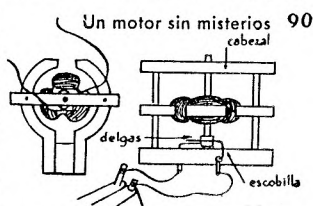


A fair range of experiments are shown, with permanent and electromagnets, bulbs and resistors, made up cells, and an electric motor. A No.3 Outfit is mentioned, to be ready shortly. Although certain specialised parts have to be assembled for the experiments, this isn't exactly a constructional system I think, so I won't go into more detail here. A box, from the manual cover, and one experiment are shown opposite. There's no indication of date except that it is said to be a toy of the atomic age. There's nothing on the manufacturer either - MECANO is included in the name of the small Spanish system MICRO-MECANO "GUINA" but there's nothing else to link the two.



Josep also sent a copy of the 12 page manual of another Spanish set, made by the well known firm Payá in 1962, called **CONSTRUCCIONES ELECTRONICAS**. It falls into the same broad category with electronic parts (transistors, capacitors, a coil, etc.) wired together on a chassis using special spring connectors. Details of 7 different simple morse and radio (I think) transmitters and receivers are given.

3. Ted Van Klink mentioned that there is a good, albeit slightly pricey, supplier of **TEMSI** in Toronto.

4. Sven-Ulrich Glage from Hamburg sent a list of his sets and the following names were new to me: - **DER JUNGE BAUMEISTER**; **EIFEL** (seems to be a Danish system of MECCANO or MÄRKLIN style, with the name on the Brackets); **FERMO** (German, the models are mostly built of triangular plates); **GA** (German, very simple with unusual parts); **GORDON** (most parts including Strips and Plates are brass plated, possibly an early East German system); **HERSA** (simple system, of small scale, made in Berlin immediately after WW2); **HW MAS-BAUKASTEN** (from the DDR firm that made DER JUNGE KONSTRUKTEUR); **LEICHTMETALL-KONSTRUKTIONS-BAUKASTEN** (aluminium parts similar to MÄRKLIN); **METABA** (German); **PICO ELEKTRIK** (looks like a 1970/80s version of ELEKTRO in MCS); **STUDIO ELEKTRIK**; **SV INGENØR**. He hopes to send more details in due course.

Other points: • On **AWS** (11/294), a later version of the set was sold with an updated manual containing additional models, and included in the set as new parts were 4 rubber Tyres. As far as is known none of the parts were coloured but there was an AWS clockwork motor which isn't mentioned in the manuals. • A **CONSTRUCTION JEEP** set that is different to the one in MCS and 14/373 - it is complete with a nice little tinplate Jeep, and the parts to build a Trailer and other models differ. It was made in Japan by Daiya. • An **INVENTRIX** outfit that was made in Germany in 1947/48 and has a clear resemblance to the Liverpool INVENTRIX in MCS. • A postwar **KONSTRUKTION** set which seems to be an earlier version of the system in MCS [and that in turn is thought to be earlier than the set described in 8/181]. • A **METALLO** set that seems to be pre-WW2 and Danish perhaps. It may be a 'new' system. • There was a German version of the **PHILIPS ME 1200** set described in MCS. • Two 1930s model plans for **HELLER MECHANIKUS** (15/415) are for model sailplanes made of aluminium that could really fly!

5. Photocopying tubular containers is always a problem and Kendrick Bisset has tried rolling the tube along to keep it above the moving light during copying. Rubber bands were put at either end to minimise slipping. The example he sent, of a GIRDER BILT tube, is very good indeed.

6. Don Redmond sent a note about research that he and

John Wapshott had done into the history of the Canadian **CASTLE BUILDER** system. The firm who made it, Castle Manufacturing Co. of Toronto, and its manager, Percy V. Jermyn, are listed in the city directory for 1917-18, but not before or after. A Jermyn family lived in Mimico, then a Toronto suburb, both before and after those years. The company's address was 69 Richmond St. East in 1917 and then at 80 Duchess St. As a working hypothesis Don suggests that Percy enlisted in 1914, was invalided home and founded the business in 1917, and died of Spanish influenza late in 1918 or early 1919, whereupon the business ceased. The resemblance to certain U.S. systems of the time has still to be explained.

