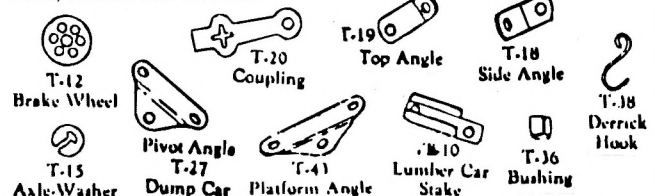


is a home made replica, and the Wheels are not original. Some fittings from the ends may be missing too, and I'd be grateful for a copy of the instructions for it if anyone has them. The other models are a Box Car and some more ordinary flat & goods wagons - the Coal Car for instance has the body of the Armored Car turned upside down.

All run on 2 bogies and the Bogie Frame is shown left. The Wheels are the toy train type made from 2 tinplate pressings, with deep flanges - the o.d. is 1.13", & the tread diameter .87". The Axles are at 1 1/4" centres, and are steel with a coppery look, 2" long, & .120" Ø; each Wheel is retained by a flat Clip (T-15 below, .41" Ø) which pushes over a groove in the Axle, inside the Wheel.



The parts are made of steel, thick enough to be entirely rigid, with some sort of surface finish which was probably bright originally, but now has a dull, patchy grey metallic appearance. (The Caboose parts looked so miserable that I sprayed them silver.) The holes are 3.9mm Ø and most are spaced at multiples of 1/2". All the Cars use the same Chassis, a plate 6.6*2.2" with flanges on the long sides (called a Bottom), and the bogies are lock-nutted to it at each end. In all there are 49 different parts and a good many of them are only used in one of the models, including for example the Tank, its Ends, the wire Handrails which retain them, and the parts for the cupola of the Caboose. The Turret on the Armored Car is the Engine Crankcase from an Aero set, but I think this is the only 'borrowed' item, apart from the N&B. The latter are 6-32 thread with RH Bolts & hex Nuts. The Coupling (above) is pivoted to the Chassis with a small Split Pin (the ends of the Coupling are bent down at 90° to engage in the cross slot of the next Car - those on the Caboose are straight, as found, and appear never to have been bent.) The other small parts are also shown above - I'm not sure where the Bushing is used.

The models are of very simple construction - in the Caboose for instance the sides are bolted to the Chassis flanges, and the ends and roof are held with A/Bs. A Long Bolt through the roof holds the cupola.

The UK agent for METALCRAFT in 1930 was Messrs H. A. Moore & Co. Ltd., Premier House, 150 Southampton Row, London WC 1. The patent mentioned earlier was American, No.1849877, granted to Garvey E. Lyons & Bert J. Anderson, assignors to The Metalcraft Corporation, in March 1932. It showed the bogie, pivoted as in the models, but with threaded ends to the axles, and for each wheel, locknuts inboard, and outside the frame.

KÖSTER This German system is mentioned in *Baukästen* (p272) but with no details except that three 0-gauge electric railway sets were shown in the 1948 Frankfurt Fair by Gustav Köster G.m.b.H., of Meinerzhagen (east of Düsseldorf), a firm that made office supplies, educational material, & metal ware of all kinds. It was founded in 1919 and may have ceased trading in 1948, or soon after, but that is uncertain. The sets were distributed by INA Vertriebsgesellschaft m.b.H. Möws & Co., Duisburg-Ruhrort, Tausendfensterhaus. A customer response postcard from the Nr.80 Set described below has a PR of '7500. 11. 48 A'.

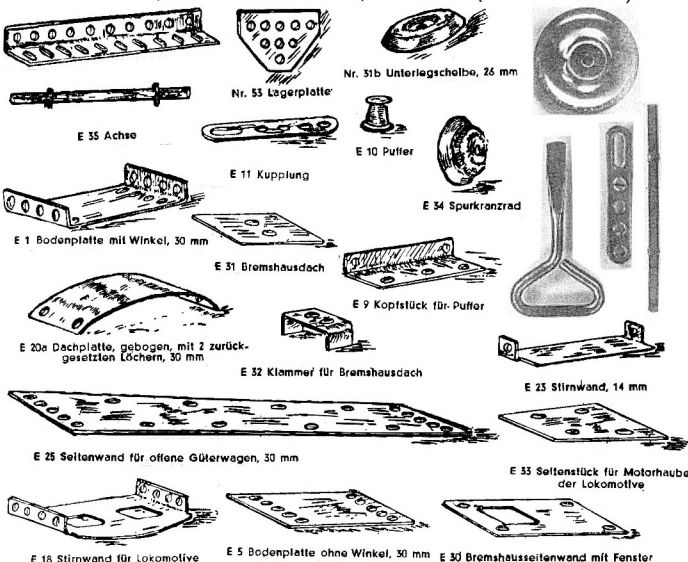
KÖSTER sets are very rare and Thomas Morzinck has kindly sent a copy of the manual from a Nr.80 Set which belonged to the late Dr Griebel, and some details of the parts. On the manual's back cover it says that the Nr.80 is the first Köster set and that others for the building of a

