

LEICHTMETALL-KONSTRUKTIONS-BAUKASTEN

At a glance the parts from this late 1940s East German system might be mistaken for MÄRKLIN except that they are made of aluminium and their hole pitch is 13mm. There was only ever one set and these notes are based on the two examples of it to hand, neither quite complete; 4 manuals; various Ebay photos; and more from a PDF kindly sent by Urs Flammer, with photos of a set and notes about the system from Jürgen Kahlfeldt.

Date: Baukästen gives 'about 1952'. Numbers included in the PRs under the name in the small bottom right panel on the manual cover labels (as in Fig.1) & lid labels, indicate 10/47 to 1/49. There is one possible indication of a later date: one lid label has a small label stuck over the original name panel: the new label's PR has been torn away but 1/49 can be seen in the original PR underneath. One 1047 manual does have '1952' as another group of numbers but comparable groups in other PRs are clearly not dates.

Maker: Most manuals/sets have no indication of the maker but in a 'Flammer' manual with 1/49 in its PR, the firm is given as Staatl. [Staatliche=state] A.-G. "TOTSCHMASCH", Zweigwerk [branch factory] Chemnitz (see Fig.6). TOTSCHMASCH seems to have been a Russian armaments company. Also the small label stuck over the name panel mentioned above has 'Staatl. A.-G. "Gerät", Werk Chemnitz, vorm. [formerly] Siemens & Halske' on it. Gerät means 'apparatus' or the like.

A history web page confirms that the Totschmasch period preceded the Gerät. The latter started in '1949-50' and continued until the firm became VEB Gerät Karl-Marx-Stadt in 5/53.

The PARTS. Mostly they look like those in the Illustrated Parts below. **Holes**, 4.2-4.3mm Ø at 13.0mm pitch, with a few, especially in the Brackets, 4.4mm. Elongated holes are 7.1-8.1 in the different parts. **Thread:** M4. **Bosses**, steel, 9.5mm o.d., s/t, bore 4.1mm, 4-point peening. **Material/Finish:** Except as noted all the parts are plain aluminium. Strips are 1.6mm thick but some 3h are 1.0mm; other parts

Fig.1



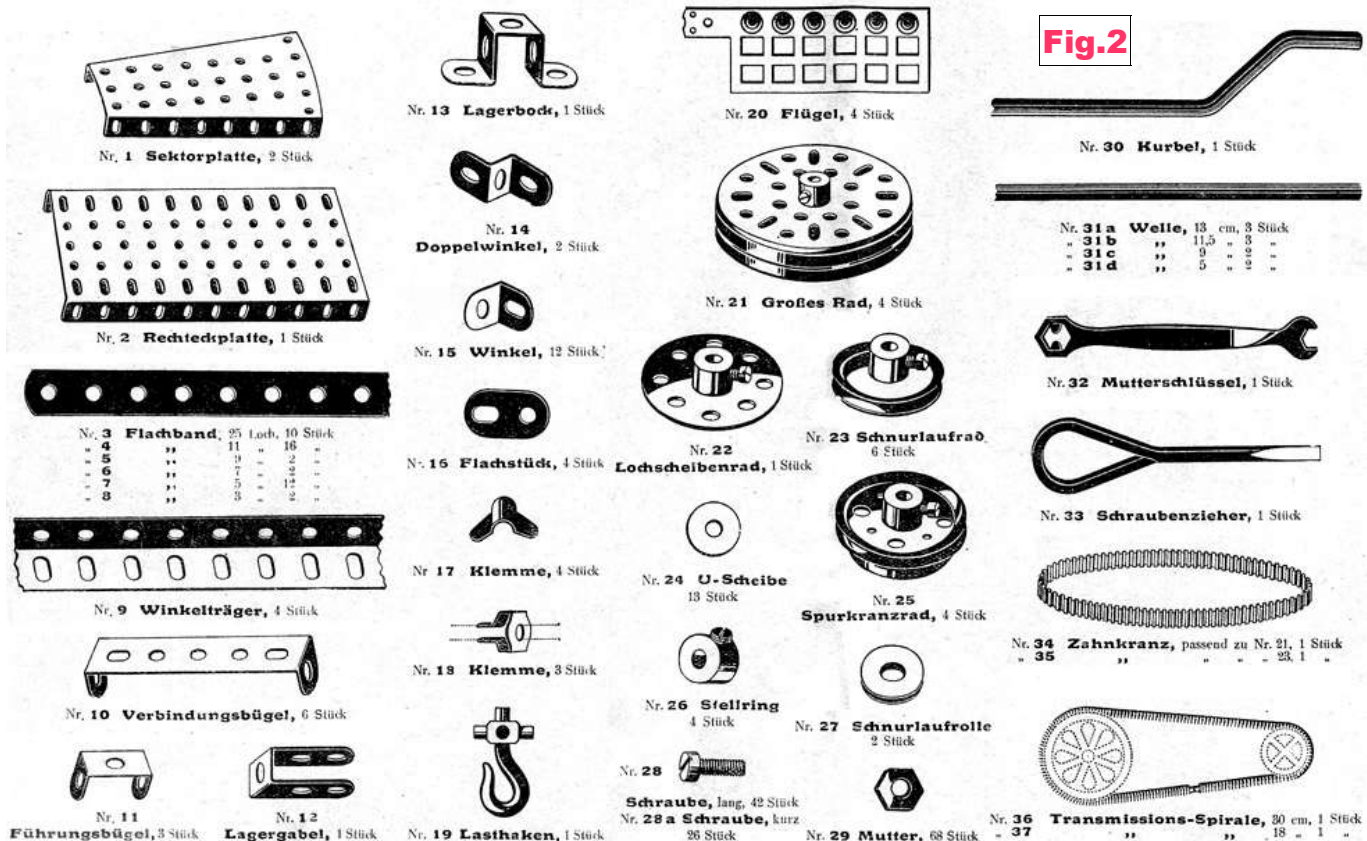
are typically 1.2mm. Jürgen noted 1.4-1.6mm. Steel parts have a light grey appearance. **Quality:** generally very good.