Don also wrote that a MECCANO enthusiast of his acquaintance saw a metal construction set in a carton marked **BARUM CHEZ** (or similar) in an antique shop in Marmora (north of Kingston, Canada). It had gone when Don rang but was apparently made in Eastern Europe and had E984 on the box. Contents may have included 2x2" & 4x1½" Pulleys with Tires, 4 Rubber Tracks, Plates, N&B, and a small manual. Don wonders if it was repackaged MERKUR.

7. Dennis Snowdon mentioned that he bought a new **No.0 ERECTOR Set**, just like the one shown in 15/411, with 1" Pulleys and the FO Plate, etc, from a shop in Stanhope in 1943 or 1944. It cost 2/6, the amount he got from a local lady for digging her garden. He later swapped it for some MECCANO parts and now wishes he hadn't.

8. A friend of Tony Matthewman has pointed out that the text in the MCS pages for **RODOPI** is not Russian but may be Bulgarian. Could well be because a map shows some Rodopi mountains in the south of Bulgaria, and though I couldn't find Bratsighovo, the manufacturer's town in MCS, there are several names thereabouts that end in 'ovo'.

9. Last year Richard Bartlett found some sets called **MECHANIC** on sale in Malta, and they are probably akin to WISDOM (see 10/238), though some of the colours of the parts are different, with air force blue Strips and white (plastic) Flexible Plates. The Flanged Plates are still metallic red. 3 sets were available, and the largest included the special Cab with the motor built into the lower part, as in the WISDOM No.6 outfit. [Roger Baker has also reported sets on sale in Kuwait for the equivalent of £4 up to £15.]

Richard has also found the remains of what was probably a **SCHEFFLERS** set (see 12/324). There was no box and as would be expected the manual didn't have a name on it. However its cover, Illustrated Parts, and Set Contents agree exactly with those in MCS/FB, and the maker, VEB Metallspielwaren of 9112 Burgstädt, is the same too. Another clue is the Windmill Sail which is parallel rather than the later tapered one shown in OSN 12. The 7 sets available are shown on the back cover and though they retain the unusual SCHEFFLERS set numbering, their prices are identical with those for the Sets 1-7 in the BURGSTÄDTER manual described in OSN 12 (and included in MCS pt.5). So that would seem to put its date at near the point the name changed, although prices may not have changed as quickly in East Germany as they did in the West. The manual's PR of KE 51 76 III-8-9 690 might indicate a date of the 51st week of 1976. That at least puts it earlier than either of the 2 possible analogous dates from the BURGSTÄDTER manual.

The major parts in the set have a dark grey, nearly black finish with a sheen to it, except that the Flanged Plates are dark blue and the 5h Ø MÄRKLIN-type (metal) Pulley is a dark red.

10. To add to what was in 15/424, Kendrick Bisset sent the following notes on the **STRUCTO** parts in his #2, 2A and 3 sets. • The A/Gs have round holes in one flange and 4.7*7.6mm slotted holes in the other. • Wagon Wheels are 1½" Ø, and have a very smooth tread, ⅜" wide. The ones in the #2 set have 6 spokes and are painted black; the others

INVENTRIX *Baukästen* says that this system was made as an additional product by a company called Inventrix Kleingerätebau [small tool maker] GmbH of Alfeld (Leine), south of Hannover. The dates given for the firm are 1946-58 and its principals were Dr. Hans Schellhoss & his wife Anneliese. Of the system's 41 parts the Plates & a few others have something of STABIL about them; the rest are run of the mill except for 2 sizes of zinc die-cast Flanged & Grooved Pulley Wheels with the boss on the 'inside' (like the original MECCANO #20).

INVENTRIX is described in MCS as British because at the time the label on the only outfit known carried the address Inventrix Ltd., 9 Union St., Liverpool 2. Presumably it was an export set - the parts in it are painted but are otherwise, apart from very minor differences, identical to known German equivalents - the latter have a dull grey rustproof coating.