complete railway system will follow. Bridges, signals, stations & cranes are mentioned, also the introduction of an electric motor. As a foretaste the Signal opposite is shown.

Thomas mentioned that the idea for this type of set may have come from a book, *Die elektrische Modelleisenbahn*, by Rudolf Wollman, which was first published in 1945, and gave detailed instructions on building a complete model railway. The Köster sets may not have been successful because H0-gauge was more popular than 0-gauge, and by 1948 Märklin & other companies had resumed production of model railway items. OLYMPIA, the East German system (see 15/417), appeared in 1949, a year later than KÖSTER, and although at 7mm, the hole spacing of the parts was a little greater than KÖSTER, railway related models were scaled to H0 size. It lasted until 1955.

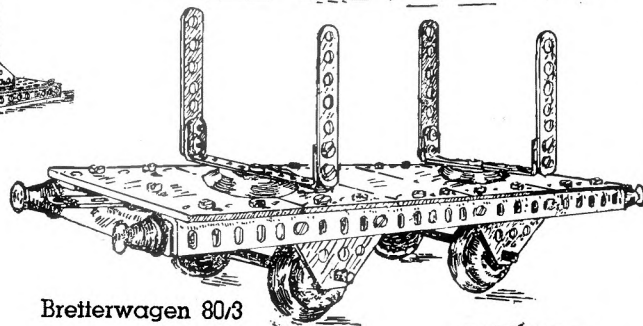
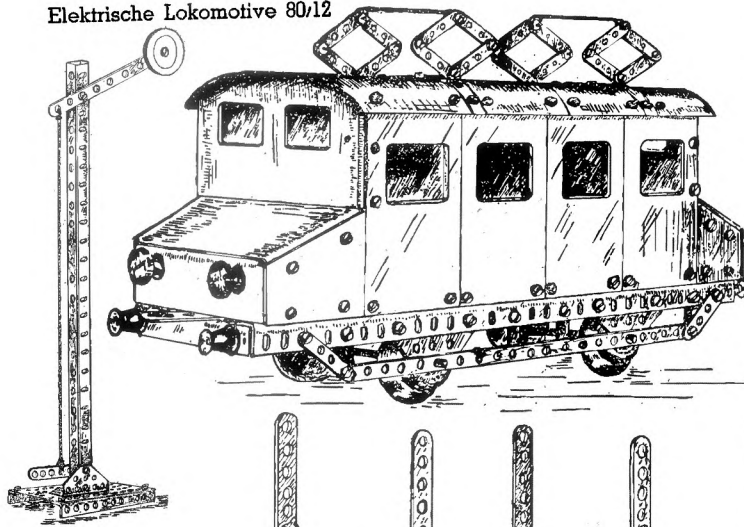
There are 52 different parts in the system, 31 of which have a particular purpose and have PNs prefaced by 'E'. Strips are aluminium and Plates are steel, painted green, red or grey. The holes take 2.5mm Bolts and are at 6mm pitch, or multiples thereof in the 'E' parts.

The 'standard' parts comprise: • Strips about 6mm wide, with 3,4,7,15,22h, and semi-radiused ends. • DAS, 1*5*1 & 2*9*2h, and a 1*2h A/B. • A/Gs (as below), 3,12, 13,15,17,25 holes long with square corners. • A Flat Trunnion (Nr.53 below). • 5 & 10mm CH Bolts, & hex Nuts. A 7mm Washer, and a formed one, 26mm Ø (Nr.31b below).

