

The **No.8** looks unused. It is in an attractive wooden box, 53\*34\*15cm, with a hinged lid, and a hinged drop-down front giving access to 5 wooden trays. One has a corner cutout to accommodate a Boiler in the tray below. Most of the parts are clipped to orange cards with the small parts in 7 green, round boxes, probably plastic with AMI moulded into the lids. The label inside the lid is similar to the 1-2 manual but the model on it is a Lifting Bridge. There were 3 manuals with the Set, a



1-3, a 3-5 & a 6-8, and all have the type of cover above. In all they were said to have 550 pages with 150 in each of the two larger ones, and 1500 models for Sets 3-8!

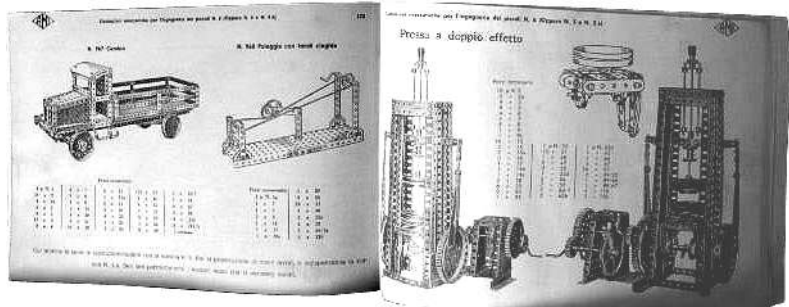
The No.8 is a big set and the Ebay photos show each of the 5 trays. It is obvious that they contain many different parts not in the 1-2 manual, Braced Girders for instance, and Tyres, Contrates, Sprockets, & Gear Rings. Also among the Ebay photos, most of a 6 sided parts leaflet on which can be seen parts which match most of those in the corresponding parts of the AMI-LAC parts list. The two lists are not in quite the same order though and because some of the Leaflet isn't shown, one can't be sure which of the AMI-LAC parts were not in the AMI range. Another item in the AMI leaflet is the sideplate Motor which continued into AMI-LAC.

So it seems that AMI developed both in terms of the range of sets, the range of parts, and perhaps the man-

uals (they had new covers at any rate). Turning to the **set contents**, those for Sets 1-4 & 1a-3a in the 1-2 manual are identical to those for the same AMI-LAC sets in MCS. However although an AMI-LAC manual cover is shown in MCS I suspect that the Set Contents there, for Sets 00-5, is actually for AMI. If so, the AMI range of sets at that stage had increased from 1-4 to 00-5, and sets 6-8 were still to come. There is no Set Contents in the AMI-LAC No.9 manual but the total number of parts in the sets is given and roughly it seems the AMI 00-3 became the AMI-LAC 1-5; while 4 & 5 became 6 & 7 but with fewer parts. The AMI-LAC No.7 had 580 parts, against 651 in the AMI No.5. Possibly the AMI 6 & 7 became the basis for the AMI-LAC 8 & 9 but there is no firm evidence for this. If correct though it may have been that AMI-LAC decided to see how sales of the larger sets went before deciding whether to have a prestigious No.10 based on the AMI No.8 (which was said to weigh 17kg).

Going back to the parts, the **colour scheme** in the No.8 is: light green Strips, DAS, A/Gs, & longer Flat Girders; dark green Flanged Plates, Braced Girders, & some Brackets; medium red Eccentrics, Trunnions, a few Brackets, & circular parts of 6cm Ø & above (the Flanged Disc scales at 9.5cm; the 3" Pulley is the later type and is shown thus in the parts brochure); bright smaller Circular parts but the 28mm Flanged Wheel is brass; light blue Flanged Sector Plates & Windmill Sails; blue Flexible Plates; blue-grey Boiler with dark, perhaps black, ends. A few of the small parts are chemically blackened.

All that is known of the **6-8 manual** are the 2 pages below that were shown on Ebay. The Press on the RH page became a No.8 model in the AMI-LAC manual with identical illustrations but neither of the other two models were included in it.



