

OTHER SYSTEMS IN INDIA Ashok Banerjee has sent two letters as follows

"After the exit of MECCANO from India in the mid-fifties, there was a complete vacuum. Then a number of local manufacturers came up with metal construction systems, but these were very rudimentary and rather short lived. However in the early sixties a system was introduced called PLANO, which was more or less a clone of MECCANO, and the quality and finish were quite good. The specifications were the same as MECCANO. In due course it went up to Set No 14, and had quite a decent assortment of steel and brass parts. I collected a few sets in those days (I was a child then) and still have some parts in my collection. These are fully compatible with MECCANO. There were a few oddball parts too, for example a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Strip with one elongated hole. I heard later that the company folded up due to embezzlement of funds by some employees. It is no longer in existence, probably. If you are interested, perhaps I can try to find out more about PLANO. It will take a bit of time, since it will entail a visit to Delhi (where the factory was located) and Calcutta (where business was brisk), and both these cities are quite far from Ahmedabad."

"Yes, you are right, the information in MCS on PLANO at least is not entirely correct. If my memory serves me right, it came onto the market around 1961 - up until then shops were selling off residual MECCANO stocks, although as a scarcity item it had become expensive. In 1964 my father bought me a No 9 PLANO set - the biggest available at that time. I still have the loose parts (though not the box and manual - I was only 12 years old then and had little sense of preservation!). I can tell this much about parts in sets up to No 10:

Strips: $1\frac{1}{2}$ ", $2\frac{1}{2}$ ", $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", $12\frac{1}{2}$ "

Girders: None

Angle Brackets, Fishplates, Trunnions and Flat Trunnions.

Flanged Plate: $5\frac{1}{2}$ "x $2\frac{1}{2}$ "

Crank Handle with Grip, Crankshaft and Axle Rods

Bush Wheels and Wheel Discs: 8 hole

Double Angle Strips: $2\frac{1}{2}$ "x $\frac{1}{2}$ " and $1\frac{1}{2}$ "x $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Cord, Screwdriver and Spanner

$1/8$ " BSW Bolts, domehead/cheesehead, hexagonal nuts, washers

Pulley: 1" brass with boss

Wheel: MECCANO type tinplate

Faceplate: $2\frac{1}{2}$ "

Flexible Plates: $5\frac{1}{2}$ "x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " and Triangular $2\frac{1}{2}$ "x $1\frac{1}{2}$ "

I'll give you more information in subsequent letters when I get the opportunity to do more research.

I had not heard of MILANO before, shame on me. But there have been several short lived systems, all based on MECCANO, such as MAXHINA, MICMAC (up to Set No 6) - all now extinct. Six months back a new MCS was put on the market, named METAL CONSTRUCTION OUTFIT - only one set so far with a small assortment of parts, including 4 "x $2\frac{1}{2}$ " Flanged Plates, Strips and a few moulded plastic parts like wheels. It is expensive, retailing at R 165 (£5.85), and certainly not worth the price. Colours are mainly red and silver. If you want more details, let me know."

QUERIES

1. From Gaston Marette: the thread size of British TRIX is 4BA; that of German and French TRIX is 3.5mm diameter, 32 threads per inch (this thread was known in Belgium as Belgian Thread No 19 and is no longer used except in repairing old machinery).

2. From Ashok Banerjee: I think "Made in China" always refers to Taiwan, since I have always found that products of mainland China bear the inscription "Made in the People's republic of China".

3. From Don Redmond: the ERECTOR GU Eccentric Loop is made of $5/32$ " (0.156") dia. steel. (Info. from Louis Boselli, Cornwall-on Hudson, NY)

4. From Gaston Marette: the Florin is the official unit of currency in the Netherlands. It is called "gulden" in Dutch but noted f in its country and NLG in the international market (just like "pounds sterling" is noted £ and GBP respectively).

5. From Don Redmond: can anyone tell me what system had axle rods with a flat on one side. [In a later letter Don answers his own query saying that GABRIEL ERECTOR has a full length flat on its rods. I have included this as it may be of interest to others - are such axles unique to GABRIEL ERECTOR, I wonder - Ed]