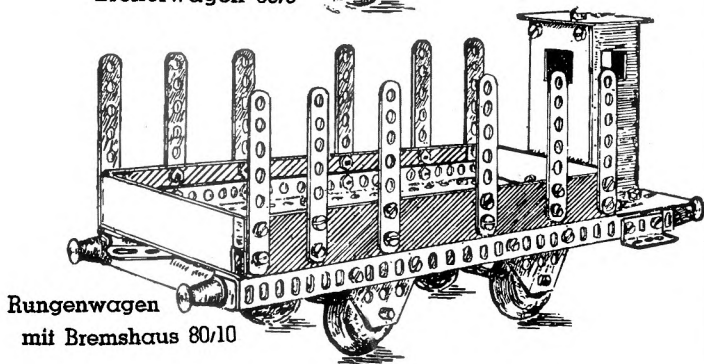


Apart from the Coupling, Buffer, Wheels & Axles (shown above), the E parts are Plates to make the floors, sides & roofs of the models. The small selection above includes most types, and most others are identical except for one or more extra holes, and in width. The Plates are of quite heavy metal, and have a tendency to go rusty. On the right above are some photocopies of parts: the o.d. of the Flanged Wheel is 27mm; and the lengths o/a of the Axle, Screwdriver, & Coupling strip are 55, 46, & 36mm. There are numerous gaps in the PNs of the parts in the Nr.80, which perhaps speaks of more in the other sets, or planned. One may be a 25h Strip which was among the photocopied parts that Thomas sent.





Breitterwagen 80/3

Runnenwagen
mit Bremshaus 80/10

Gebaut mit Köster-Konstruktions-Kasten Nr. 80

The box lid label of the Nr.80 Outfit, at the bottom of the last column, is blue & brown, 26*17cm. The Loco looks like the one in the Manual (see above) but the Carriages immediately behind it cannot be made with the parts in the Nr.80. Included in the Set are 24 each of Wheels & Buffers, and suitable quantities of other parts, to allow 6 different models to be made up at the same time. Other parts include 48 Strips, 19 A/Gs, and about 400 N&B.

The manual, described below, contains line drawings, parts lists, and building instructions for 12 models, including the models above, plus 9 other goods vehicles. All are open wagons with sides of different heights, and some have 7h Strips as uprights to contain loads. 2 have a brakeman's cabin (as above) at one end on an extension of the basic 25h (15cm) long chassis. The latter is made from A/Gs spaced apart by Flat Plates, or Flanged Plates if Side Panels are to be used. All the models run on 4 Wheels but the chassis size is very similar to the METALCRAFT one.

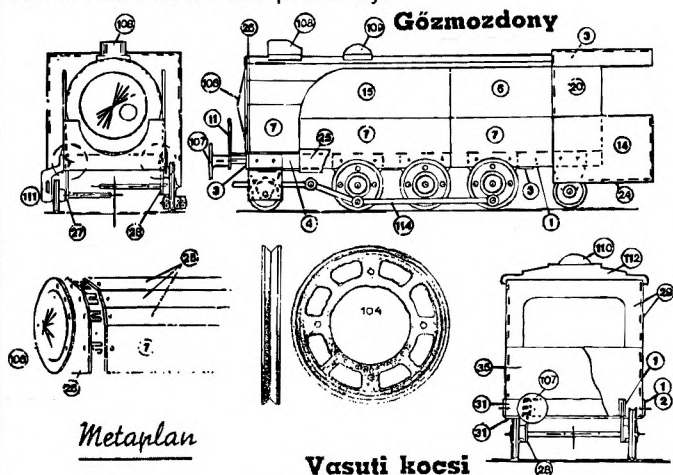
The Loco isn't fitted with a motor but among Dr Griebel's collection is a complete made up KÖSTER goods train which looks to be made up of Nr.80 models, and its Loco is fitted with a ready assembled motor. It has a contact underneath to pick up current, and looks as if it would run on commercial 0-gauge track. Thomas wrote that in the flesh the models 'look very nice and by no means poor'. He also remarked that the 'standard' parts could have been developed into an interesting normal MCS.

SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: Köster
Konstruktions-Kasten Nr.80. •Details of maker:



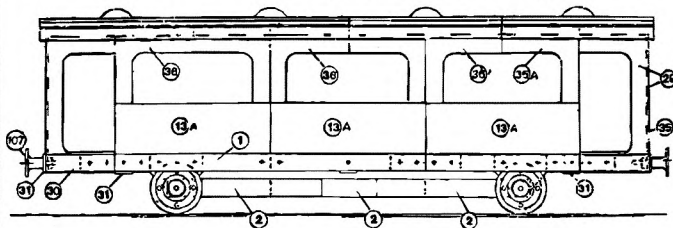
Gustav Koster G.m.b.H., Meinerzhagen/Westf. •Dates &/or Ref Nos: none. •Page size: 145*215mm deep. •No. of pages: 24 inc covers. •Language: German. •Printing: B&W inc cover, with line drgs of models. •Page Nos. of Ill. Parts List & highest PN: 3-5,E34,57. •Page Nos. of Set Contents & highest PN: 6,E34,57,W1. •Sets covered: Nr.80. •No. of models: 12. •Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model: Plattformwagen,80/1,7-9; Elektrische Lokomotive, 80/12,19-22. •Other notes. •The distributor is given on the front cover: INA Vertriebs-gesellschaft m.b.H. Möws & Co., Duisburg-Ruhrort, Tausendfensterhaus. •Details from photocopy.

METAPLAN This Hungarian system is shown in MCS with illustrations of all the parts. They are probably aluminium and most are intended to allow realistic rolling stock to be made. They can also be used for architectural and other models. No new information is available but for readers without MCS the 2 models below will give an idea of the system. Most of the holes are not shown in these views but generally the Strips such as #2 & #25, are fully perforated, while the Plates usually have only edge holes, and often only every other one. The wheels used are Pulleys and the larger size is given as 45mm Ø. Scaling then gives the hole pitch as 15mm, which is the same as the other Hungarian systems, see 20/582. The wheels scale at about 10cm spacing; the Loco is some 39cm long overall, and the Carriage 56cm. So, quite large models but how robust I wonder. I don't suppose they were meant to run along on track, and there's no mention of a motor. As well as the 2 sizes of Pulley on the Loco, a 90mm one (centre below) is shown in the Parts List, and probably the 45mm would fit in its centre, attached by Flat Brackets. MCS suggests that METAPLAN may date from as early as the 1930s, but the 1950s would be another possibility.



Metaplan

Vasuti kocsi



PRINCE WILLIAM At the top of the Instruction Sheet for a PRINCE WILLIAM (P R henceforth) model is 'One of the King William Series', and 'Prefabricated Toys'. At the bottom is: Johnson & Powell Ltd., 16, Upper Highgate Street, Birmingham, 12. The 4 known P R models were all sold as separate kits and are all railway items - an open Truck, a Tanker, and a Loco & Tender. The Loco is only known through an entry in an auction catalogue, with no details. The Truck and a photo of a Tanker are shown overleaf, with a portion of the illustration on the model's box to show the Tank End.

All 3 models have the same base, a 1 3/4" wide U-section

on the AMI-LAC, Eitech, & Dickie-Schuco sets in the next Issue.]

4. On **PRINCE WILLIAM** (23/679), Tony Press sent the photo below of Jack Little's Loco & Tender, standing in front of the Loco's box. The main parts, including the Loco's Undercarriage, are green, with red Wheels, Boiler Supports, Coupling Brackets, and Saddles for the (brass) Chimney & Steam Dome.



5. Thomas Morzinck sent the photo below of Dr. Griebel's **KÖSTER Goods Train** (23/679) on 0-gauge track. The sides of the Loco are green and those of the Wagons red. The Loco roof is grey and all the Strips are black.



6. On the claimed Aug. 22 1922 patent for **STEEL ENGINEERING** (23/666-7), David Hobson has found that the only 'toy' patent of that date was No.1426376 to A.C.Gilbert, but it related to 'square girder construction', not **STEEL ENGINEERING**. It was originally filed on 2 Feb. 1915.

7. On the **AMI LAC** Gearbox Plate (23/659, John Hanby wrote that it wasn't available when he asked Guiseppe Servetti about it in around 1968. The **MÄRKLIN** part was

shown in a June 1967 List but by 1969 it had been deleted, along with over 20 other parts.

8. From Dan Farmer, St Paul, Minnesota, 'Hello! I just found your website. My grandfather, Weston Farmer, created the **BUILD** erector set back in the mid '40's. My father has told me stories about how he & his four brothers would sit around creating the models that were eventually used in the manual. Quite apart from **BUILD**, my grandfather was a world renowned naval architect & writer. He even worked for Walt Disney in the early days, and I recall actually throwing out some Disney 'cells' as a teenager when helping my grandparents clean out the summer cabin!