OSN 38/1153

AMI-LAC: S3

### Snippet: 'New' System Another METALLBAUKASTEN

'Früh übt sich' on the sliding lid of the set right is the first part of a German proverb which ends '..were ein Meister will'. In English one might say 'Practice early .... if you want to become a master (craftsman)', and this sentiment is illustrated on the lid by the boy with his Crane and the man with his real crane in the background. The logo in the bottom right corner is made up of the words 'Kühle Spiele Halle' and possibly this could indicate a firm called Kühle making Spiele (= toys etc) in the town of Halle.

The largest town called Halle is some 30km east of Leipzig, and this seems the most likely given that Leipzig was a centre of toy making. If so it would have been in what was East Germany after WW2 but there are no signs of East German officialdom on the lid. So the Set could be from pre-WW2 and this would justify the date of c1930 claimed in the Ebay ad. But immediately postwar could also be possible, before the



apparatchiks got into their stride. And of course it might have been a West German Halle.

The box measures 30\*23\*3cm and the Ebay ad mentioned 'Nr.301/302', presumably the set designation, and probably the text under the logo on the lid. The Strips & Plates look as if they might be aluminium and scaling from them gives a hole pitch of around 1.5cm. Likewise the wooden Wheels are 2-2½cm diameter.

OSN 38/1153

METALLBAUKASTEN [6]: S1



6. **BRAL Gears Outfits** The cover of a manual to hand, left, has the Bral logo in the top left corner & *Scatola ingranaggi* (= Gear Set) top right. It is 215\*152mm, with 16 pages plus covers, all blank except C1. After an introduction 13 gear meshing examples are shown, followed



by 9 mechanisms (Fig.14 to Fig.22 on pp7-15). They include Reversing using Bevels, a 3-Speed Gearbox, & a Pinion/Contrate Differential. p16 has ads for 3 Motors (Tipo P clockwork, 9\*7\*4cm with 5\*7h sideplates; Tipo Ma 20, 20v, 9\*6\*3.5cm, also with 5\*7h sideplates; & Tipo MM/CC, 4.5v cylindrical, 7\*4\*4.5cm) and a Tipo A 15w Transformer with 6-12-20v outputs. There is no indication of set contents and no reference to any particular sets. Some of the larger models though would need more Gears than are in a set seen on Ebay and described next.

The Ebay outfit has a lid label identical to the Manual cover. Its box, 12¾\*9¾", is red and the parts in the outfit can mostly be recognised in the photo of the open box below. But



in case of doubt the 16t Bevel is below the centre of the Rack Strip, the parts either side of the 48t Bevel are ½" Pulleys, the blue part bottom right is a Circular Saw, & along the bottom are: Sprocket Chain, a chemically blackened, MÄRKLIN-style Worm Housing, and, mounted on an Axle, a Strip Coupling, a Coupling, a Universal, & a Worm. One point of interest, the faces of the 57T Gear & 48t Bevel are not pierced like their MECCANO equivalents. The Ebay photos of this Set included the manual cover & 4 inside pages, and all were identical to those of the Manual described above.

Looking through the **Bral material** in my file there are only 3 references to Gear Sets. Two are in identical undated catalogues, one sent to me by Bral in the early 1970s, and the other which had 1968 in pencil on the cover. Two sets are shown in it, one of which looks identical to the Ebay outfit and is called No.2. The No.1 is smaller with the same style of packaging and contains 2 each 19 & 25t Pinions, a 50 & a 57t Gear, a 50 & 2x 25t Contrates, 2x 30t Bevels, a Worm, a large & 2 small Sprockets, and Sprocket Chain. The third reference was in a manual, possibly from the 1960s, with the same illustrations of the No.1 & No.2 sets. There is no mention of the sets in later manuals although the Bral electrical sets continued to be advertised in them for some years.

There was thought at least one change to the Gear Sets — another Ebay offering shows both sizes of sets, with the lids and contents as before, but with the parts in light blue formed plastic trays.

**BRAL: S3**

[39/1166]

7. **EZI-BILT Notes** Jack Little wrote that a manual, complete except for its cover, & thought to be from the 'Melbourne' period (see 22/636-7), has been found. It is 9¾\*7½", covers Sets 1-3, & prices are given in its parts list. The Colton, Palmer & Preston Ltd (CPPL) 1-3 version of the 1-5 manual described in 19/544 was almost certainly based on this manual.