6. José Bernal Moreno asks if anything is known of a system made by BASSETT-LOWKE based on rods and other parts.

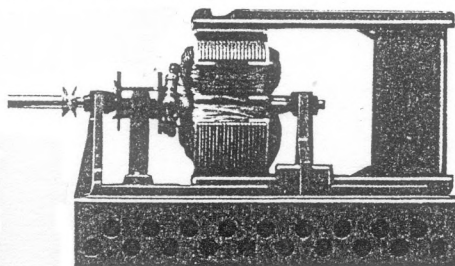
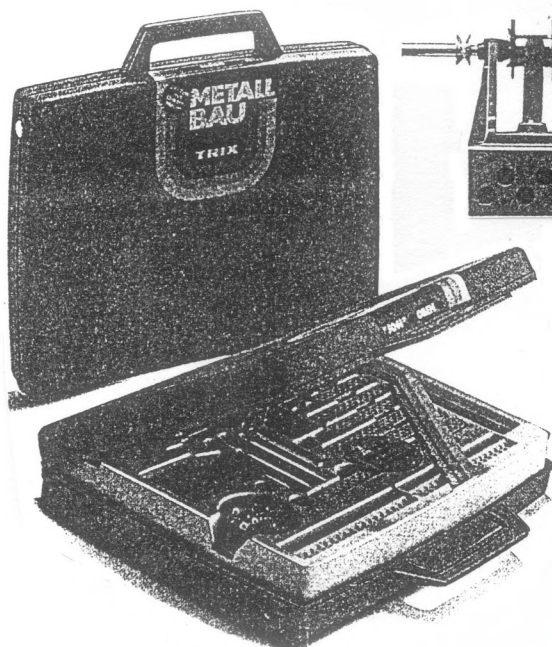
TRIX TODAY Tony Matthewman sent photocopies of the two pages of the 1991-92 TRIX catalogue devoted to Metallbaukästen. They are pages 170 and 171, so it seems that metal construction sets do not loom large in the TRIX scheme of things. 5 sets are listed, as below, preceded by the Reference No:

- 85051 Metallbau A, which contains 217 parts and a motor. The box lid shows the crane that is shown in MCS FB (TRIX [3]).
- 85052 Metallbau B, with 275 parts; it is a set in its own right but also combines with #A to allow bigger models. There is a gantry crane on the box lid.
- 85053 Metallbau A+B, is just that. The lid has another gantry crane, with a small crane rather than a crab on it, and a lorry behind it.
- 85007 Metallbau Getriebe. Gears and associated parts, 277 in all. Its picture, the only one to show anything of the set's contents, is reproduced below, the significance of the '7' in the bottom, right corner isn't known, but I'll call it #7 for ease of reference.
- 85061 Metallbau-Kofferset K. Over 280 parts and a motor in a plastic carrying case, see below. It comes with instructions to make a large crane (einen großen Baukran) and 5 other models.

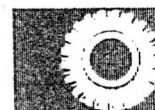
Then there are 25 Packs of parts (TRIX Metallbau-Einzelteil Packungen), as listed below. In general the finish is bright zinc plating and by implication the Angle Girders are of steel, but some Strips and A/Gs are shown coloured yellow and are described by 'Vergütet durch Kunststoff-Einbrenn-Beschichtung' which may mean protected by a plastic coating. On the other page it says that this finish gives the models a more 'Technik-Look'. The parts finished in yellow have the same PNs as their plated counterparts, but the pack numbers differ. If the parts aren't yellow then, according to the catalogue, they are plated, but some pulleys and others are shown coloured in the illustrations and any such information is included below.

- 85021-5: contain yellow Strips FB5, FB9, FB13, FB17, FB26. (30, 20, 12, 10, 8 off per packet)
- 85084-5: yellow A/Gs WS17, WS26. (6, 4 off)
- 85031-5: Strips FB5, FB9, FB13, FB17, FB26. (30, 20, 12, 10, 8 off)
- 85080-2: A/Gs WS9, WS17, WS26. (10, 6, 4 off)
- 85036: DAS. 3 different lengths shown on the packet, together with an Angle Bracket.
- 85037: Nuts and Bolts. Also Grub Screws and Long Nuts on the packet.
- 85039: 4 rolls [coils?] of enamelled wire for coils etc. (Dracht, lackisoliert, 4 Rollen. Gut geeignet für Spulen usw.).
- 85038: Sprocket Chain. Shown gold in models. (2 lengths)
- 85040: Screwed Rods. Also Axle with threaded ends on the packet.
- 85044: Tyres, Small, R1. (4 off)
- 85046: Tyres, Large, R3 (2 off)
- 85047: Gears. (3 off). Perhaps the traditional TRIX type as shown in #7 (centre bottom and the 2 perforated gears on either side), brass finished; but on the packet (below) not all the holes are shown, particularly the outer ring of 30 slots which allowed a 3:1 ratio with the 10 tooth wheel.
- 85048: Gears running at 90° (Kegelzahnräder). (3 off). A large and a small Gear are shown on the packet (below) and the large one has the same pattern of holes as the row of large, toothed 'wheels' in the #7 set. They are red and the smaller toothed wheels (the 4 above the large ones and the 2 at the bottom on either side of the large trad gear, are also red.

