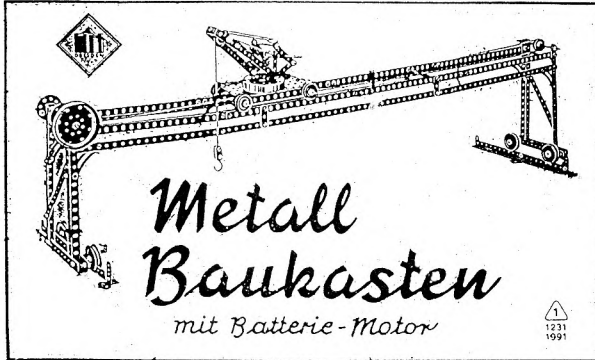


about 1950. The Sets 18-24 in MCS were preceded by a series 1,1A...3. MCS doesn't mention that Strips, A/Gs, and small parts were nickel plated.

METALL BAUKASTEN A system from the 1930s with over 50 different black parts. Holes are 4.1mm Ø at 12.7mm spacing.

METALL BAUKASTEN mit Batterie-Motor The manual cover of this East German set is shown below - the logo on it was reproduced in 13/337. EZ says that the parts were packed in a plastic box, and that they were strong and well made, with a black finish. They included 2 sizes of Tyres, rectangular and trapezoidal Plates, and circular parts up to 7h Ø. 4mm Bolts were used, and the pitch of the holes was 12mm.



METALLO-TRIGON This 'geometrical' system was discussed in 5/93. EZ gives the period as 1913 to c1926 and lists the firms who made it during that time: Metallo-Trigon GmbH, Offenbach; from 1916, Stanzwerke GmbH, Eisenach; from 1919, Stanzwerke u. Schloßfabriken GmbH, Bad Liebenstein and Sachsendorf bei Eisfeld; from 1920, Stanzwerke GmbH at Sachsendorf and from 1923 at Eisenach again. A photo of a 1916 No.2 Set shows several types of spoked Pulleys with 3, 4 and 6 spokes, all straight, and a pair of the smaller (6-spoked) ones are fitted with Tyres, as shown in the original sketches of the parts in MCS.

MEWEKA From EZ: this DIY system (see 12/321) was made until c1960.

MIKRONO Konstruktionsspiel EZ lists this system as being made by M. Löffler of Altona/Elbe from 1918 to ?, but no details of it are given. If I've understood correctly it already existed in 1916 under the name **ROSETTA Konstruktionsspiel**, and also mentioned is **PYTHAGORAS Konstruktionsspiel** in connection with the words 'objection/Patent/renaming', but I can't sort out exactly who did what to whom.

M K A Probably from East Germany in the 1950s, this system had about 40 parts, all plain aluminium except for steel Axles, and included both TRIX-style and MECCANO-

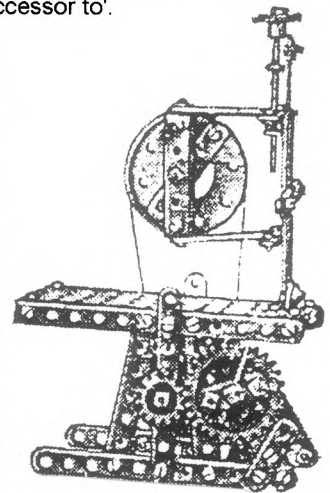
style Strips. The hole pitch at 11.2mm was larger than TRIX but smaller than MECCANO, and the holes were 4.1 and 4.3mm respectively. Mystery Part #3 from 2/25 may be a M K A part, or if not it's very similar. The model at the foot of the last column gives an idea of some of the parts. There are 3 sizes of Pulley with Tyres to fit the middle one. All of them, and the 5h Ø Disc, have tapped bosses.

M K A may well be connected to **M F C**, already in MCS - the parts look the same, the same range of PNs are used, and those for the N&B, the only parts that can be positively identified by PN, are identical.

MODELLO On the logos (12/312), Jeannot wrote that the JB one was that of the first manufacturer, Johann Brandner of Regensburg (1919-20). Ernst Plank at Nürnberg then continued (EP-MODELLO) until at least 1928. EZ confirms the hole pitch as 10mm with an Axle diameter of 4mm.

MÖWE The name is sometimes spelt **MOEWE**. This system was made from about 1946 until perhaps the early 1950s. A leaflet shows what looks like a metal box, and has at the bottom 'Made in German - Brit. Zone - N. Rh. W.' The only mention of a maker is 'Möwe Metall-Baukasten-Fabrik'; in EZ it is given as 'Möninghoff & Weiß Nachfolger' - the last word seems to mean 'successor to'.