Said manual was found with a No.4 set which is believed to date from when production was restarted in 1944 (see 22/638). Its date is known from the '660' stamped on the base of the box, the serial number of the permit, dated 24th November, which allowed the resumption. The applicant was actually a Mrs B. Bishop, presumably a CPPL officer, and it was not unusual for such permits to be granted to a representative of a company, without the name of the company being given.

At 19¾\*10½", the box's base, right, is very nearly the same size as the '1941' No.4 (see 22/637) but its wooden sides and partition are nailed to a painted steel plate; its sliding lid is painted steel too with the top covered to within ½" of its edges by a paper label similar to the '1941' one but extended outboard of its centre and 4 line wide surround.



The parts in the box were from several periods but several of the 1" Pulleys were made from a different pressing to later ones and are thought to be from an early Melbourne set.

**EZY-BILT: S7**

[39/1166]

8. **Another address for S.J.MILLER** The Executive Erector Set produced by S.J.Miller was described in 24/692. Most of the parts in it were gold plated and a selection of such parts were recently offered on Ebay by a seller from Boulder, Colorado, the town in the address on the front on the Set's manual. Your editor succumbed to temptation and when the parts arrived they were in a cardboard box printed with '1 dozen Royalty Games' on its ends, & 'S. J. Miller Co. Inc., 1707 Surf Ave., P.O.Box 130, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224' on one side.

**ERECTOR [4a]: S2**

[39/1166]

9. **Snippet. More on METALLBAUKASTEN [6]** Another Nr.301/302 (see 38/1153) set was offered on Ebay. It was in the same wooden box but the lid, identical looking to the one in OSN 38, was said to be cardboard. Part of the manual cover, below, was shown. The parts were aluminium and those that could be seen were 2,4,5,6,8h Strips with fully rounded ends; A/Bs with 2 round holes; a 5\*6h Perforated Plate and a longer one, probably 6\*9h, both with square corners; a 5h Ø Disc; and Hexagonal Nuts about MÄRKLIN size. No



Wheels, wooden or otherwise were present.

**METALLBAUKASTEN [6]: S2**

[39/1166]

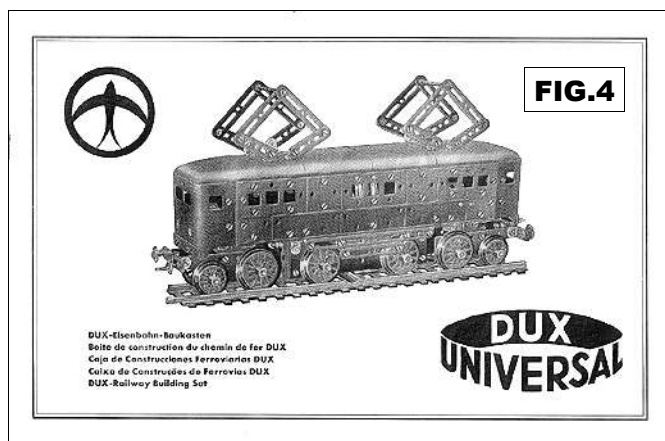
10. **TECNIKIT** A loose-leaf manual with models for Sets 0-3 was described in 10/250, & now another has been found with the same outer wrapper (with No.0 models on the back covers, as before) but inside a loose double-sided sheet for Set 4, & one for Set 5. This is the first real evidence of a Set 5. Each of the loose sheets has 4 models, from 4.1 AMERICAN LOADING BAY to 4.4 WINDMILL, and from 5.1 DRAWBRIDGE to 5.4 FLOUR HOIST. All are presented in the same style as before with the Parts Required given for each.

The parts needed for the No.4 models are within the Inventory in MCS. Extra parts for the No.5's are 2 each of 8 & 12h A/Gs, 1x 1" Bossed Pulley, & 2 each of #U7 1\*7\*1h DAS, & #F9/5, 5\*9h Plate. Those last 2 parts were not in the No.4.