These notes are mainly about the 'Liverpool' set, with its parts still strung, & a similar, near complete 'German' outfit, but other German sets seen on Ebay will also be mentioned.

The 'GERMAN' SET It is packed in a black box, 43*24*2½cm, with red trimmed partitioning to create 9 small compartments for Strips etc, and 3 large ones for brown cards on which the Plates, the Wheels, and a few other parts were strung. The lid label, 26*18½cm, is in very poor condition but below an identical one from an Ebay set. The logo at the left is

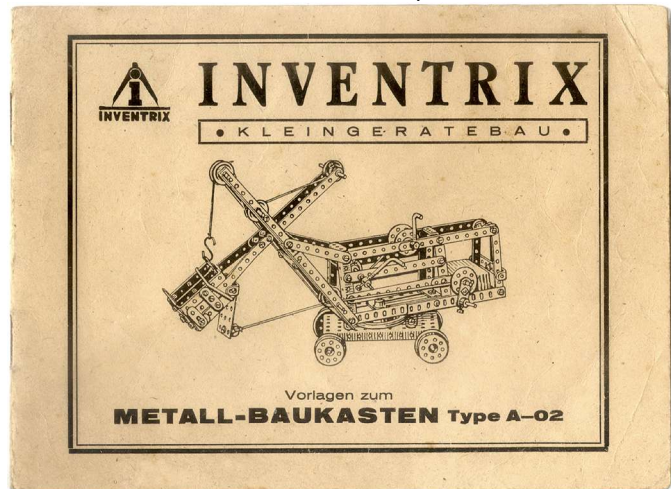


an 'i' inside a pair of dividers, and the model is a Fire Engine. No set number can be seen on the box but there may have been one in the circle in the bottom right corner of the label. The manual has Type A-02 on its cover (right).

The Parts in the set are listed below with the quantities as given in the manual in curly brackets. Examples of most of the various types can be seen at the bottom of the page. • **Holes** are mostly 4.2mm Ø, but 4.1mm in some in the smaller parts. • **The hole pitch** is 12.5mm. • **Bosses**, apart from those of the die-cast Wheels mentioned above, are steel, 11mm Ø, held (securely) with a narrow ring of peening. Their bore is 4.2mm, but 4.1 in a few, and they are single-tapped M4. • The parts are generally reasonably well made but from rather soft steel and some are a bit battered from use.

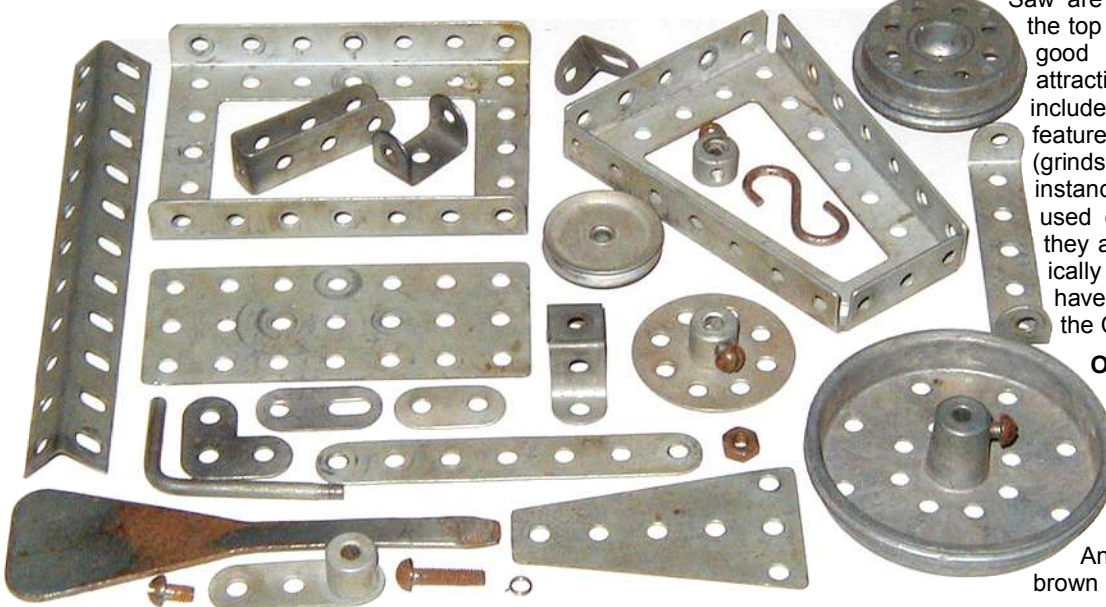
• 2,3,5,7,11h **Strips**. All the 'strip' parts are slightly wider than 12.5mm, most by about .1mm. {4,6,12,6,26}. • **DAS** {4}. • 11h **A/G**; the slotted holes are 7mm long {10}. • **Flat Bracket** and the **A/B** made from it. The slots are 9mm. {6,16}. • **Double Bracket**, 19mm wide {4}. • **Corner Bracket** {4}.

