

News from Italy

The notes that follow are based on material kindly sent by Umberto Delaini.

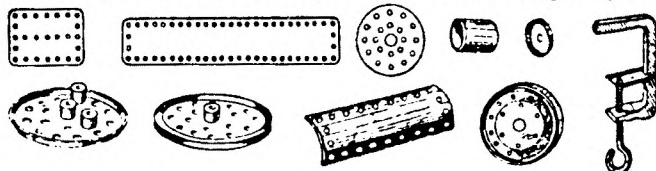
C.I.G.E.A. Sets C.I.G.E.A. was the large Italian system, dates & full details unknown, which had many parts that resembled MECCANO, though with holes at 13.0mm pitch, and some of original design. MCS contains some information, with illustrations of some of the parts, & some of a lettered series of sets, plus in Part 5, the Set Contents of a different run of sets, 00 - 3. Now, more is known from a copy of a manual, which has the Contents of Sets 00 - 9, and, through Frank Beadle, a copy of the Set Contents of the lettered sets. The new material will be included in the MCS Extra Sheets but points of general interest follow.

It is assumed that the lettered sets preceded the numbered ones because Set H is very much larger than Set 9, the largest in each series. All the sets are called 'LA MECCANICA per ragazzi' ('Mechanical Engineering for kids' perhaps).

The Lettered Sets The Set Contents of these are headed C.I.G.E.A., Milano, Italy, alongside the logo above. By each part its price has been typed in, with a handwritten note at the top indicating (I think) that they must be increased by 20%, and dated 19-1-55. That's the only date I have for the system.

The Sets covered are Baby, A - H, and linking sets A1 - G1, all in the 'serie BOY-MEC'; and 2 'FIS-MEC' ones, Alfa & Beta. The BOY-MEC ones have the same totals of parts as those in MCS. A 'Rosso' manual is advertised on the MCS Part 5 Sheet 3a and is said to contain 'Applicazioni fisiche-meccaniche', hence no doubt FIS-MEC (fisiche - relating to physics).

The 220 different parts in the H Set is the only list of parts available but there may have been others because the PNs go to 352, and 'over 300' are claimed on p4 of MCS. I haven't been able to understand the name or purpose of certain parts in the Contents, in particular Nos.51-53,106, 109,118,206-8,255,257,260-1,280,283,285-6,290,322, and 325b. Notes on some of the more unusual parts follow, with those illustrated marked '¶': • 4h wide Plates, perhaps flexible, length 5,11,18, & 25h[¶]. There are no other flexible plates in the Sets so these might be thought to be the equivalent of MECCANO Braced Girders. Within the same group of PNs is a 5*7h Plate[¶] with a line of centre holes. The 18h part is an unusual length and there are also an 18h Strip, A/G, & Flat Girder. These may have originally been the only size between 11 & 25h because the 13, 15 & 21h have a letter suffix after their PNs. • DAS 2,3 & 7h wide, each 2 & 3h deep. • 2 Circular Plates, 60 & 80mm Ø, each with & without a centre boss. The 80mm is the largest circular part. The large centre hole in the smaller 'without' one[¶] is probably about $\frac{5}{16}$ " Ø to suit the addition of a boss. • A 40mm Loose Pulley, and 40 & 60[¶]mm Fast Pulleys. Also what looks like one disc of the 60mm with extra bosses to give an 2-Throw Eccentric[¶]. It is shown alongside the 60mm Fast Pulley. There is a Tyre for the 60mm Pulley. • Sprockets with 14,18,30,34,47 teeth. • 19 & 35t Pinions, each with 6,12 or 18mm face widths; 60 & 100t Gear Wheels. The 35t is shown with a recessed side, like M31. The 19/35t & 19/60t are said to run together with ratios of 2:1 & 3:1 but perhaps these are only approximate and the unusual number of teeth is to do with using a Mod. of .65. • A pair of 9t Helicals that presumably mesh at 13mm centres. • Two Cylinders listed as 20[¶] & 56mm and there is also a Cylinder End[¶] - perhaps the 56mm is a longer Cylin-



OSN 23/656

der of the same diameter as the 20mm. • The Curved Boiler Plate[¶] seems a better idea than a one piece Boiler. The larger sets contain 3 of these and if they formed a complete circle with a 1 hole lap, the diameter would be 37mm. However the illustration of the Boiler End[¶] (next to the Boiler Plate) looks larger than that, and the holes in a cylinder made up of 3 Plates would not always be very convenient. • A Table Clamp[¶]. • Some basic electrical parts including a 2mm N&B and an Insulating Bush & Washer, like the prewar

M182/182a. • A 3*2h A/B[¶], a Double Reversed A/B[¶], & a 2h wide Girder Bracket[¶] that looks to be made from a Flat Girder.

Returning to the sets, the G is quite large with 3174 parts in all (about the same as the last MECCANO No.10), including 86 A/Gs, 36 Flat Girders, 26 Flanged or Perforated Plates, 20 Flexible? Plates, 10 Sprockets, 31 Gears, & about 700 N&B. It has 8x 60mm Pulleys but only 4 Tyres for them. The H is identical to the G except that it has the electrical parts, an upright sideplate 12-24v Motor, ME 507 (shown in MCS), and the Transformer TR-RE 704.

The lid labels and manual covers can just be seen in the illustrations of the sets in MCS, and all are similar to the lid label opposite, with from left to right, an aeroplane, a car, and a something else. They are clearly not the same as the cover with the Loco in MCS.

As well as the Rosso manual already mentioned 2 others are advertised on the same page: Verdi (Green) for 'ingegneria meccanica', & Bianco (White) for 'supermodelli'. These may be over and above the standard manuals.