A page from a manual shows 2 models which can be built from Sets 1 and 2, and for which about 20 different parts are listed. These include Strips 3,5,7, 8,11,12 & 20 holes long; Achsenträger which may be Double Bent Strips; a Baseplate which looks as if it is 5*11 or 12h, and may have flanges on its long sides; 2h Ø Loose Pulleys; 5h Ø Flanged Discs with a pulley groove and a large centre hole, like STABIL; 25 & 85mm Axles which are probably Threaded Rods; a Crank of some sort; and the large and small Gears that you may be able to see in the Bandsaw above, and which look as if they might be similar to the STABIL patented gears.

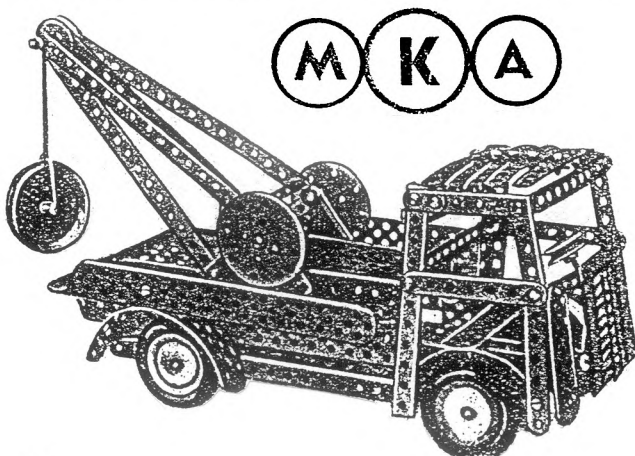


Some of the parts in a set differ from those in the models. The Baseplate is flat and has 12*5 holes, while the 5h Ø Flanged Discs appear not to have a centre hole but instead a boss, fitted to the recessed side, with 6 holes at 1h radius around it. There's also a Double Bent Strip and two 8h long Flat Sector Plates with a 5+7*3 hole pattern. They, like the Baseplate, have sharp corners.

To give an idea of the size of the sets the other model, a Double Swing, uses 57 parts plus 20 Angle Brackets, 8 Pulleys, 80 Bolts and 100 Nuts.

Nothing is known of the hole spacing or diameter but my impression is that the pitch is nearer ½" than 10mm, and in that case the holes scale at between 3½ and 4mm.

MWK This was an East German system from between WW2 and the early 1950s, with plain aluminium parts that had 4.1mm holes at 12.1mm pitch. In all there were about 36 but the models I have seen show only the following: 2,3,5,7,11h Strips; 1*5*1, 1*3*1, 2*1*2 DAS; 1h Angle and Reverse Angle Brackets; Double Bent Strip; 7*11, 3*11, 3*7 Perf. Plates; a Tapered Plate (see model at top of next column), & a 2h Triangular Plate (perhaps with a centre hole); 28mm and 62mm Ø (pulley?) Wheels, and a Handle, all of which are nipped onto 50 and 90mm Threaded Rods; N&B.



M K A & M F C Both these systems were East German, probably from the 1950s, and in MCS they look very similar if not identical. Little or nothing is known about the manufacturers or exactly when they were made (there seems to be a rubber-stamped name & address on the MFC manual cover in MCS, but I can't decipher it). Neither system is mentioned in the German reference books, but it's probable that MFC came first, as no parts or outfits are known. The unusual feature of both is that they contain a mix of normal and TRI-X-style parts.

One can guess at the reasoning behind these systems: TRI-X Spanners often gets pressed into service as Narrow Strips, and usually add to the appearance of a model, or to their neatness mechanically. How nice then if a range of Narrow Strips, and perhaps a few Brackets to match, were available. And TRI-X N&B are a bit small really, so use M4.

But M4 means the TRI-X-style parts are larger than the originals, by nearly 50% in fact, with a hole pitch of 11.2mm, and a width of 22mm. The longest (19h) Wide (TRI-X pattern) Strip is 21cm long, and the longest (25h) 'normal', 11mm wide, Strip is nearly 28cm. Brackets are a mix of the two styles, but A/Gs are the convention pattern. Unlike TRI-X all Wheels have tapped bosses. No Gears though. MKA parts are all plain aluminium.