• **Double Bent Strip** {1}. • 3h deep **Single Bent Strip** {2}. • 5*11h, 5*7h, 7*3/5h **Pierced Flanged Plates** {1,1,2}. • The 'centres' of these **Plates**, 3*7h, 3*5h, 5*1/3h {1,1,2}. • 41 & 66mm o.d. **Flanged & Grooved Wheels**. Both have the same integral tapered boss and a hemispherical recess on the back face. {4,2}. • 28mm **Pulley** with 4½mm wide vee {6}. • 37mm Ø **Bush Wheel** {4}. • 35,60,100,150,175mm **Axles**, 3.9-4.0 Ø, with square sheared ends {4 each}. • 2½*4cm wire **Handle** with about 6mm of thread on the 4cm arm. • **Collar**, 11mm Ø, 8mm wide, & unlike the bosses, double-tapped {6}. • **Single Arm Crank** {4}. • **N&B**, M4, plain steel. • 6 & 15mm u/h **Bolts** with 6.9 & 7.3mm Ø RH respectively {80,10}. The 6mm are used as Set Screws. • Machined hex **Nuts**, 7.9mm A/F, & 3¼mm thick {90}. • 50,80,100mm Ø Rubber **Driving Bands** of 2¼*1½mm wide rectangular section {1 each}. • **Axle Clip**; just 2 to 3 turns of .6mm spring wire, like a short M176a but without the arm, and thus exceedingly difficult to 'wind' on or off an Axle {12}. • A flat **Hook** of 2½mm Ø wire, 31mm o/a {2}. • A flat **Screwdriver**, 105mm long. • A **Spanner**, missing but no doubt similar to the one in the Liverpool Set shown later.