Another Set not yet mentioned is MOTRAR, a Motor Set, which is also advertised on p3a of MCS Part 5, though it isn't clear if it was contemporary with the lettered sets. It contained 168 parts including a cylindrical type Motor, a Transformer, a Rheostat, & a selection of parts - standard as far as can be seen but a Manual is mentioned on elementary electro-mechanics.

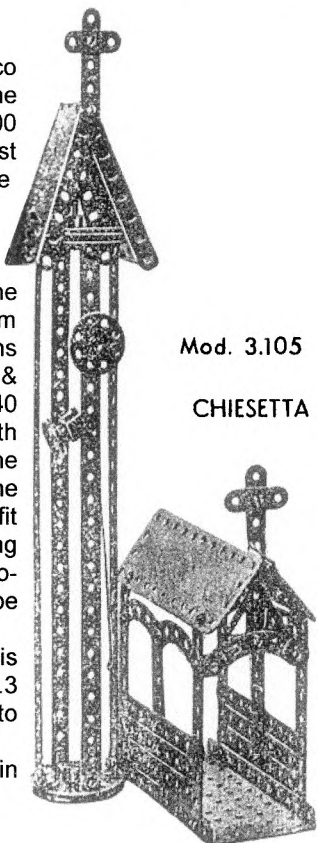
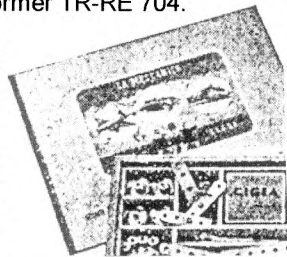
MCS has nothing on the colour of the parts but the A - H Sets are called a 'Serie nichelata' in MCS, so perhaps the parts are nickel plated.

The Numbered Sets

Umberto's manual has the Loco cover shown in MCS, and the range of sets in the Contents is 00 - 9, with linking sets 1a - 8a. Most have been radically changed - the number of parts in the largest is reduced from 3174 to 1350, & the number of different types of part from 220 to 146. The 'missing' parts are a little from everywhere including all lengths of Strips & Girders between 11 & 25h, except the 18h ones; the 40 & 80mm Ø parts; the Gears with faces wider than 6mm; and the Bulbs & Bulb Holders. But the No.9 is still a respectable outfit with 320 N&B, 16 Gears including 4 Bevels & 2 Helicals, and a Motor - now the long-sideplate type ME 411.

Of the smaller sets the 0 is very similar to the Baby, the No.3 to the B, and, broadly, the No.6 to the E.

The Motors & Transformers in



Mod. 3.105

CHIESETTA

MCS are advertised in this Manual, along with the MOTRAR set, and the Bianco & Rosso manuals, though the FIS-MEC sets aren't mentioned. The Verde manual is no longer listed. The Illustrated Parts page is as in MCS.

A few more details about the Manual. It is the 11th edition, and though the cover has a '2' in the white roundel, models for Sets 00 - 3 are shown. There is a clear photo and a Parts List for each, more than adequate for the simple models possible with these small sets. Nos.00-2 have no Flat Plates and the models are the sort found in early 1930s MECCANO manuals. In fact very many look as if they are identical or very near it. There are 2x 4*11h Plates in the No.3 and many of the models are original. The Church on the previous page is the most unusual.

SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: LA MECCANICA per ragazzi. No.2.



•Details of maker: C.I.G.E.A., Milano.
•Dates &/or Ref Nos: Undicesima Edizione.
•Page size: 246*176mm deep.
•No. of pages: 32 inc front covers.
•Language: Italian.
•Printing: ½-tones of models; cover red/white/black on green.
•Page No. of Ill. Parts & highest PN: 8,233.
•Page Nos. of Set Contents & highest PN: 6-7,326a.
•Sets covered: 00,0,1-3.
•No. of models for each set: 19,22,18,22,13.
•Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 00: COMPASSO, 00,1,9; CARRO PER LEGNAME,00,23,12: 0:

SCIABOLA,0,25; ROULETTE,0,50,17. 1: SEDIA A SDRAIO, 1,53,18; GRU A SNO?-?,1,73,22. 2: SEGA PER METALLI,2,76,23; PIATTAFORMA MOBILE, 2,100,28. 3:CHIESETTA,3,105,29; AVVOLGITRICE,3,120,32. •Other notes: details from photocopy.

The Contents of Set 00 - 3 in MCS/FB are identical to those in Umberto's manual - perhaps they came from a later edition, with the larger sets omitted for some reason, or perhaps they no longer existed.

'New' System, FAI MECCANICA Umberto sent a photocopy of a manual from this small Italian system, photos of a set, and leading details of the parts. The manual is for Sets 00 - 2 but mention is also made of larger outfits. The No.2 is in many ways comparable to an early 1930s MECCANO No.2, but has a slightly wider range of parts, 46 in all, including a couple of unusual ones, a pair of Gears & more A/Gs. All the parts are chemically blackened, including the bosses, and they generally look to be a cross between MECCANO, & MÄRKLIN, with a touch of BRAL. Holes are 4mm diameter but the hole spacing is only 12.0mm. No dates or details of the maker, presumably FAI, are known.

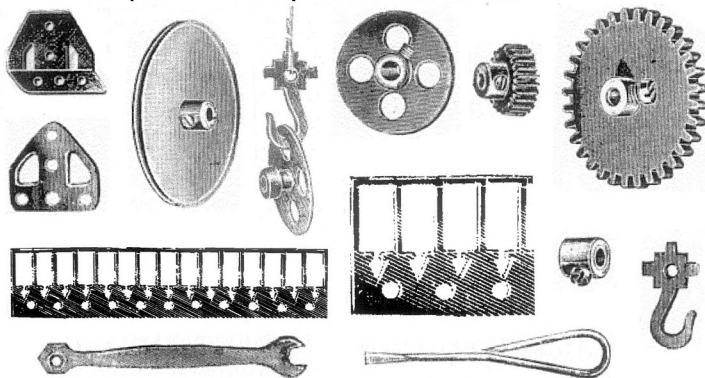
Sets. The Set is a No.00 and is packed in a red box which scales at 32*19cm. The lid label, red & black on blue, with a man at a lathe and a boy with an Inclined Delivery Chute, is shown below. The inside of the box is cream with the parts within red card partitions, and strung through the bottom of the box with black cord. One compartment for the NBW is square with a red lid. The main parts are a Flanged Plate, 10 Strips, 2 each DAS & Flat Trunnions, 6 Brackets, 4x 25mm Pulleys, and 10 N&B - somewhat less than an early 1930s MECCANO No.00.



