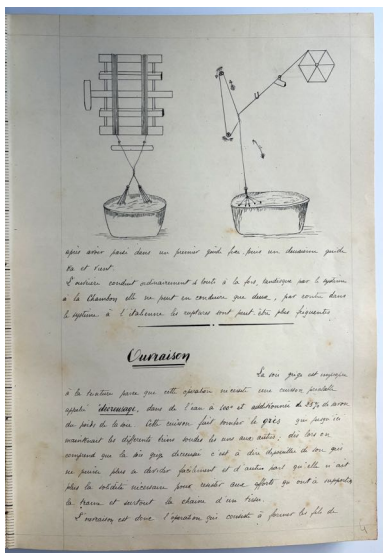
Lyon, 1907.

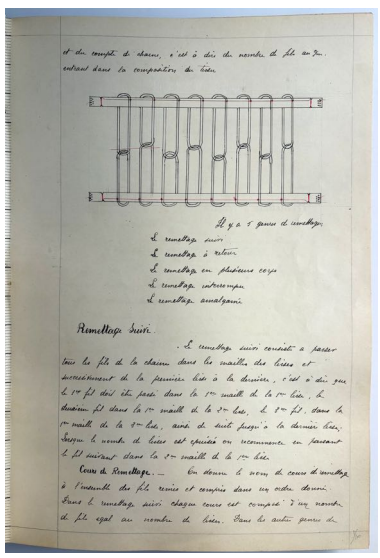
2 volumes. **V.1:** (38.5 x 26.5 cm). 137 leaves, 68 textile samples. **v.2:** (38.5 x 26.5 cm). 105 leaves, 41 textile samples. Both volumes bound in matching contemporary burgundy goat spine and corners, titles in gilt on the spine, over red cloth boards, with marbled end papers. Some external rubbing to the boards, especially at the head, tail, and corners, but excellent volumes with very clean interiors, very near fine set. Both volumes have folio numbers in the lower corner of each verso, seemingly in a later hand.

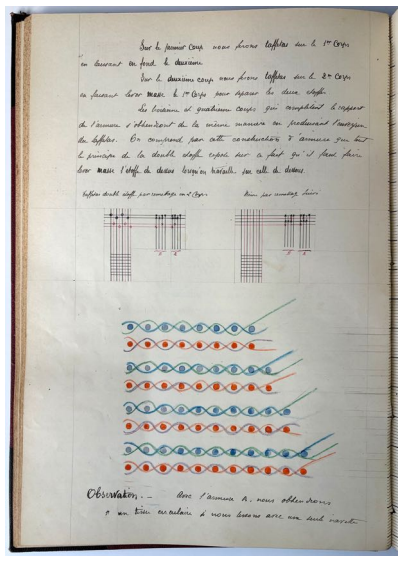
$2,500

The weaving course that produced this textbook was taught by the celebrated J. Loir, who taught for many years as a professor at École Supérieure de Commerce in Lyon, c. 1900-1930. Textbooks for his courses are uniformly organized and introduce printed leaves of text, describing the Jacquard method, and full-page plates. Eventually Loir would issue printed versions of his course (starting in 1923), but this example is a unique manuscript copy created by a student, J. Frécon. [N.b.: Loir is identified by a record in the BnF catalog as "Joanny Loir (1854–1935)" yet he is also recorded as "Jean"].