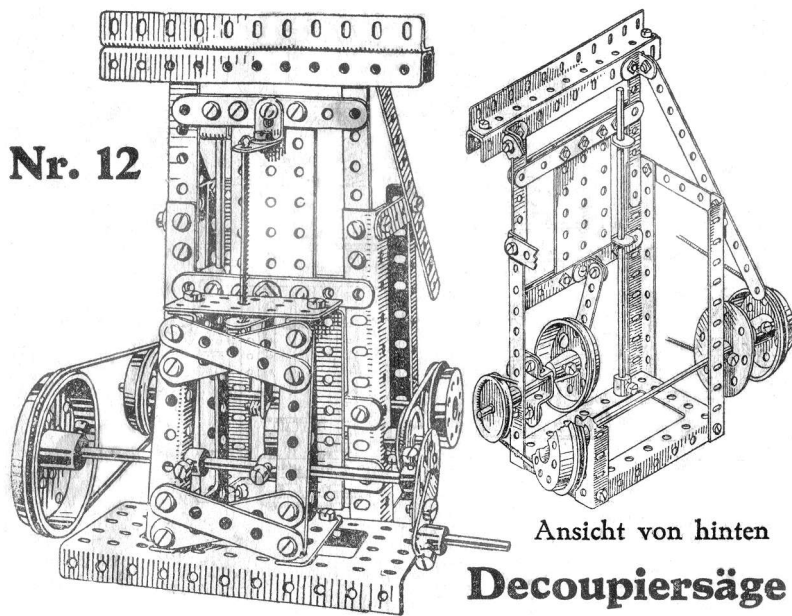


The Manual has 16 unnumbered pages, 198*147mm, plus covers. The latter are all plain except the front above. Pages 1 & 2 have an Introduction (in which an A-01 set is mentioned) & the Inventory is in on p3. There is one model on each of the other pages, from Nr.1 Säulenbohrmaschine (Column Drilling M/C) to Nr.13 Webstuhl (Loom). One shaded line drawing is provided for each plus an auxiliary view or two for most. Also a parts list which gives those needed for each, named, portion of the model, rather like the STABIL method. The models include the Digger on the cover (Nr.10), the Fire Engine on the lid (Nr.4), a Monoplane, a Roundabout, a Windmill, as well as Machine Tools, & a Crane. The Fire Engine & a Reciprocating Saw are shown, natural size, at the top of the next page. In all a good selection of reasonably attractive looking models. They include many of the essential features of their prototypes (grindstones in the Windmill for instance) with pulley drives used extensively. Beyond that they are fairly simple mechanically - the Fire Engine does have centre-pivot steering but the Crane has no ratchet.

Other GERMAN Sets A number of other outfits have been seen on Ebay, all with parts matching those above. 3 are similar examples of the present A-02 set. Another A-02 has a plain brown card box with a whitish



Nr. 12



Ansicht von hinten
Decoupiersäge

label printed in brown and featuring 2 models which are in the manual above, Nr.3 Leuchtturm (Light Tower) and Nr.7 Horizontal-Sägegatter (Log Saw). A very small version of the firm's logo is in the top left corner & the set number is bottom right. With this set was an A-01 outfit in a similar but smaller box. The label model is a simple Loco not in the A-02 manual, and the logo is in red. Neither of these sets had a manual with them but another similar A-01 has one in portrait format with a white cover, again printed in brown, showing a Drilling Machine. It was said to contain 12 models, from Plattenwagen to Bohrmaschine. This set's box is also brown but darker and it looks to be patterned with small embossed circles. The parts are in 1 large & 4 small compartments.

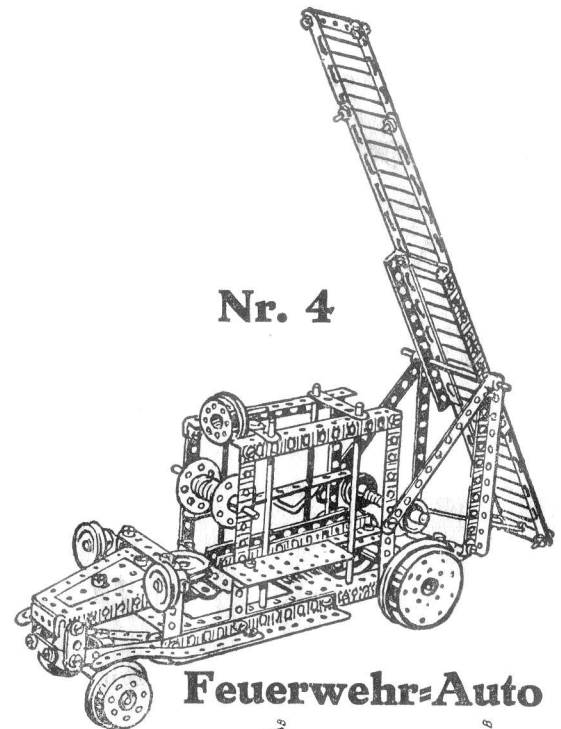


The 'LIVERPOOL' Set The parts in this set are still strung but the manual is missing. The box is again black but at 30½*51*3cm it is 50% larger in area than the A-02; the contents though are identical (and as the A-02 inventory except that both sets had only contained 4 Flat Brackets). As can be seen above, the lid label, 19½*31cm, shows it to be a Set No.3 and it also carries the Liverpool address. The model is of course the Digger from the A-02 manual. As already implied this is the only set known with coloured parts, the only one from Inventrix Ltd., Liverpool, & the only one with a set number without the 'A' prefix. Perhaps one day other 'Liverpool' sets will be found, and German sets with coloured parts.