Outfits 3,4 & 5 are mentioned in the Manual, and also a Motor set, an Electrical set, and others to make a Steam Loco, a Car, & an Aeroplane. Nothing is known of any of them.

Parts. The notes below are based on the Illustrated Parts List in the Manual, & the information from Umberto. The parts look similar to MECCANO (M) except as stated - K denotes MÄRKLIN. Parts illustrated are marked †.
• **Strips**, 3,5,7,13,25h with fully rounded ends. A Curved Strip like M90a but with no slotted holes. 1*5*1 & 1*3*1 DAS.
• **A/Gs**, 5,7,13,25h with K-like, slightly rounded corners.
• **A/Bs**, Flat, Angle & Double (including M11a). Re-

versed A/B (K-like with no slotted hole), & Double Bent Strip. A **Trunnion**†, flat-topped like BRAL, and a Flat Trunnion†, but the cutouts in the actual part looks M-like.
• A 5*11h **Flanged Plate** (K-like but with no slotted holes in the top). A Flanged Sector Plate (8h long, K-like).
• **Pulleys**, 25 & 58†mm, & an 11mm Loose Pulley.
• **Bush Wheels**. 32mm 4-hole,† & 36mm 8-hole The 4-hole is only shown once in the models, as a weight for a Hook† - it is called up for other models but the 8-hole is actually shown. The Contents show the 4-hole in Sets 0-2, with 3 in the No.2, and just one 8-hole, in Set 2.
• **Gears**. A 14t Pinion† & 46t Wheel†. They mesh at 2h centres and that gives a Mod. of 0.8. The Pinion is also said to be able to run with the Gear at right angles, ie like bevels.
• A unique 11h long Railing or **Windmill Sail** (†, with a section enlarged - it is called Striscia a cancello - Gate Strip?). A K-type **Hook**†. A **Collar**†. A loop of **Spring Cord**. Red **Cord**.
• 4mm Ø **Axles**, 25,65,85,115,150mm long, & a **Crank Handle** with square bends, about 13½cm o/a.
• **M4 NBW**. The Bolts are round-headed, 7mm Ø, and 7 & 10mm u/h; the Nuts are hexagonal, 7mm A/F & 3.3mm thick. The Washer is given as 4.3mm i.d. and is 8mm o.d.
• **Tools**. The wire Screwdriver† scales at about 13cm o/a. The Spanner† (10cm o/a) looks like the K-pattern in the Set, with the open end cranked.
• The parts are **stamped FAI** on one side.



The Manual. It has 48 near A5 size pages and the cover is identical to the lid label. Although it says 'Instruction Booklet for Sets 00, 0, 1, 2' on the inside front cover, no 00 models are shown, though a few of those for Set 0 could be made with the No.00. The layout of the 87 models is unusual with models from the different sets often grouped together by type, usually preceded by a page or two of explanations. Thus all the Cranes follow notes on pulley blocks & cord brakes, notes on gearing & pulley transmission lead to Machine Tools, and Vehicles follow 'wheels'. There are also notes on Levers, a Watt's Governor, & Newton's Disc.

[Cont. »]

Corrections • The page numbering of OSN 23 should read 23/xxx instead of 22/xxx. • In the MCS Database 2000, the 'SM' in 'Codes C' on p44 should read 'SH'.

ITEMS FROM LETTERS

1. From Don Redmond. • John Wapshott recently found a **CASTLE BUILDER** box (22*11½*2½") with no set number on it, and the bulk of the contents turned out to be most of a **STRUCTOMODE** No.6 Set. No manual or other 'paper' was with it. Characteristic **STRUCTOMODE** parts found included the Windmill Sails with large round holes, Braced Girders with semicircular cutouts, & a Little Hustler motor. Also present were Flanged Plates, whereas **CASTLE BUILDER** had Perforated Plates & A/Gs instead. The two Propeller Blades of the No.6 were found but they are 'sickle' shaped (as sketched left, ½-full-size)



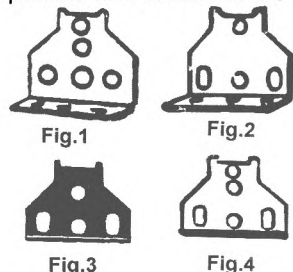
instead of the broad, early **MECCANO** type shown in **STRUCTOMODE** manuals. The parts nicely filled the compartments in the box, with the Motor fitting into a full-depth section, and raised level packaging in the other sections.

As noted in 16/458, **CASTLE BUILDER** was made in Toronto by the Castle Mfg. Co., probably from 1917 to 1918/19. Canadian Toys Ltd. of Hamilton, the makers of **STRUCTOMODE**, were listed in the Hamilton directory for 1921-22 (after that the manager, R.H.White, appeared until 1925). Is it possible that Canadian Toys acquired and made use of some **CASTLE BUILDER** boxes?

Points of interest concerning the (supposed) **STRUCTOMODE** parts found are: • ½" & ¾" Loose Pulleys made of tin discs eyeleted together; • the early **MECCANO** pattern Pawl is made of ordinary not spring steel, and is nickel plated; • the 5*11h Flanged Plate is as shown in the manual with the flange holes near the bend; • the Motor is as the manual but without the wooden base. (The type was illustrated in 19/551 with 'KNAPP' on the base.)