MKA sets appear from time to time on Ebay, and this account is based on photos of some of them, and on 2 actual sets. One is my own and one belongs to David Hobson, to whom best thanks for lending it to me. Neither has a lid, and mine has no manual, but luckily the partitioned bases of each match exactly some of the more complete Ebay sets. The parts in the 2 sets to hand show several differences, and for convenience they will be referred to as 'early' & 'late', their most likely sequence.

The PARTS Most of the 42 parts used in the Manual models are shown below, though only one representative Strip, Wide Strip, Axle, & Screwed Rod. Parts not to hand

Leading Particulars

Name M K A Aluminium Baukasten

Country East Germany

Maker

History MCS gives 1950s.

Hole pitch 11.2mm. **Hole dia.** 4.5mm, some 4.4mm.

Sets Nos.II & III are known.

Material/Finish Plain aluminium. Late sets may have blue anodised Pulleys.

Boss Aluminium single tapped M3. o.d. – early: 9.0mm, but 10.4 on the 55mm Pulley; late: 10.0mm. Bore - 4.0 to 4.1mm. Peening is a ring, with recess (early), or with 4 indents (late).

Fixing M4 thread. 2 types of N&B are known, both aluminium. Early) 7.0 Ø CH Bolts, 6½mm u/h, with hex Nuts, 6.0mm A/F, & 2mm thick. Late) Bolts: 7.0 Ø RH, 6½mm u/h, & 8.0mm Ø RH, 10½mm u/h; with hex Nuts, 7.0mm A/F, & 2½mm thick.

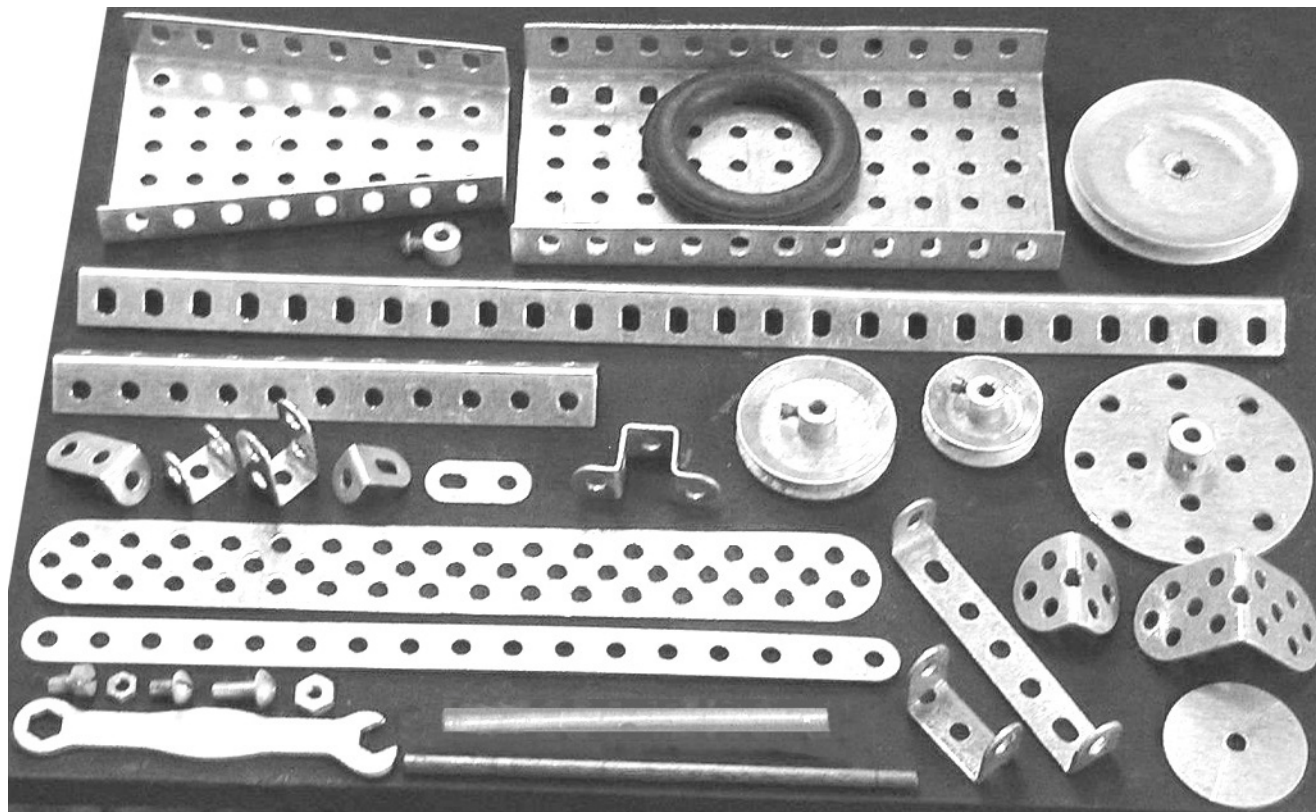
Axles Brass (early), 3.97mm, or Steel (late), 4.03mm Ø.