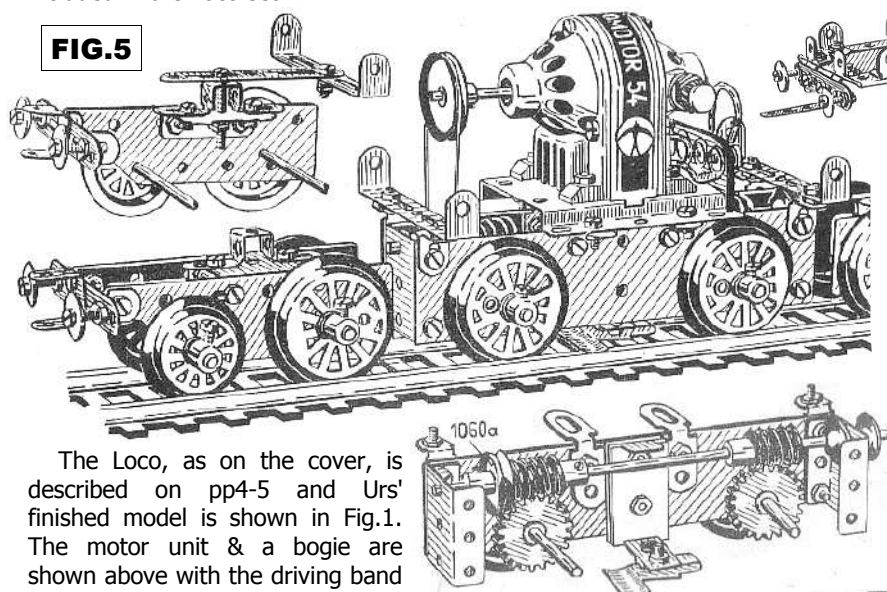
**TECNIKIT: S2**

[39/1166]





the No.55 Transformer; the Illustrated Parts (Fig.3); and the Set Contents. The latter are shown in Fig.2 with the English names from a list of the parts on p3 added. Of the 54 parts 27 are in the standard or Gear Sets, and a few of the 'specials' are modified standard parts. The Motor & Transformer are not included in the Loco set.



The Loco, as on the cover, is described on pp4-5 and Urs' finished model is shown in Fig.1. The motor unit & a bogie are shown above with the driving band going to a Pulley #1060a. All the Wheels on one side of the Loco have insulated bosses (#120/7a & 120/8a), and the springy pick-up Shoe #120/13 is also insulated using the Strip #120/11a with the Mounting Bracket #120/12. The Shoe can be turned through 180° to contact either an outer or the centre rail of 2- or 3-rail track. The complete body shell is bolted to the two DAS on the motor unit, and the Double Bent Strip on each bogie is linked to the centre hole of another DAS across the bottom of the body shell by a horizontal Strip, as top left in Fig.5. It is lock-nutted at

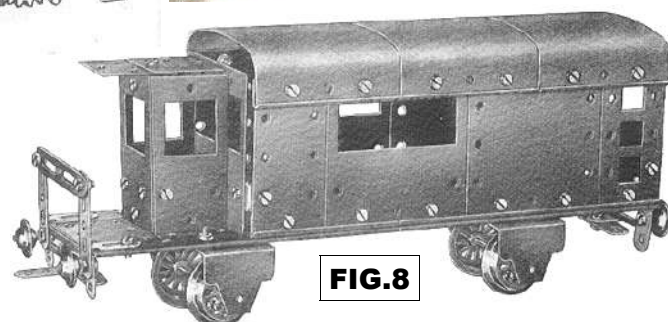
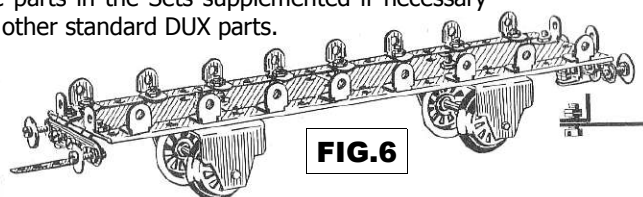
each end, through a slotted hole in the Strip at the Double Bent Strip end.

p6 has a Coach made from Set 121. It is basically the same as Urs' in Fig.7 except for the window panels. The chassis (Fig.6) is made from Plates edged with Strips with A/Bs to allow the side & end Panels to be attached. Each wheel unit is pivoted by a Bolt lock-nutted through its centre hole.

p7 has Urs's Coach made with Sets 101+122z. Apart from the Side Panels it differs from the Set 121 model in the Plates used in the chassis, the Brackets used to attach the Panels, and the way the coupling is mounted. Also on this page an ad for the Transformer – it has a knob on top giving 3 voltages for forward and 3 for reverse

p8 has an ad for the Motor: 20V/12W; the PR: G 1161 W; and the 101+122z Goods Van in Fig.8. Again the chassis differs only in the Plates & Brackets used.