No Trunnions (see 23/681) were in the box.

• The 1924 **ERECTOR Car Truck** had the top hole raised compared to the **STEEL ENGINEERING** pattern (see 23/666), and then in 1926 the original hole was restored giving 2 holes at the top. [Referring to *Greenberg*, this last pattern was shown in the Illustrated parts (Fig.1) for 1924-



26, and then changed to Fig.2 in 1927 (with a single hole at the top and the side holes elongated). In 1928 & 1929 the Fig.3 type is shown, and no later illustrations are provided. But these changes may not represent the (whole) truth of the matter because where the Car Truck can be seen in the

photos of sets, it is the Fig.2 type in 1924, 1928, 1929, & 1933 (all in nickel). It is said that the extra hole was added in 1935 (Fig.4) and this part, painted red, is shown in a 1935 outfit and in later sets. *Greenberg* also has a photo of a set, said to be a 1920 No.1, which clearly shows 4 of the Fig.3 parts. Said part isn't listed in the 1920 Parts List or Set Contents, so was this an early trial set, or has it been mislabelled/badly restored? Figs.1-4 above have been copied from *Al Sternagle's Erector Parts Illustrated*.]

• Re the **ERECTOR 24t Gear** (23/666), the standard pattern prior to 1924 was plain with no face holes. My 2-hole version has a 7mm centre hole and no boss. [My mistake over the standard Gear, the 2-hole version was listed from 1914 through 1920 and was never included in any sets. I wonder if Don's example was a disc that 'got away' before it was 'bossed'. It's true that in some brochure illustrations it doesn't appear to have one but it always cost 15c against 10c for the unpierced one with boss.]

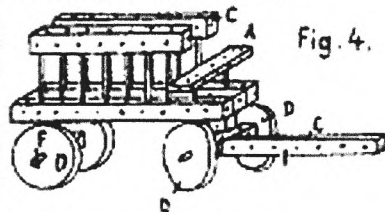
• Were the **STEEL ENGINEERING** Curved Girders the same curvature as the equivalent **ERECTOR** parts D & E?

• Colin Hinz has a pretty Russian set with the transliterated name of **VOENNAYA TEKHNKA** (Military Engineering), which was apparently made in St. Petersburg in 1999. It is packed in a transparent plastic box and the parts resemble **KONSTRUKTOR** [3] (see 22/648), but are steel rather than aluminium. The 16 models in the manual are chiefly army units, & vehicles.

• The 2000 Database lacks some figures for **NECOBO**. The following are from a batch of parts including Mod.1 Gears (see 7/147): bosses are 4.1mm bore & double-tapped 5/32" BSW; Axles are probably 4.06mm Ø, though some with the parts were 4.02mm. Other points: the bore of the Cone Pulley, #176, is less than 4.06mm; the nicked boss of the Face Plate (#83 but with 2 rings of 8 holes) is single-tapped; the tapping of the Handle Crank, #124, appears to be 1/8" BSW & the Set Screw is machined brass with a cheese head; the 16/60t Gears run freely at 1½" centres; the 20mm Bevel has 20 teeth and meshes nicely with **MECCANO** #30.

2. Details of an 11th Edition **C.I.G.E.A. manual** were given in 23/657. Luciano Luppi wrote that his 11th Edition is dated 'X 54'. He also sent some details of a 4th Edition from 1946, as follows. •Name: LA MECCANICA per ragazzi. •Maker: C.I.G.E.A., Milano, Via Nino Bixio, 15. •Date: XII 46, Quarta Edizione 50000 (could be the number of copies printed). •Page size: 246*170 mm deep. •64 pages + covers. Paper quality is much better than in the 11th ed. •Printing: half tones of models; cover is green with off white, grey, black inset. The inset is the same as the lid cover on 23/656. The 'something else' on it is a steam locomotive. •Language: Italian plus French/English/Spanish/German Introduction. •Sets covered A,B,C,D,E. •No. of models for each set: 23,20,21,10,10.

3. From Werner Sticht. • On **Korbuly's MATADOR patent** (22/623 & 23/682), the Austrian patent can be seen at http://members.xoom.com/oelli/matador/Patente/Nr.11515/Seite_1.gif & /Seite_2.gif). It is similar to the German one but also includes a vehicle with wheels, the Cart right. [On dates,



it was applied for on 2 Nov. 1901 and was granted (Beginn der Patentdauer) on 1 Dec. 1902. Hornby applied for his patent on 9 Jan. 1901, added to his application on 9 Oct. 1901, and his patent was granted on 30 Nov. 1901. The 1 Nov. date mentioned in OSN 23 is the application date for the UK patent, which was granted on 6 Feb. 1902. No application date is given on the German patent.]

• Due to a typing error the **5 STABIL DRGM numbers** given in 22/650 (248034-8) were incorrect – they are really 248934-8, as stated in OSN 13/348. [Due to another typing error the numbers from OSN 13 in OSN 22 were incorrectly given as 249934-8.]

• News from Jürgen Kahlfeldt: • Confirmation of the 1933 date for the introduction of **STABILA** given in 13/343. It is said in an ad leaflet dated 5/33 that it would be launched soon, and in one dated 11/33, Sets 1 & 2 are advertised as being 'new'. • The first known ad for the **KNIRPS** Motor (see 11/272) is from early 1933, and also listed at that time were the **KNIRPS** Conversion Sets 1a & 2a. The Nr.1a was mentioned in 11/273; the 2a was to make the Nr.2 into the **STABIL** Nr.48, & the same Set was also available as Nr.46a, to make the **STABIL** Nr.46 into the Nr.48. • A **Walther's Maschinenbaukasten** with manual has been found [it was mentioned in 13/348, and has mostly wooden parts].