DP No Gears known.

Motors None.

Remarks Appears similar or identical to M F C.

are a Crank Handle and a Windmill Sail. Also the 1h*2h A/B, the 1*1*1h D/B, & the 30mm Disc were only in the late set. But generally the early set is the most complete and the numbers of parts in it are shown in curly brackets in the notes that follow.



- **Generalities.** Slots are 6½mm long. Ends of Strips & Brackets are fully rounded. The corners of the A/Gs & Flanged Plates are square. The number of holes in the wide ('TRIX') parts are those in the centre row. Most parts are of 1mm metal, but thicknesses of .9 to 1.3mm also occur at random.

- **Strips.** The 7 lengths have 3,5,7,9,11,17,25 holes; they are between 11.0 & 11.2mm wide (with a few up to 11.5mm). {4, 8,4,4,8,6,10}

- **Wide Strips** are 3,5,7,9,13,17,19h long, and 22.0mm wide. {4,6,6,8,4,4,6}

- **Flanged Plates.** The 5*11h is 66mm wide o/a, with slotted holes in its outer rows & in its 16½mm deep flanges. The Sector Plate has flat ends & slotted, 14½mm flanges. {1,2}.

- **Brackets** (see also the 'Late Parts' below. The 'normal' types are the Flat Bracket; the A/B made from it; the 2h deep D/B, the wide D/B (1½*½+1+½*1½h); the Double Bent Strip; & the DAS. The latter is similar in width & slotting to the Flanged Plate. {6,8,3,2,2,2}

The Wide A/Bs are 1½*1½h & 2½*2½h. {6,6}

- The **A/G** is about 13½*13½mm, and 11 & 25h long. {2,6}

- **Pulleys.** Those in the early set are 55, 36½, & 27mm Ø with a 7mm wide vee. In the late set they are similar but 54, 37½, & 26½mm Ø, and the vee of the smallest is only 5mm wide. All have plain faces except the 54mm, which, as in the photo, carries 3 impressed segmental grooves, concave one side, convex on the other. {4,3,2}

- **Faceplate.** 55mm Ø, with a 1.5mm thick disc. {4}

- **Tyres.** Black rubber, now hard, 34½mm o.d. off the Pulley, with circumferential ribbed tread on the top. The late ones have MKA moulded onto each sidewall. {3}

- **Axles.** The early ones are brass, with slightly domed ends, 130, 109, 90, & 52mm long {2,2,1,1}. The few in the late set are steel but otherwise similar.

- **Screwed Rods.** Again brass: 110, 81, & 49mm long {1,1,1}. None were found in the new set.

- **Collar.** 9.0mm Ø, 6.0mm wide, single tapped M3. {5}

- **N&B.** 44 Nuts & 65 Bolts were in early set – up to 80 are used in the manual models. The tiny early **Set Screw** is brass, with a 4.0mm CH, and 4mm u/h. The later one is aluminium with a 6.0mm RH, and 6½mm u/h.

- **Spanner.** The early one is steel, 81mm long o/a & 1.5mm thick, with 6mm wide jaws. In the later set it is aluminium, 1.9mm thick, the same length but with 7½mm jaws. In both the matching hex opening is not quite large enough to accept the Nuts in the Set. No Screwdriver was in either Set.

- **Windmill Sail.** This can be seen in the Windmill shown overleaf - it seems to have 2 holes for attachment and is black on white, or perhaps on yellow.

- **The Late Parts.** Two 30mm Discs were in the late set, plus 1 D/B (the same width as the 2h deep D/B), and 2 of the 1*2h A/Bs.

The SETS 3 different sets have been seen on Ebay, and two have partitioned boxes which exactly match the present early & late ones. All the evidence is taken together in the descriptions below.