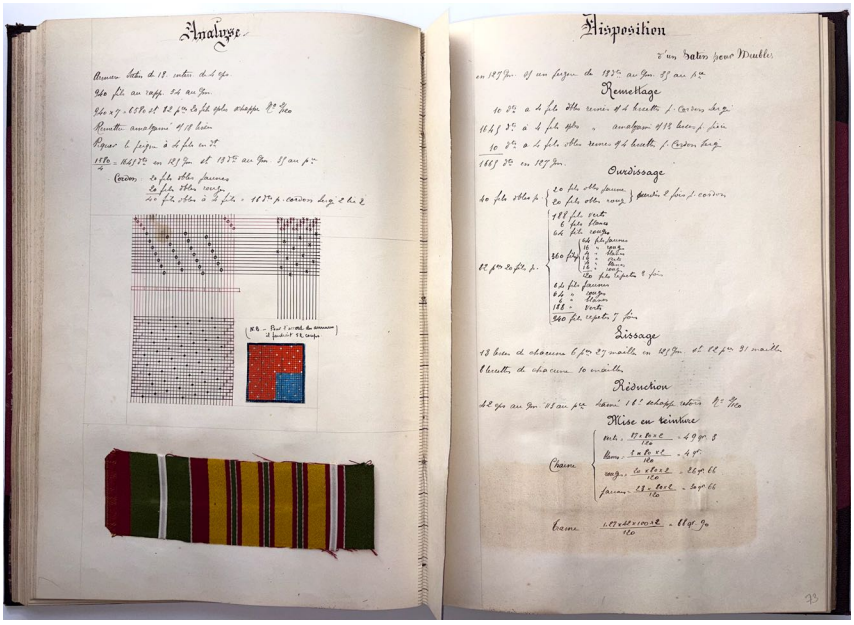
Typically, the textbooks produced under Loir are over a two-year period, with both volumes having title pages to that effect. In this case volume 1 has no title page and starts right in on the course (there is no indication that an existing title page was removed). Volume 2 does have a title page which indicates that it is the second part of the course—the gilt titling on the spines also reflects this designation. There are slightly fewer pages in volume one than is usually seen for a two-year course, and it may be that this set documents a single year's course—all the usual topics are covered, although they appear in a slightly different order than seen in other sets we have handled.

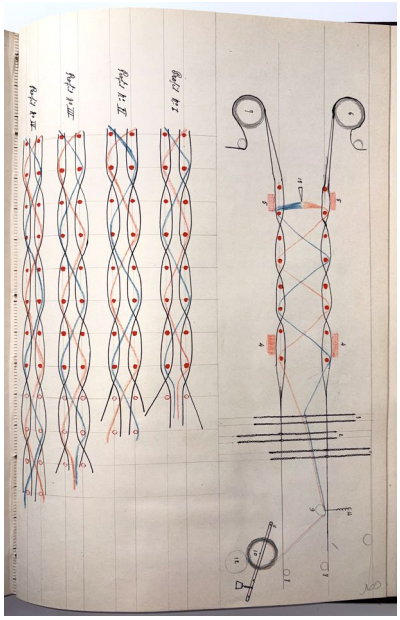






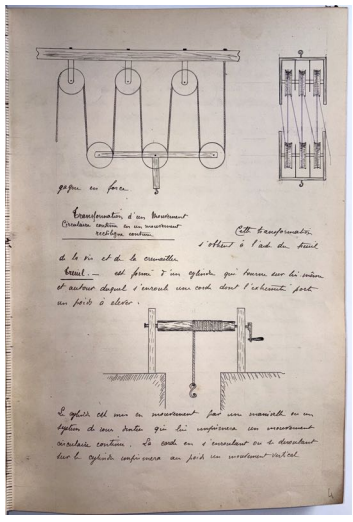
The first volume begins with a discussion of raising silkworms, their breeding and cultivation, spinning and dyeing silk, along with a few hand-drawn illustrations for several of the weaving processes. Carefully drawn diagrams for *remettage* and *armures* describing the configuration for weaving numerous types of fabrics in several variations including velvets, taffeta, *pékin* (i.e., China silk), tricotine, satin, etc.