• As would be expected nothing of **MÄRKLIN METALL**, **TEMSEI** or **TRIX** at the **Nürnberg Toy Fair** in February, but **AMI-LAC** had a stand, and so did **Eitech**. The latter showed a Lorry-mounted Mobile Crane which stood about 3m high. Also present, the firm **Dickie-Schuco**, who use the old **Schuco** trade mark, and have started to sell a system which looks like repackaged **MERKUR**. [It is hoped to have more

the same. However the old '1.xyz' models were now called '0.xyz', and the only '1.xyz' models were the 10 with a motor that had been included for the 1928 1x Set (1.185x-1.194x). The 0.xyz model numbers were changed to eliminate the gap in the numbering this caused. Each model page has 'See last page of this manual for list of models built with your outfit' at the top, and said List was on (unnumbered) p136. It included the models in the **No.5 Special Supplement**, which continued alongside the new 0-40 Manual.

1930 The outfits were changed again to Nos.1,3,5,110, 115,125,150. Sets 110-150 seem to have borne no resemblance to earlier outfits but Nos.1,3,5 were essentially the 1929 0,10,20. Compared with the No.20 the **new No.5** had some Gears (a 12t Pinion, 2x 36t Wheels, & a Worm) but no Tires. Also the 8 spring Clips were replaced by ERECTOR pattern Formed Collars (#59a), and the Axles by Gilbert parts. Most of the **parts** still looked like MECCANO, but the Gears, threads, bosses, & Axle diameter were now to ERECTOR standards, and the parts were probably being made at New Haven. (12/317)

Manuals. The 1929 0-112925 continued to be used but the List of models that could be made with the 1929 sets was no longer relevant and to overcome this little difficulty a rubber stamp was applied to the cover. Two versions are known. The first from a 1930 No.5 reads 'THIS OUTFIT BUILDS ALL THE MODELS UP TO PAGE 94', and that included, as might be expected, all models through 1.10; that is all that could be made with the previous No.20 outfit.

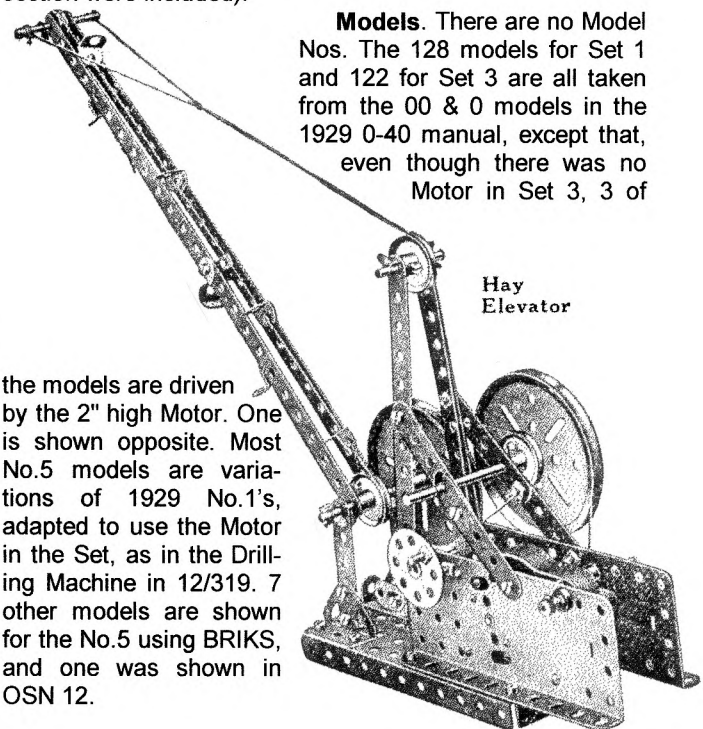
Another manual has the same overprint except that the page number is 110 (though the last digit is unclear) - 110 is the last page of the 2.xyz models (for the No.30 Set), and which 1930 outfit this would have accompanied isn't known.

A 'supplement' manual was also issued entitled '**Standard Gearing**', © 1930 from New Haven, and it may have included an illustrated Separate Parts section with prices.

LATER At some point, perhaps in 1932, a **new manual**

was issued, and it was printed in sections so a manual for any of the three sets could be assembled. One from a No.5 is made up as follows: a cover with code M 1363; 2 sections of No.1 models with M 1351 on the front of the first; 2 sections of No.3 models; the 'Standard Gearing' section; a No.5 model section; M 1417 on Sec.3A with No.5 models using MECCANO BRIK (by then included in the No.5); and M1274 on the Separate Parts section. In all there are 48 unnumbered pages (though the example known has 52 because, no doubt by error, 2 copies of the Separate Parts section were included).

Models. There are no Model Nos. The 128 models for Set 1 and 122 for Set 3 are all taken from the 00 & 0 models in the 1929 0-40 manual, except that, even though there was no Motor in Set 3, 3 of



the models are driven by the 2" high Motor. One is shown opposite. Most No.5 models are variations of 1929 No.1's, adapted to use the Motor in the Set, as in the Drilling Machine in 12/319. 7 other models are shown for the No.5 using BRIKS, and one was shown in OSN 12.

Some C.I.G.E.A. Parts Orion DreamDancer kindly sent photos & notes on some of the parts in 3 trays he has acquired. The C.I.G.E.A. parts don't fit in one but the other 2 are likely to be C.I.G.E.A. though they don't exactly match any of those shown in MCS. They are yellow cardboard, 10*14 3/4*1", with the partition tops edged in red. The parts include some BRAL & AMI-LAC but the C.I.G.E.A. ones were easy to spot since all likely ones, except the N&B, Axles, the Table Clamp, & the Propeller Blade, are stamped C.I.G.E.A. Some notes on C.I.G.E.A., mainly the range of sets, were given in 23/656.