The reason I went online looking for references to **BUILD** is that my father just sent me a complete **BUILD** set. Of course, **BUILD** was a small player, with Gilbert at the top of the heap, and ironically I think it was my grandfather who bought me the Gilbert **ERECTOR** set I played with as a child. But I'm pleased to find that **BUILD** is still remembered and mentioned on several web sites.'

[**BUILD** was a small system of some 36 parts, but with some unusual features. It is shown in MCS and I hope to include some notes on it in OSN at a later date.]

9. From Jacques Pitrat. 'I have found an ad for the French system **MOBILO** in the 18 December 1919 issue of the weekly 'Sciences et Voyages', and it is likely that the system had recently come onto the market at that point.' [See 20/581 for a note about **MOBILO** Wheels.]

10. From Orion DreamDancer. • Photos of a **Super GIRDER BILT** Set which match the one described in 19/555 except for the N&B. They have the same 4-40 thread, but the Nuts are brass (again 1/4" A/F), and the Bolts, 5/16" & 7/8" u/h, are steel (perhaps brassed) with respectively round & fillister heads. [A set shown on ebay seemed very similar except that the background colour of the tubular container was light brown instead of the red of Orion's set & those described in 17/467 & OSN 19. No Spanner could be seen and the Screwdriver was a 'commercial' type with a clear yellow plastic handle. The Bolt heads were too blurry to be clear.]

• 'The manual from a **STEEL TEC** No.4 Set corresponds to the one mentioned in 11/277, and is #7021 dated 1993. The Dump Truck is the only model in the No.6 which uses the 6*8 & 6*5h Plates in that outfit, and they are not in the No.4 Set or the #7021 manual.'

EXTRA MCS SHEETS Each Sheet costs 15p + postage if the whole batch as listed in each Issue of OSN is ordered at the same time. That makes £3.30 for the 22 below, plus postage. For all other purchases each Sheet costs 20p + postage if copied double-sided like the originals, but 7½p per side + postage if copied single-sided. All back Sheets can be supplied.

MCS Amendments, List No.9 [1 Sheet]

BIG-JOY: X1.1,5,6,4/5a/6a [2 Sheets]

BILD-A-SET: X1.2/5,4/5a/6 [1 Sheet]

CONSTRUCTOR [0]: X1.1,2,4,5 [2 Sheets]

CONSTRUCTOR [1]: X1.1,6,a,b,3/4c [3 Sheets]

ELECTRIC: X1.7,a,b,c [2 Sheets]

MECHANIX [3]: X1.1,2,3/4/6,5 [2 Sheets]

METALCRAFT 'LYONS': X1.4b/5a,5b/6a,4c/5c,5d/6b,
5e/6c,5f,4d/5g,7 [4 Sheets]

MICKEY MOUSE: X1.1,2,5,7 [2 Sheets]

MOKO'S SIMPLEX: X1.1,2,4/5,5a [2 Sheets]

PRIMUS LOCOMOTIVE: X1.3a/4a [1 Sheet]

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Snippets: KÖSTER Since the notes in 23/678, mainly about the set Nr.80 for various Wagons or an unpowered Electric Loco, some sets seen on Ebay, and at <http://alte-modellbahnen.xobor.de/t11219f27-Koester-Konstruktion-die-unbekannte-Spur-aus-dem-Sauerland.html>, shed a little more light on the sets & parts in the system. It is certain that Set 80 was produced, and most probably Nr.81, the Track Set. Beyond that are Set 82, the electric-motored Electric Loco, and certain other outfits, but it is still possible that some or even all of them were made only as factory prototype outfits, or to display at trade exhibitions. It is said that production started late in 1947 and that the firm became insolvent in the Spring of 1949.

FIG.1

Except where stated all the sets mentioned have the lid shown in 23/768 (though some don't have a set number on them), and manual covers, seen for Sets 80, 81 & 82, are as in 23/679, save their set number.

Set 80 Of the 6 examples seen 4 have nickel parts with a few possibly black in one of them, and in 2 they are coloured (red, green & blue Body Panels, grey Roofs, black Strips) with a few nickelled in one. Fig.1 is the best photo to hand of a set, the lid along the bottom fits over the box's bottom compartment. In another example the parts in the centre compartment are more neatly arranged. All the boxes have the same 3 compartments in the base.