Nothing is said in the manual of the possibility of making other rolling stock, but this would certainly be possible using the parts in the Sets supplemented if necessary by other standard DUX parts.

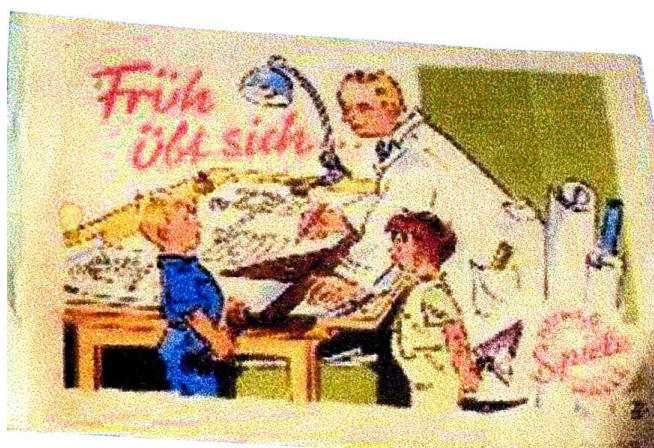


**DUX-UNIVERSAL: S4**

**OSN 43/1300**

**Snippet. More on METALLBAUKASTEN [6]** Yet another Nr.301/302 set (see 39/11663) has been offered on Ebay. It was in the same wooden box with card lid as before, and most of the parts mentioned earlier could be seen except the 5h Ø Disc. They included a 6\*8h Perf. Plate (the 6\*9h mentioned in OSN 39 was a mistake, it should have read 6\*8h). One 'new' part is a 14h Strip. 6 Wheels (or Pulleys) could be seen, 4 which looked identical to those in the 38/1153 set, and 2 which were brown, and a little smaller in diameter.

With the set were the manual right with the same slogan as on the lid, and the Bauvorlagen document that was with the OSN 39 outfit. Both carry the 'Spiele' circular logo: bottom right on the manual cover and bottom left for the Bauvorlagen – its very top can just be seen in the bottom left corner of the OSN 39 photo.



**METALLBAUKASTEN [6]: S3**

**OSN 43/1300**



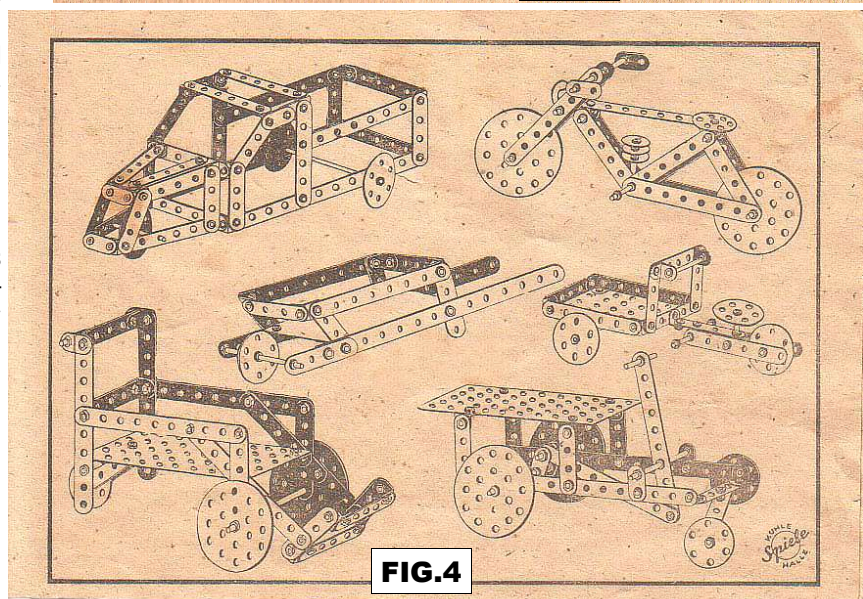
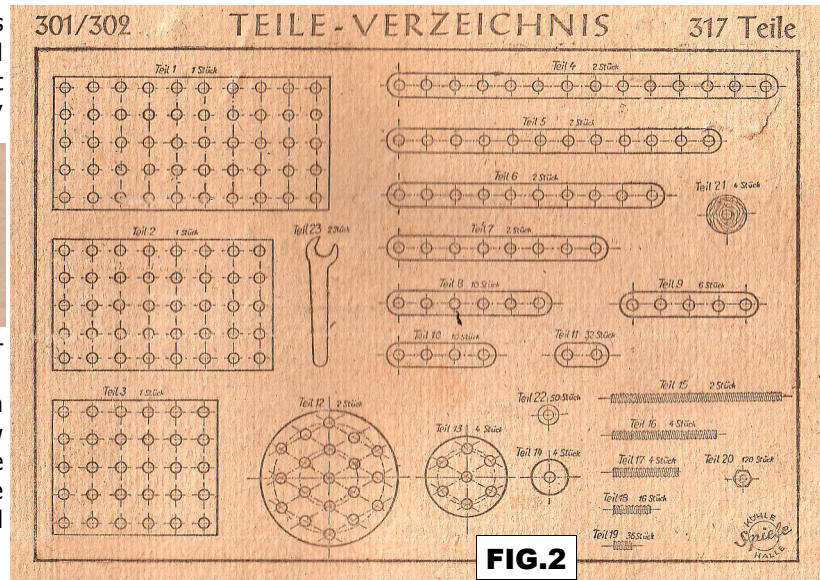
**A METALLBAUKASTEN [6] Set** Snippets about this small system appeared in 43/1300 and earlier, but now Jean-Pierre Guibert has kindly sent photos and notes on his Nr.301/302 set – the only size known.