The steel parts, including most structural parts, are probably nickel plated though many are now very dull looking. A few pieces are dark red or dark green, and in some cases the same part is in green & plated, so probably two periods are present. The bossed parts are brass, except that the Sprockets are dull nickel with brass bosses. All bosses are double-tapped, and have recessed peening rather like MÄRKLIN. The parts in the photos are listed below, with the colour if not plated. They look like MECCANO, unless otherwise noted, though the hole pitch is 13.0mm of course. Holes are about 4.4mm Ø. The thread is 'an iffy M4'. All corners are well rounded, with some near fully radiused. Scaled dimensions are prefaced by an 's'.

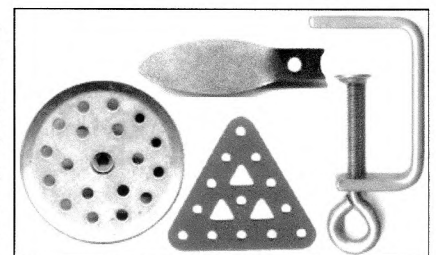
- **Strips.** 3,5,18,25h, #15,16,20,21. The 18h, & some of the 25h are green.
- **DAS.** 1h deep by 3,5,7h long, #23,24,25. 2h deep by 3,7h long, #98,100. 3*5*3h, #99.
- **Reversed A/B.** 1*1*1*2, #103. 1*3*1h, #?, perhaps 96.
- **A/Gs.** 11,18,25h, #79,80,81. Some of the 18h & 25h are green.
- **Flat Girders.** 3,5h, #121,122.
- **Flanged Plates.** 5*11h, #1, flanged on the 11h sides. 8h long Sector Plate, #6, with only end & centre line holes, and

6mm slots in flanges. The ends of the flanges at the 5h end have very pronounced rounding.

- **Flat Plates.** 4*11 & 4*25h, #9,10, with only edge holes. 5*7h, #8, with edge & lengthways centre line holes (see OSN 23). 5*5h, #137, fully perforated, red. 5h side Triangular Plate (below), #131, red.

- **Pulleys.** Loose, #55, one is 15.5mm o.d. & one 15.9mm. 26mm Loose, #58, with 3 face holes. 26mm Fast, #61. 60mm, #64, below, with rings of 6 & 12 holes, staggered symmetrically.

- Of 4 black **Rubber Rings**, 3 were on the 26mm Pulleys. All have 'G' moulded into them with a 4 or 5 digit number on the opposite side, possibly '23420'. They may be #228.



- **Other Bossed Parts.** 8h Bush Wheel, #51. Flanged Wheel, #53.

- **Gear,** #178, 60 teeth, s40mm o.d., no face holes.

- **Sprockets.** 14t, #164, s24mm o.d. 30t, #166, s48mm o.d, no face holes.

- **Cylinders.** s20mm Ø, s20 & s56mm long, #214, 216, steel, no holes in walls. The Cylinder End, #219, is brass, like M164 but no side holes and quite shallow.

- The steel **Table Clamp** is shown above – the body is about s79mm long.

- A steel **Propeller Blade**, above, which may be #117, is s53mm long o/a.

- **N&B.** All brass, with square Nuts, #235, 6mm A/F, and s6mm Ø fillister headed Bolts, 6 & 8mm u/h, #237,237a. Grub Screws, #237, are steel, 5.5mm long.

EDITORIAL An Index for OSN 1-30 has been compiled with 20 pages in the same style as before. I'll have photocopies made at the beginning of December & if possible please let me know before that if you would like one. The cost will be £2.30/2.90/3.80 for the usual postal zones. I've also added a page to the OSN web site (www.osnl.co.uk) with the full Index on it, and it can be printed off for free - it's a large file though so may take a while to load with slower connections.

Work on updating the Database is underway and I hope to have it ready before the next Issue. There will be more space than before for additions to the main section, & it's likely to have 56 or 60 pages. At most the cost will be £9.50/10/11, & if you would like a copy it would help if you could let me know before Xmas. I hope to put the main, alphabetically sort on the web site but the total width is about that of a landscape A3 page & I've yet to find a way of persuading my A4 printer to print the right half of such a page from the web page, or a way to download the file in a form that would allow it to be printed.

Another addition to the Site is a page showing the parts of the French AUTO-CYCLE system. This is because I plan to include an article about it in the next Issue and there will not be room to show all the parts there. Of course enough about them will be included in the article to make it understandable but it seems a pity not to make all the details available. In this case they occupy 8 A4 sides and it should be possible to print each of the original sides onto a landscape A4 or US Letter page.

It may be that I will add other material of like nature in the future, and possibly articles for which there is no immediate space in the Newsletter. Another reason for using the web to supplement articles is that copies of MCS are no longer available (except Tim's MECCANO CD of course), and so an increasing number of readers cannot refer to it.

Which brings me to the MCS Extra Sheets that were available with Issues 7-27. A new reader recently asked me if I knew of any for sale and didn't realise that I could still supply them, although now only 2 complete sets are left. A set consists of 598 sheets, most double-sided, and the total price is £100/104/118. Like MCS it seems unlikely that the Extra Sheets will be reprinted in the foreseeable future.

Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. From Jacques Pitrat. Some more information on the **LITTLE JIM Train Construction Sets**, made by Metalcraft for the J.C.Penney store, see 23/677-8 & 24/691. There were three sets: 100, 200 & 300, and their contents were exactly the same as those of METALCRAFT Sets 980, 981 & 982. The lid of the 300 is as described in OSN 24 except that the 12 Cars that can be made are shown on it. 'Builds 4 at one time' it says on the lid but that does not mean any 4 Cars, for example one cannot build the Coal Car & the Armored Car simultaneously. It is also claimed that the Cars can fit any gauge track, but the two lengths of Axle in the Set allow only O gauge & a wider gauge - and for the latter the Wheels have to be outside the Trucks and look very awkward.