Notes based on the earlier (11/47 PR) of the two sets to hand follow, with differences in the later one (1/49 under the torn label) added in curly brackets.

Sector Plate. Ends

are flat across. **Flanged Plate.** 66mm wide o/a. **Strips** 11.9-12.1mm wide. **DAS.** 66mm wide o/a. **D/B** 20½mm wide o/a. {21½} **Double Bent Strip.** Bends more rounded than shown. **Reversed A/B.** 1.1mm thick. {1.5mm} **Angle & Flat Brackets.** .6mm thick. The Flat is 23mm long o/a; the A/B is bent from a longer blank. **Spring Clips.** Steel. #17 is 6mm wide with narrower wings tapering to 3mm wide. #18. Wings taper from 4.3 to 3.8mm. **Hook.** Blackened steel. Like the MÄRKLIN part but not as shiny with less rounded edges and more metal around the hole. **Windmill Sail.** 34*81mm plus the arm. **Flanged Disc Pulley.** 65-66mm o.d., 1.8-2.0mm thick metal. **Bush Wheel.** Disc 36.0mm Ø, 1.6mm thick. **Pulley.** 25½mm Ø, 4mm wide over vee. **Washer.** 12mm Ø, .4mm thick. Jürgen's are 11.8/.7mm. **Flanged Pulley.** 35.6/30.6mm Ø over pulley/tread. There are no 'dimples' to locate the discs together. The face holes are round (like the early MÄRKLIN part) at 11.5mm radius. **Collar.** Steel, s/t, 10mm Ø, 6.6mm wide. **Loose Pulley.** Steel, 12.0mm Ø, 3.2mm thick. {4.0mm} **Bolts.** Steel, 7.0mm Ø head, 6½/8¾mm u/h. Jürgen's: 7/11mm. {7/10mm u/h}. **Nut.** Steel, pressed, 8mm A/F, 2.5mm thick. {aluminium, 2¾mm thick} **Crank Handle.** Not seen but about 16cm long o/a from scaling an Ebay photo. **Axles.** Steel, 3.9-4.0mm Ø with slightly chamfered ends. {the one remaining is aluminium} **Spanner.** MÄRKLIN-style but shorter at 95mm o/a. The 2 other Spanners in Fig.3 were also in the Set. **Screwdriver.** In all the sets