One of the nickel sets has the lid in Fig.2 featuring an elaborate Gantry Crane far removed from the railway models. But it seems to be a Nr.80: the set number is on the lid for the bottom compartment; the parts in the box, though jumbled up, look as would be expected; and the 2 pages shown from inside the manual are pp18-19 of the Nr.80 described in OSN 23.

FIG.2

Set 81 This is the track set and the parts are shown or listed in Fig.4. #51, 52, 53, & 55 are Straight, Curved Outer & Inner, & Centre Rails; #54 is probably a current pick-up to be fitted to the Loco; #56 is a Bracket to hold #57 Isolating Strip; #58 a Fishplate. #59 a Sleeper; #60 the Terminal Connecting Plate; #S17 & 20 a Bolt & Nut; and V2 the Manual.

Of the 2 sets seen one box has 4 lengthways compartments plus 1 crossways, and all the parts are shiny; in the other there are just 4 crossways, and the parts are also shiny but the Centre Rail is brass. The box looks the same size in plan as the Nr.80 but may be rather deeper.

Set 82 Only the set in Fig.3 has been seen, and the Loco made from it was shown in 24/715. The Motor Unit has wheels appreciably larger than those in Set 80. Whether the body in the set was supplied ready assembled isn't known.

Set 80-1 See Fig.5. This seems to be a set with just the parts to make a Loco, almost certainly the unpowered Elektrische Lokomotive 80/12 in OSN 23 – the box wouldn't be deep enough to house the Power Unit.

Other Sets 4 boxes identical in size, and similar in style to the 80-1 above but more rectangular, have been seen. The only one of their names that can be read is (probably) Rungenwagen mit Bremshäuschen, followed by a hyphenated set number. Model 80/10 shown in OSN 23 is Rungenwagen mit Bremshaus and is probably the same model (häuschen = little house).

An empty box the same size in plan as the Nr.80 but 2 of its 5 crossways compartments are partitioned to give an extra 6 compartments (and possibly several more originally).

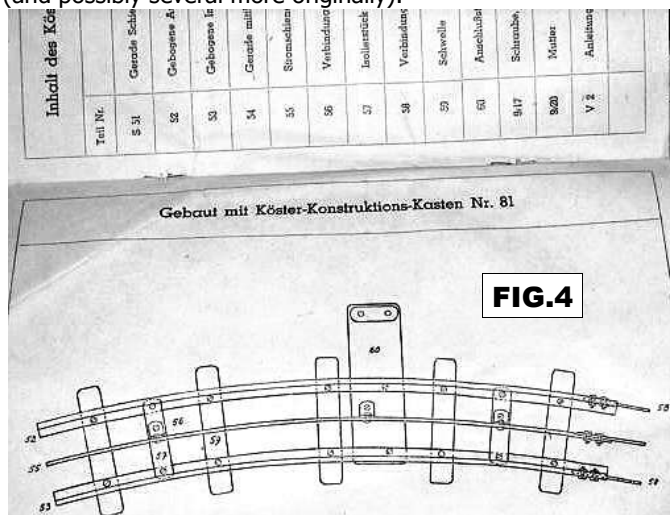


FIG.4

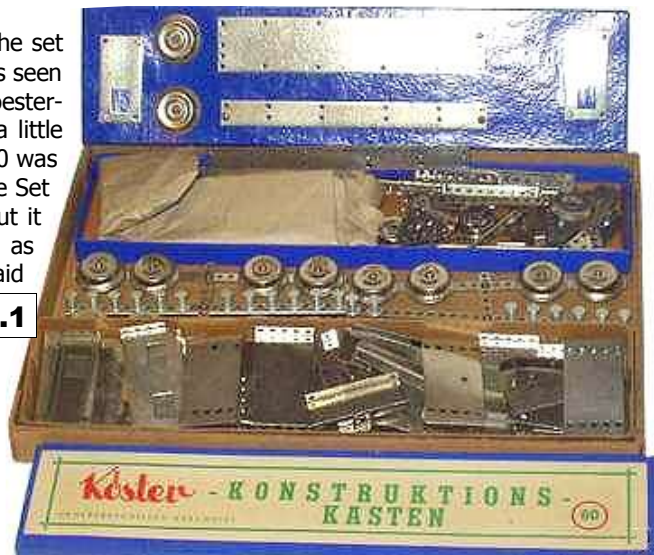


FIG.3



FIG.5