LITTLE JIM Train Construction Sets: S1 [31/908]

2. Josep Bernal wrote that he has some **C.I.G.E.A.** brass parts and they are threaded M4 (see 27/789).

C.I.G.E.A: S1 [31/908]

3. Jack Little sent a November 1947 Colton, Palmer & Preston trade ad for **EZY-BILT**. It shows Sets 1-8 in a pile so only the lid of the top box can be seen. It is just like the one in 28/837 with the 2 boys & galleon, except that the ad is in red & black only, so no green bits. This is the earliest sighting of the 1-8 range. The ad shows all the boxes the same size but Jack wrote that while they were all tin, the 1-3 were smaller than the 6-8 - the 4 & 5 have yet to be seen. Also in the ad, the sole agents: 'GEO. WILLS & CO. LTD., in all Capital Cities'.

EZY-BILT: S2 [31/908]

4. In 10/244 it was noted that the vee of the **N-G-NEERO** MECCANO-type 70mm Pulley is quite narrow and David Hobson pointed out to me that its illustration in MCS, identical to the **FORGEACIER** one (N-G-NEERO was virtually a copy of FORGACIER, presumably made under licence), makes it look much wider. Some FORGEACIER parts came to hand recently and sure enough the 70mm Pulley is wide like the illustration, and that's because it is like a MÄRKLIN Flanged Disc Pulley with a single flanged disc, and not 2 discs riveted together. The pattern of piercing in the faces of the 2 types is the same.

Although most parts in the 2 systems look very similar there are small differences of detail. The most obvious is in the name stamped on most circular parts, with FORGEACIER JEP FRANCE on the French parts instead of N-G-NEERO MADE IN ENGLAND. The punched holes are about 3.6mm and the N&B in the only NGN set examined are the metric M3; the FOR equivalents are referred to as 3mm in the French instructions and are no doubt the same. But the threads used in the other parts differ. FOR/NGN bosses are tapped M3.5/8" BSW, and the threads on other parts like the Threaded Pin & Handrail Support are M3.5/4BA. Axles are about the same size, 3.43mm Ø for the few NGN examples seen and 3.43-3.54 for some FOR parts. (In passing both lots of parts included 3 different lengths of Crank Handle, from 145 to 245mm o/a. I had thought, from the 'per bag, containing:- N123 7 cranks, various lengths' in the NGN Parts List, and a similar entry for FOR, that there were actually 7 different lengths. But 7 does seem a little excessive, especially in a system in which such parts can be cut to any length, and probably the 'various lengths' meant only the 3 seen. Some illustrations of the Accessory Set show what appears to be more than 3 lengths but a FOR example to hand, mostly still strung, has 2 each of the 3 lengths, but arranged so they look to be 6 different lengths - their ends hidden under a card for other parts.)

On dates, David has found the relevant UK patent, No.381348. It is in the name of the Société Industrielle de Ferblanterie, of Boulevard Beaumarchais, Paris, and its application Date was 21/10/31. It has a convention date of 21/10/30, a year earlier, and so there will be a corresponding French patent of that date. The patent describes the workshop-box of tools & materials, and the advantages of the system. There is also a patent of addition from the same company, UK 384215, application date 17/6/32, convention date 15/10/31. This describes the use of the lid of the workshop-box as a baseplate for the cutting & perforating machines, and it also describes the shearing & bending tools. David commented that the use of the lid in this way would seem an important feature to avoid damage to table tops and parent/child relations. In fact the lid was fitted with rubber feet

backing card and the part between the bottom pair of A/Bs is the Small Pulley #1039. Notice also the Hook in the top right corner, not seen elsewhere. No doubt all the N&B are used to attach the parts. The manual has the Loco cover shown in OSN 26.

Set 1 2 sets have the same partitioning as the example in Baukästen (p222) and the box size is given there as 30*21*2.5cm. The manual cover with these is similar to OSN 26 but is whitish, doesn't have the maker's details along the bottom, and the 'Vorlageheft Nr.1' is above the Loco. A third set is in a box of about the same size but possibly a little deeper, and has red topped partitioning to give only 5 compartments. It's just possible that this is a Nr.2 set. Its manual is as OSN 26 but with the bold lettering in red. Finally a set in a bigger box with the parts attached, probably singly, to a yellow card. Its 35mm Pulleys have only 2 face holes, so it might be thought to be an early set but the 50mm Disc #1034 is painted blue and the 7*9h Flat Plate #1021, red. Replacements from Ph. 2 perhaps except that the 50mm Disc in Ph. 2 had a boss. Below, the manual

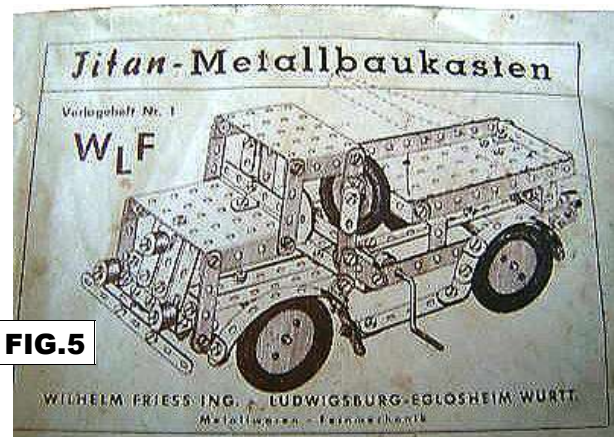


FIG.5

cover, completely different but still marked 'Vorlageheft Nr.1'.

Set 2 Set 2 is only known for sure from the Set Contents sheet.