The Early Set. The box is about 23*34*3cm, and the lid is a lightish blue with a large yellow, portrait label. It has a Crane with a long jib, similar to the one shown later for the No.III Set, but pointing to the left, and loading a Lorry. Like all the labels seen, the wording on it is 'MKA Aluminium Baukasten'. No set number can be seen. The base is divided into 9 areas by partitions capped with the light blue. In one Set the N&B are in a round, 60mm Ø, dark brown Bakelite box with a screw-on lid.

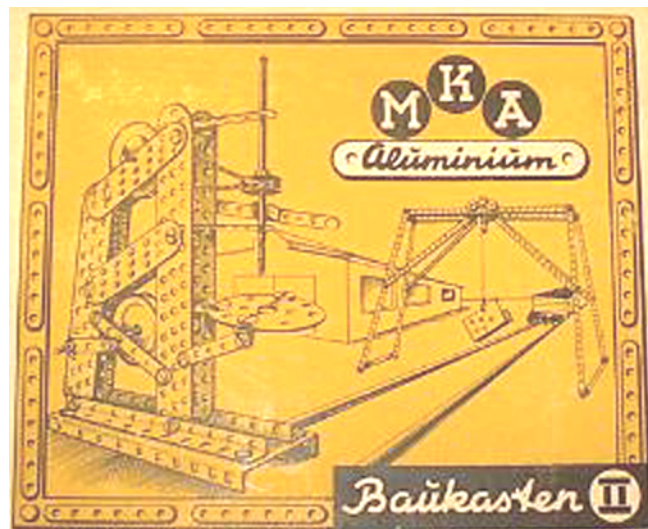
It is likely that the parts in this Set include a Flanged Plate, 2 Flanged Sector Plates, 4 Face Plates, 4x 55mm

Pulleys, & 4x 36½mm Pulleys with Tyres.

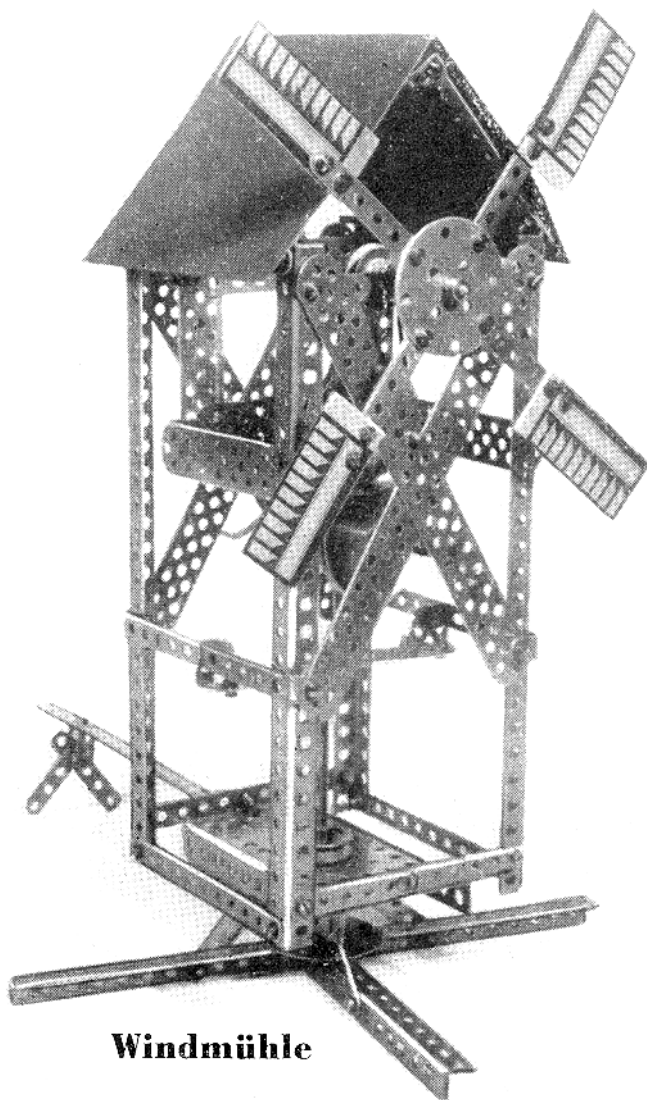
The manual has the greyish-brown cover, 210*146mm, below. The word Bunt usually means colour, but the only colour in this manual is on the cover itself. It can also mean mixed or varied, and so might be a reference to the contents. Finally it might be the makers name - Bunt is a German surname, albeit a rare one. C2 has an intro and the PR '110 Richard Perko, Cottbus-Ströbitz S 62423' – Ströbitz is part of Cottbus, a town 80km north of Dresden. C3 & C4 are blank.



