

Sept. 10, 1969

Dear Mrs. Patri:

May I suggest the following alternatives in reference to the problem of the drying boards. Please let me know which you would prefer.

It is very possible that amongst the many Japanese who live in and near San Francisco there is a craftsman who can make fusuma, the sliding doors to our closets. The construction of fusuma and the drying board is very similar. If you tell such a craftsman that you want to have kari-bari built he will understand. You should further tell him that the Kari-bari must be made of kozo paper (such as you received from Kurodani) and there must be at least seven layers of such paper. Furthermore, mention the final layer getting a coating of persimmon juice. (kaki shibu)

If you can't find such a craftsman, the next easiest alternative would be for me to construct the boards for you in my shop. The price for this, including shipping would be between 55,000 and 60,000 Yen (\$155 to 165). Between construction time and shipping time you would receive the boards two to two and a half months after I receive your order.

A third alternative is for you, yourself to do the entire job from instructions I would send you. This is by far the most difficult alternative. Since you have not even seen any of the processes involved you will find it extremely difficult to construct. The instructions will be as difficult to write. Truthfully, I mention this alternative only because you indicated a strong desire to do the work. Perhaps the only one to benefit would be Mr. Kelman, for whom writing the instructions would be good study. I definitely advise against this way, but if you insist the necessary paper for the two drying boards would come to about 6,000 Yen, not including shipping, which wouldn't be too much I believe.

A final possibility that I have thought of is to have the frames built here, and then send them and the paper separately, along with instructions for pasting. Shipping included, this would come to about 40,000 Yen. Perhaps then you could practice on a makeshift frame, whereupon you could then have the "pleasure" of making your own Kari-bari.

If you have any other suggestions beside the above, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Iwatara Oka

Iwatara Oka