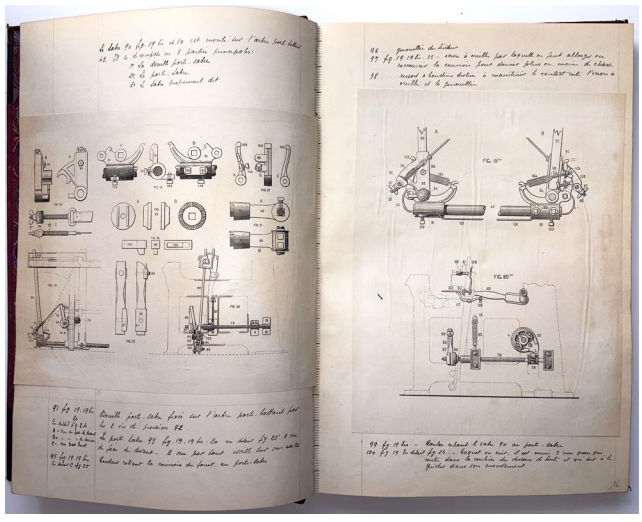




Part two includes a *disposition* / *décomposition* section for 68 patterns analyzing a variety of fabrics, which include a textile sample and the specifics for *remettages, lissage, ourdissage, armures*, and the *mise-en-teinture* or dyeing specifications. Additionally included is a printed chart ("Prix de Revient"), which allows the producer to calculate the cost of production for a given fabric and the projected retail price. This printed form was one of Loir's initial moves towards printed weaving textbooks.

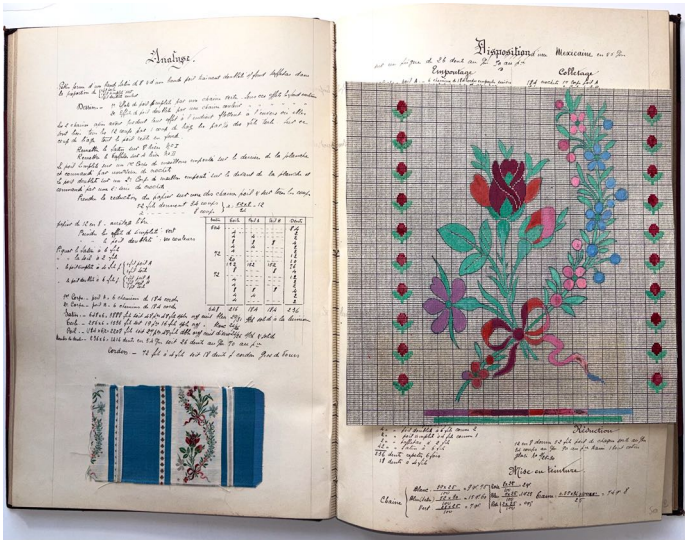
The second volume begins with the "Cours de Mécanique appliqué" section: 48 pp. of highly technical textual analysis with both hand-drawn and printed (pasted in) mechanical drawings of looms and weaving equipment.

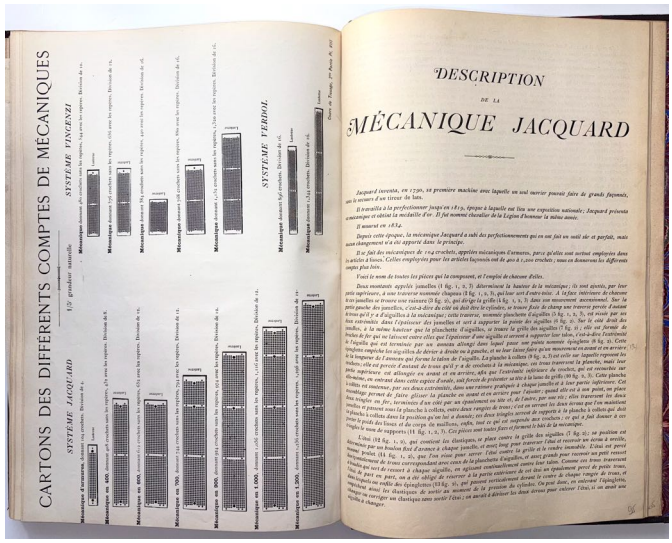




Next follows an explanation of *mise-en-carte*, i.e., the use of colored graph paper cards to determine weaving patterns, and then the *décomposition* section for *tissus façonnés* (textiles patterned from complex weaving), 41

façonnés patterns and corresponding textile samples. At the end there are 8 pp. of printed text and 8 engravings that describe the Jacquard loom, the Verdol loom, and the Jacquard and Vincenzi punch card systems.





Loir's use of the large format graph paper designs, which serve as templates for transferring designs to Jacquard punch cards, made producing complex weaves an easier task.