Fig.2



seen which have one, it has a wooden handle, apart from the wire one in Fig.3. Perhaps the latter 'belonged' to one of the doubtful Spanners. **Gear Rings.** 32/14 teeth. {steel, 34/14} **Spring Cord.** Not seen. {steel, 1.9mm Ø with looped ends}

Other Parts. Set Screw. Steel, 5mm Ø cheesehead, 4¾mm u/h. **Grub Screw.** Steel, 5¾mm long, flat end. {none, only Set Screws}

The SETS The boxes measures 37¼*19*5cm and the labels are identical to the manual cover (Fig.1) in size & design, except that each has its own PR in the small panel bottom right. The only exception is the lid mentioned earlier with the Geräte company name & logo on the added label. Lids are made of different cardboard to the bases and are lighter in shade.

The set contents are given in Fig.2 and are very similar to the prewar MÄRKLIN No.2. Apart from some minor differences, the Leichtmetall set has no Curved Strips and only 68 against 80 N&B. A plus though is that LEICHTMETALL has 2 lengths of Bolt.

The boxes have 2 layers of parts with different partitioning. They are shown in Fig.3 with the parts placed in what seem to be likely places; the righthand 'A' set is the earliest. There would have been plain cardboard lids over the 3 centre bays.

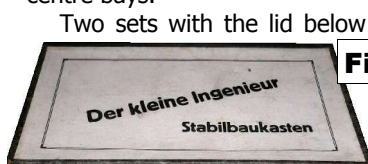


Fig.4

Two sets with the lid below were offered in one lot on Ebay recently, and a Set with the same lid was offered in 2003, and another, in 2006. All looked largely complete with LEICHTMETALL parts, all had the same Fig.3A partitioning, & the Fig.1 manual. Perhaps the label was 'home-made' and perhaps the same sets were being reoffered, but there were minor differences in their contents which made me wonder.

The MANUALS have 8 unnumbered pages about 295*180mm plus covers. The earliest Totschmasch manual has the plain cover in Fig.6 (or it might be an added title page). All the others have pink, or in one case grey covers, with the same label (Fig.1). It has the artist's monogram in the bottom left corner. C2 has the Illustrated Parts (Fig.2) with quantities. The inside pages and C3 show 16 models from Langholzwagen [Railway Timber Wagon] to Lokomotive. The model pages look unchanged in all the manuals seen. All the models are no doubt copied from MÄRKLIN, I found most of them among the No.1 & 2 set models in a late 1930s manual, though there they were shaded drawings and not of the LEICHTMETALL/earlier MÄRKLIN type.

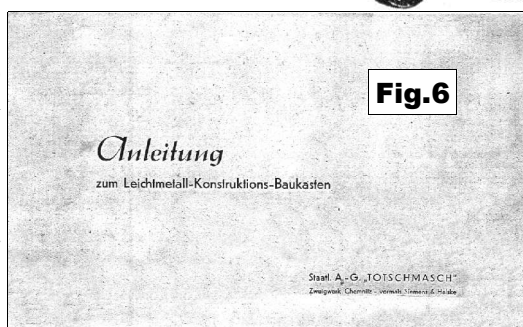


Fig.6

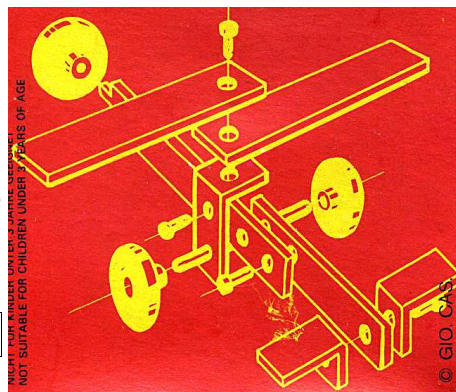
LEICHTMETALL: S2

OSN 51/1572

Another GIO Part. 3 sets from this 'mini' Italian system were described in 33/998, and Jean-Pierre Guibert has found a 4th with parts to make an Aeroplane, a model which is among those shown on the sides of all the set boxes.