**The Box** The box, **FIG.1** 297\*228\*27mm, is as in 38/1153 with a wooden frame and cardboard bottom and sliding lid. The logo is shown right. Jean-Pierre gave a nice translation on the 'Früh übt sich' slogan on the lid – 'Get a head start'.

**The Parts** with their quantities are shown on the underside of the lid (right) and are listed below with their number in curly brackets. Except for the wooden Wheel and black steel Spanner, all are aluminium. Holes are 5mm Ø at 15mm pitch and the thread is M5 (actually 4.9mm Ø).

- #1-3 Perforated Plates, 5\*10,8,6h. {1,1,1}
- The 5\*9h mentioned in OSN 43 was a mistake.
- #4-11 Strips, 14,12,10,8,6,5,4,2h long and 13mm wide. {2,2,2,2,10,6,10,32}
- #12-14 Discs, 5,3,1h Ø. {2,4,4}
- #15-19 Screwed Rods which scale at approximately 9,6,3½,2,1cm long. {2,4,4,16,36}
- #20 hexagonal Nut. {120}
- #21 Wheel, wooden. {4}
- #22 Washer. {50}
- #23 Spanner. {2}

No A/Bs or Bolts are mentioned. Some A/Bs can be seen in the models and in Ebay sets – the latter have 2 round holes and most likely the (large) quantity of 2h Strips includes A/Bs. No Bolts are apparent in the models either, with the Screwed Rods used to hold the parts



together. That would account for the number of Nuts provided. But some Bolts, about 1cm long, can be seen in the photos of one of the 3 Ebay sets to hand.

**The Manual**, with the Set, 150\*102mm, is the Bauvorlagen type as in 39/1166 and has 8 folded pages including the front left. One of the models pages is shown above.

OSN 44/1349

METALLBAUKASTEN [6]: S4

**Snippet. A No.1 FERMO Set** FERMO was the post-WW2 German system with the main parts triangular, and coloured black in most known sets. The outfit described in 27/784 had no label, or else it had come off without leaving a trace, and lid tops were not shown in the photos for the two Ebay sets mentioned in 41/1230. There was also no indication that any of the sets had a number. But Jacques Pitrat has alerted me to another set on Ebay which had the label right, occupying about 40% of the lid. Its box was black, like the OSN 27 example, and was the same size. The parts too were identical, except that the Pulleys were black instead of aluminium, and they had the same layout on, again, a blue backing card. As can be seen the label shows the set to be a No.1, so was any other size of FERMO ever produced? The front of the present set's manual was shown and appears to be identical to the one in the OSN 27 outfit.



OSN 44/1349

FERMO: S3