Inside are 20 pages of models, 11 in all, from Bank on p1 to Feuerwehrauto mit Leiter on p20. No details are given of parts, PNs, or set contents, and no reference is made to a Set No., or to more than one set. There is one smallish photo for each model, a Parts List (using PNs) for all but the Fire Engine, and written instructions for all but said Fire Engine and the first three (small) models. The models include the Crane on the lid, a Sewing Machine, a Motorcycle & (streamlined) Sidecar, and the Windmill & Press overleaf. Also the Breakdown Lorry in MCS, with the same Parts List. Not included are the Drilling Machine & Gantry Crane on the No.II lid, shown below, or the MFC Mechanical Hammer in MCS.



The Late Set (No.II). The box is about 26½*31*3cm, and the tops of the 7 partitioned areas in the base are blue as in the early set. But lids are either fawn or red, both nearly covered with the label above. One, or perhaps two of the smaller partitioned areas have card lids, and contain N&B, etc. Some of the parts in the set to hand appear to have been held to (missing) backing cards by aluminium clips



Windmühle

bent up from narrow offcuts from thin sheet. The likely set contents include a Flanged Plate, 2 Flanged Sector Plates, 2 Face Plates, 2x 55mm Pulleys, & 2x 36½mm Pulleys with Tyres. One set has 2 smaller Tyres but it isn't known if they are original.

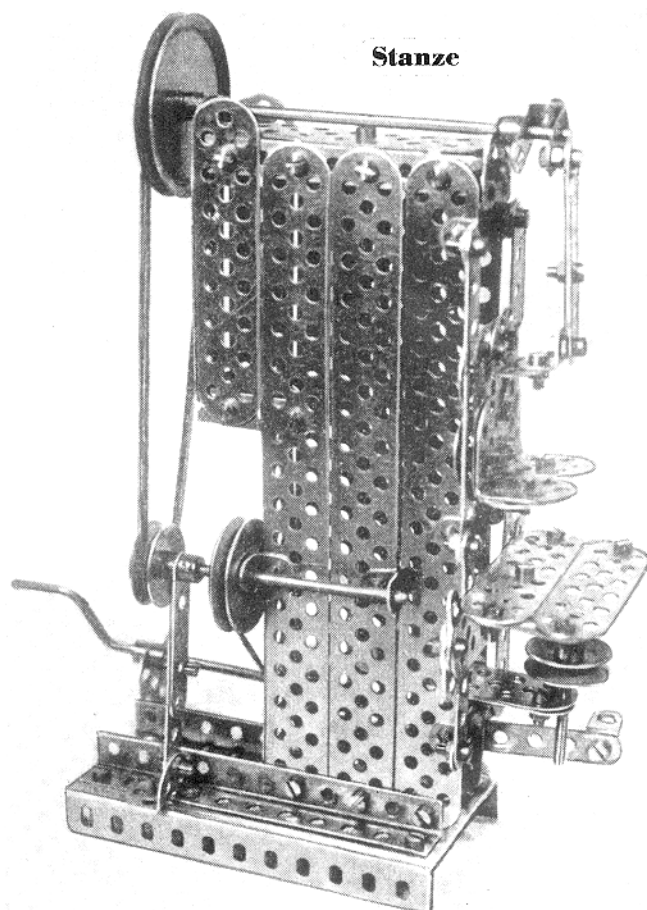
This No.II set is smaller than the early one and so the latter might be a No.III, or possibly it had no number because it was the only set at the time.

Only the cover of the manual has been seen – it is grey or light yellow, and plain like the No.III in MCS, but with only a '2' under the MKA & METALL-BAUKASTEN. Another manual, not with a set, is similar but the cover is pink and the set number is the Roman 'II'.