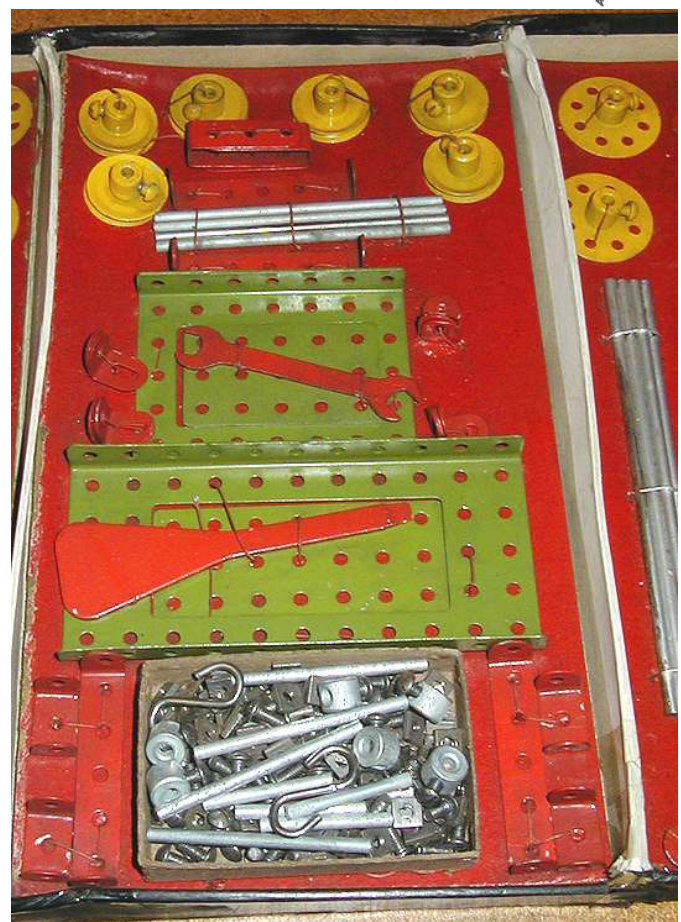
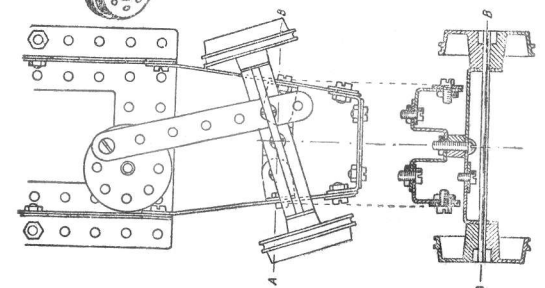
The set box is partitioned into three equal areas and the parts are strung to a red card in each, with the small items in a black topped box at the bottom of the centre compartment. It can be seen with its lid removed in the photo of this compartment right. All the Plates in the Set are painted green, all the Wheels yellow (including their bosses & Set Screws), and all the other parts, excluding Axles, N&B, etc, red. The red is practically the same shade as the backing cards, but all the parts are rather grimy and when cleaned the red is lighter, almost a pinkish shade.

Examining the small parts and those still strung, there are some minor differences from the German parts. • The **holes** seems slightly smaller even allowing for the pain - more are 4.1mm & a few 4.0. • The bores of the steel **bosses** are also slightly smaller, 4.0-4.1mm. • The **N&B** are still plain steel but

Nr. 4



Feuerwehr-Auto



the **Bolts** are 8½ & 18mm u/h, with 7.4mm mush heads & 7.1mm tapered cheeseheads respectively; and the **Nuts** are pressed, square, 8.0mm A/F, & 2mm thick. • The **Spanner** is 80mm long o/a.