It can be seen from the constructional drawing of it, right, that the part

FIG.1



GIO: S2

OSN 51/1572

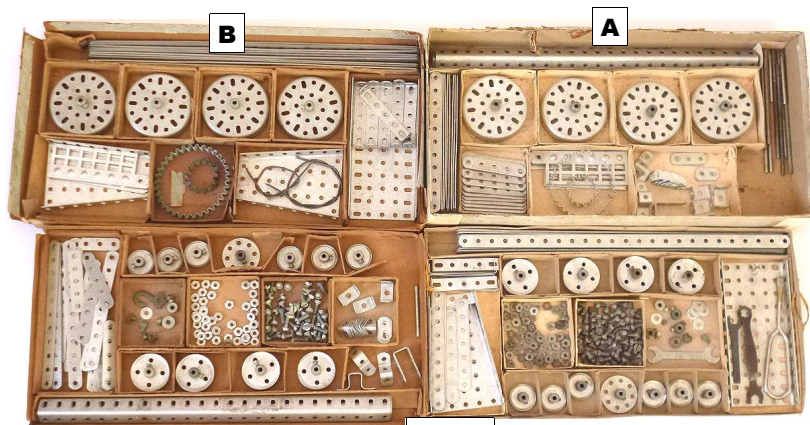
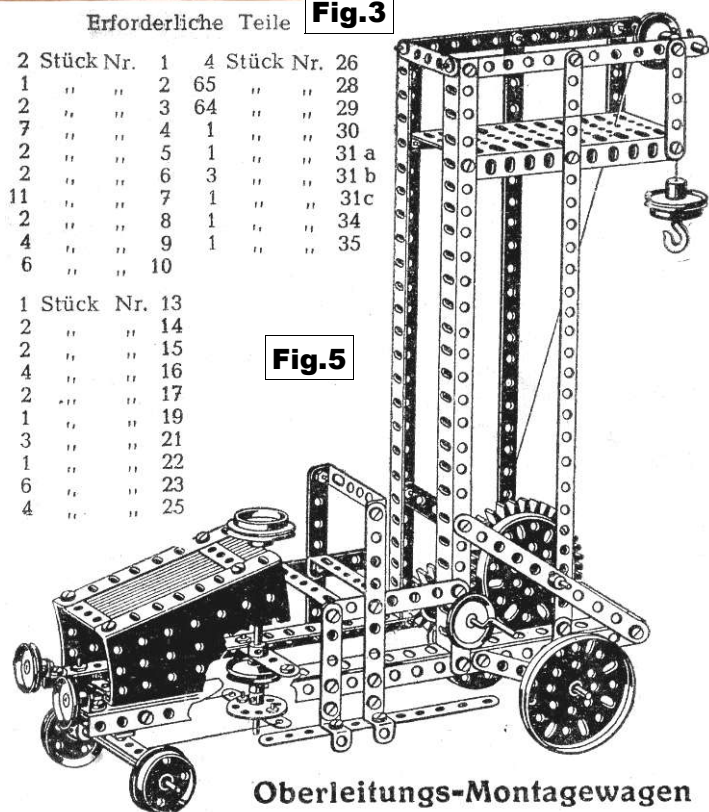


Fig.3

Erforderliche Teile									
2	Stück	Nr.	1	4	Stück	Nr.	26		
1	"	"	2	65	"	"	28		
2	"	"	3	64	"	"	29		
7	"	"	4	1	"	"	30		
2	"	"	5	1	"	"	31 a		
2	"	"	6	3	"	"	31 b		
11	"	"	7	1	"	"	31 c		
2	"	"	8	1	"	"	34		
4	"	"	9	1	"	"	35		
6	"	"	10						
1	Stück	Nr.	13						
2	"	"	14						
2	"	"	15						
4	"	"	16						
2	"	"	17						
1	"	"	19						
3	"	"	21						
1	"	"	22						
6	"	"	23						
4	"	"	25						

Fig.5



Oberleitungs-Montagewagen

One of the models is shown above at its original size, it is the only one in which the Gear Rings are used.

C4 is plain with just a PR which differs from the one on the lid label. A typical PR is (C231) Sachsenverlag Chemnitz 1951 1047 2000 C 100224, but the numbers are usually different and sometimes the printer's name is omitted.



FIG.2

propeller pushes onto a spigot which has been added to the end of the normal 5h Strip, as above in Fig.2. This modified Strip was not included in any of the three OSN 33 sets.