Linking Sets Given the 0A Contents sheet mentioned above, it's likely that there was a 1A as well.

A Nr.3 Outfit? A parts price list has all the parts listed in Fig.4 except those in colour, and the red ones were needed for Set 2. Thus it seems that the system grew in terms of parts and sets. The part in blue, the Trunnion seen in Fig.1, is certainly not in Set 2 so perhaps there was a Nr.3 which included it, and possibly other, as yet unseen, parts.

Two Phase 2 Items

The Piccolo

Set The photo right looks to be both sides of the Set's packet. The text under the Bicycle speaks of 58 parts and 21 models.



FIG.6

An Electric Motor

The wording on the box includes 'Type 4', and, afterwards, translating, 20V AC/DC. One of the two coils in the Motor can be seen in Fig.8. Presumably the lever on the front panel gives forward & reverse.

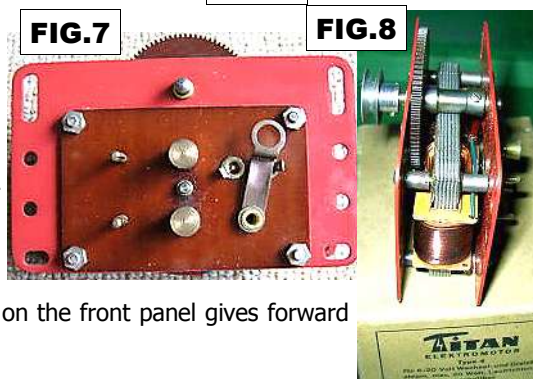


FIG.7

FIG.8

TITAN: S2

OSN 45/1382

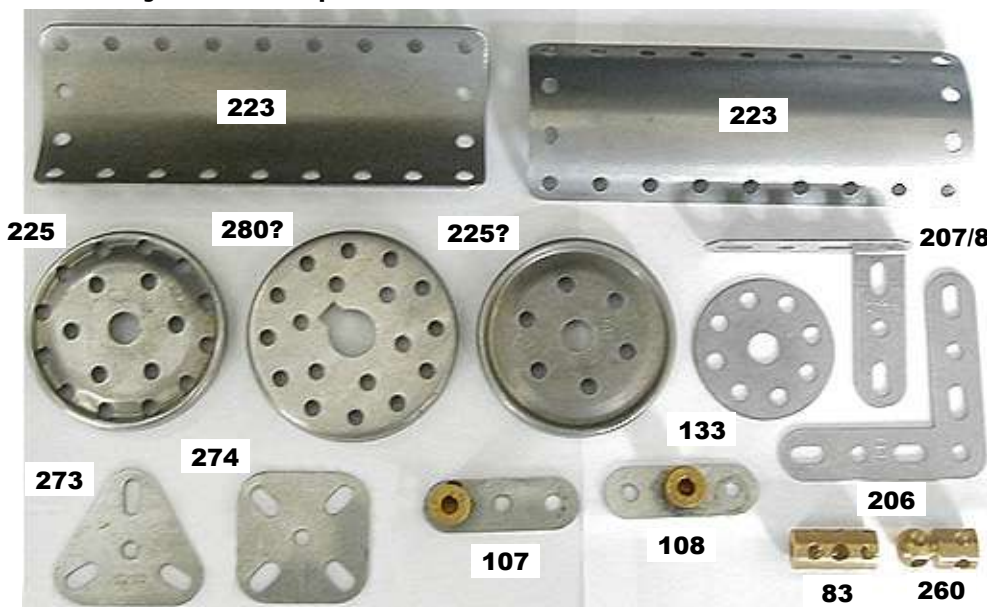
Some C.I.G.E.A. Parts Thanks to Paul Goodman I've been able to see his small collection of C.I.G.E.A. parts, and these notes add to those in 27/789.

All the parts are nicely made with a dull nickel sheen finish, and all are shown below except for a 5h-sided Triangular Plate #131 which is as illustrated in OSN 27. Each piece is labelled with its probably PN, and all are stamped CIGEA, with CIGEA-ITALIA on the end faces of the brass parts.

Holes are at 13.0mm pitch and are mostly 4.3mm Ø, but 4.1mm in the Cranks & 4.5 in the Wheel Disc. **Slots** are 8.4-8.8mm long. All the **brass parts** are 10.0mm Ø with a bore of

4.1mm, and are double-tapped. The **thread** in M4.

Other points of interest: **The circular parts:** their centre hole is about 8mm Ø but near 12mm in #280?. The 3 larger diameter parts have a flange 5-6mm deep. **#83 Coupling.** 21mm long o/a with the end holes at 13.0mm pitch, as they should be. **#107,108 Cranks.** No slotted holes. The strips are 13.1mm wide. **#133 Wheel Disc.** 36½mm o.d. **#206-8 Corner Brackets.** The basic part #206 is formed to give handed parts 207 & 208. **#223 Boiler Plate.** 4 lapped by 1 hole make a cylinder of 50mm Ø which will push into the Boiler End. **#225 & 225? Boiler Ends.** The part with the 2 rings of holes matches the drawing in the Illustrated Parts (see 23/656). Apart from the extra ring both parts are the same with an o.d. of 50½mm. The outer ring is so close to the edge that it would have limited usefulness. **#273 & 274 Small Plates.** Useful looking parts but they were not included in the later numbered sets. **#280? Wheel Flange.** It is 53mm Ø and the only likely part listed is #280 'Contropiastra circol. Ø 53mm'. It could be used with #134 Perforated Circular Plate of 60mm Ø (see 23/656) which looks to have a large centre hole, or with the 60mm Ø Plate with Boss, #154. **#260 Handrail Support.** It has a transverse bore through the ball part and the cylinder.



C.I.G.E.A.: S1

OSN 45/1382