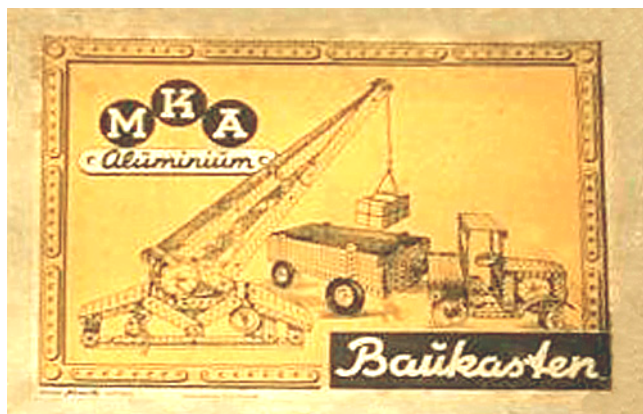
The No.III Set. No set number can be seen on the box but one Ebay set includes a No.III manual. The box is the largest of the three and scales at 38cm wide. It has 14 partitioned areas, topped with blue, and again one or two small areas are lidded. The lid is grey or fawn and the label (somewhat foreshortened) at the top of the next column, nearly covers it. The Crane on it has already been mentioned; the Tractor & Trailer is a developed version of one of the models in the early manual.

In the 4 No.III sets seen on Ebay the contents visible fall between those of the early & late sets, but in reality are probably similar to the early outfit.

The Pulleys in one of the sets appear to be anodised



Stanze



blue, a late innovation perhaps.

The manual cover is grey with red & blue lettering. Its design is exactly as in MCS with a horizontal Strip under the name, and below that, to the right, the 'III'.

Using the Parts Some of the models in the Manual look quite neat but most aren't very ambitious. I made a 38cm long Tugboat from my set and found that on the whole the parts were easy to use, and, at least for that model, the overall effect was enhanced by having both types of parts available. The only potential disadvantage was that when joining wide & normal parts at right angles, the rounded end of a wide part often protruded a little beyond normal part. This created the right sort of 'cluttered' look in the Tug, but might be a problem in some models.

the Liverpool $\frac{5}{32}$ " BSW. In round terms 7-32 is 4 thou smaller in diameter and despite the difference in thread angle between the two (see 7/160), 7-32 Bolts & Screws can be used in BSW tapped parts, bosses for instance. They are a little loose but tighten satisfactorily. This means that 7-32 Bolts/Screws would fit bossed parts imported from England.

It is believed that 7-32 was the thread in all the U.S. produced parts, that is from 1922 onwards, but it also seems likely that 7-32 Bolts & Screws were used from as early as 1916. This could possibly have been to circumvent wartime shortages. It is also possible that certain parts were made in America before 1922 and used 7-32. An example is the 56t Gear with the square centre hole & zinc boss (see Mystery Part No.45, in 27/795).

7-32 was used in the 1929 Gilbert 'double-digit' MECCANO sets (see 27/788) but from 1930 onwards ERECTOR threads were used, 8-32 N&B, and 6-32 tapped bosses.

U.S. MECCANO: S1

[29/846-7]

10. On the **No.0 KWIK BUILDER** set in the 1st column of 28/827, Harry Marien has succumbed to temptation and opened the envelope with the parts in it. The contents are 2,6,2,2,2,2 of 7,6,5,4,3,2h Strips; 4 each of 1*3 & 1*4h 'Plates'; 6 A/Bs; 10 N&B; and a Spanner (as in the No.1). The 3-7h Strips are green, the Plates red, and the other parts are bright looking. The contents are as in the photo in the Set's manual (described in 10/262) except that the 1*4h Plates replace the 1*5h, and the 4 Washers, & 5 of the 15 N&B, shown in the Manual are lacking. (The set contents of No.0 given in OSN 10 was incorrect, it is now apparent that the DAS and the 'small Plates' are actually 4 each of 1*3 & 1*5h 'Plates'.)

KWIK BUILDER: S2

[29/847]

11. Some more information on an **MKA No.II set**, from Jacques Pitrat, see 28/830. The colour of the manual (with a '2') is cream rather than light yellow and it has 8 pages, plus the covers. There are 8 models, one on each page, from a 'Schiebekarre' (Luggage Barrow) to a 'Dekopiersäge' (Sawing Machine). There is only one Flanged Sector Plate in the set, and only one is used in the manual models. There are two 27mm Pulleys, without Tyres, and Tyres appear in the manual, as in the Set, only on the 36mm Pulleys. There are no backing cards in the set, and it is not sure that there were ever such cards. The aluminium clips are used to hold the Strips of the same size together.

M K A: S4

[29/847]

WEB SITES

[29/847]

- <http://home.t-online.de/home/HGFinke/metall/engl.html> (from Thomas Morzinck). A German **MÄRKLIN** enthusiast shows pictures and gives some details of his models and mechanisms. In English.
- Werner Sticht has revised his **STABIL web site**, www.stabilbaukasten.de.vu. Many new items have been added, others have been expanded, and there are additional interesting photos. The new material includes more on the history & parts; on the motors; the Inventors Sets; the Kanonen Sets; the Railway Wagon Sets; the small Sets 46, 48, 48M; the Knirps Sets; and the years up to 1920.
- www.Merkurtoys.cz (from Orion DreamDancer). There is an English version of this **MERKUR** site, and now included are new or revised manuals for sets 012, 014, 019, M4, & M6. All manual pages can be viewed/printed.
- www.bral.biz The new **BRAL** site. It is in Italian but is easy to navigate. More details elsewhere in this Issue.

QUERIES

[29/847]

Query 29 On the colour of STABIL Cord, Werner Sticht wrote 'that blue/white Cord (two coloured strands twisted

together) was used in the 1950s & 60s – I remember it very well from my first STABIL set that I got in 1957. Plain white Cord was used in sets from the 20s and 30s.'

SMALL ADS

[29/847]

Wanted. Any metal nut & bolted together **constructional car or vehicle kits**, or any parts, boxes, manuals, information (see 28/814). Also PRESTACON Tool/Kits.

Please call Gary on 01635 200460 before 8pm or email me at gary2car@aol.com.

MÄRKLIN 1089 Eiffel Tower set, illustrated instructions needed, or colour copy, or mono. Happy to pay for copying or full value if original. Graham Colover, L'Escafe, Barnet Lane, Elstree, Herts, WD6 3QZ; tel: day 0207 6258899, home 0208 9538143; fax: +44 (0)207 6258866.

For Sale CD VERSION of MCS - MECCANO VOLUME

A completely new edition of the Meccano Volume of the MCS has been produced on CD in .PDF format (Adobe/Acrobat Reader is needed). It has been thoroughly revised and updated to the present, with many colour images and consists of over 1100 pages. The format is the same as the normal MCS. The Adobe/Acrobat Reader will be included on the CD (for Microsoft PCs), although it is also available as a free download from the Adobe website for virtually all operating systems. Price including postage for the CD will be as follows:-UK - £5.50; Europe - £6.00 (10 Euros); Rest of World - £6.50 (US\$11). Send cash in UK£, US\$ or Euros, or UK£ cheques drawn on a UK bank to Mr. T Edwards, 5 Burnside Road, Largs, Ayrshire, KA30 9BX, Scotland, Great Britain. Email - timothy.edwards1@btinternet.com. Website - <http://edwards.web.users.btopenworld.com/meccano.htm>.

REVIEW: CD of MCS MECCANO Volume [29/847]

Some details of this new version of Frank Beadle's original are given in the ad above. For those unfamiliar with Frank's tome it covered MECCANO in Argentina, the U.S.A, Brazil, the UK, France, Germany, Mexico, & Spain, with one or more sections for each, some 400 pages in all.

What Tim has done is to scan Frank's original pages, updating them where possible, and then add all the fresh material he has been able to obtain, in colour where appropriate. There is quite a lot of it actually, with over 1100 pages now, a labour of love indeed. The format is unchanged and also the countries covered, but apart from Brazil & Germany, there are significant additions to all the countries, and huge ones for the U.S.A., the UK, France, & Spain. In each of these the standard & special/theme sets are all included with separate sections for each identifiable period.

This is an invaluable work of reference for all enthusiasts, and would be a 'good read' for anyone even remotely interested in the MECCANO story. Quite apart from the new material it is very convenient to have so much detail of MECCANO in one place. I'm not going to attempt to summarise the additions but I would like to mention that in the French section Tim has included all the sets produced since Liverpool closed. It's the first time this has been done as far as I know, and it was well worth doing now, before the details get muddled with time.

To allow quick access to any section a series of 'bookmarks' can sit permanently on the left of the screen, one for each country. Clicking on one of them gives a dropdown menu with a list of all the sections for that country, and then clicking a section takes one to the first page of it. It's very convenient to use but once in a section the only way to get to a particular page is by clicking through the preceding pages. This doesn't take long, even on my ageing machine, but can be a bit tiresome if one wants to cross-refer between 2 or more pages several times.

Of course if much use is to be made of a particular section it doesn't take long to print off the pages. Provision is made for double-side printing if required with a binding margin on the inner edge of the pages.

Tim has included a slip with the CD asking to be told of errors, & information to fill remaining gaps. More on MECCANO in Germany & Argentina would be particularly welcome.