TRIX



85044
(58 5044 00)
Reifen, klein R 1,
4 Stück



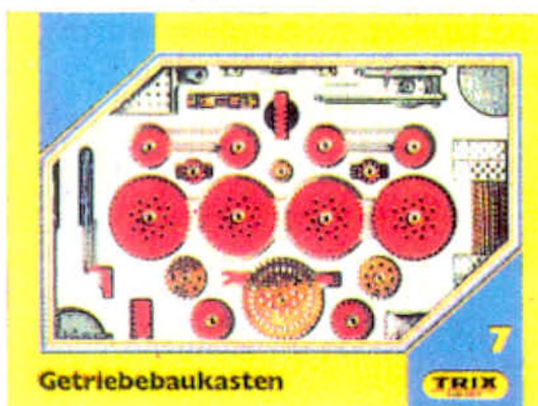
85046
(58 5046 00)
Reifen, groß R 3
2 Stück



85047
(58 5047 00)
Stirnzahnräder
3 Stück



85048
(58 5048 00)
Kegelzahn-
räder, 3 Stück



• 85049: Pulleys. (4 off). 2 sizes are shown on the packet, and the larger one is red in one of the models shown. (I have a Pulley which looks just like DR25/50 in MCS FB, it is of red plastic with a brass boss moulded into it).

There are other parts shown in the models and the sets which are not it seems included in the packets. For example the Flanged Plate, Hook, and Double-ended Spanner SCH4 shown in MCS FB. As far as can be seen all the parts are consistent with MCS except for the shortest A/G being called WS9. In the earlier German parts in MCS it is WS8 and that would be consistent with the standard TRIX practice of ending the designation for Strips and A/Gs with the number of holes in the centre of the 3 rows. Although it can't be confirmed that the WS9 here is the same as the earlier part, in an older German manual WS9 is used for the 8 centre hole part. In fact no A/G with anything other than the 8 centre holes is known and why the designation is irregular is a mystery - the English PN is A9, so the error, if error it be, is international. Every illustration of the part available (all postwar), except one, shows 8 centre holes. The exception is a Belgian leaflet from the late 1940s where there is a drawing of the part in a set, with 9 holes in its middle row and 10 in the outer ones.

The catalogue reference of the motor is 85041 and it is described as GM1; apart from the base it looks identical to that in MCS FB under the same reference. It runs on d.c. of up to 12v.

The UK agent for TRIX is Euro Toys and Models Ltd, Euro House, Llansantffraid. Powys. SY22 6BH, they do not stock the construction sets but whether they could get them to order is not known.

TUBEPLAC The parts shown in MCS are stated to be full size (MATÉRIEL GRANDEUR RÉELLE) but this meant that the hole spacing in the Plate #10 is different to that on the shorter sides of #11 for example. I had one or two other questions about the system so I asked Jean-Louis Figureau if he could help, and he replied as follows:

- All the parts are made of steel.
- The hole spacing in #10 is 16mm; in the other Plates (#11-14) it is 12, 42 and 100mm as appropriate; and in the Link #30 it is 16mm.

He also sent a photo of the No 1 bis set that he owns and except for #10 all the Plates are included painted both yellow and red, #10 is only in red.

PRIMUS BIG WHEEL OUTFIT The nuts and bolts in this set do not have the usual PRIMUS 5/32W thread; Roger Baker showed me a set recently, complete and shining in its box, and the o/d of the Bolts was .135"; I was not able to identify the thread but the pitch looked coarser than say 4BA. The Bolts were steel, brass plated, with .300" dia mushroomheads and were 3/8" long. The nuts were solid brass and square, .253" A/F, the same as standard PRIMUS nuts. The holes in the lugs of the Wheel Sections, in the Hubs and in the eyes of the Wire Stays (spokes) are large enough to admit normal bolts but presumably the slightly smaller ones were supplied to allow for tolerances in the length of the Stays and so forth.

In MCS the date for this set is given as 'probably about 1920's'; in the manual and on the Wheel Sections there is Patent No. 3479-1916, which prob'ly means that the date of the patent was 1916. 'Probably' because in MJ 6 p141: 'Up to 1915 Patent numbers commenced again at No 1 each year, but from 1916 onwards numbering was continuous. Hence up to 1915 it is necessary to quote the year also.', and from the examples given the numbering in 1916 started from 100,000. Perhaps the change didn't start until part way through 1916. The set certainly existed in 1920, it is included in a list of prices (from Roger Baker) dated 23rd Feb 1920.

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CONTRIBUTIONS. If possible please type these, single spaced, on one side of the page only, within a width of 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (170mm).

TRIX MATTERS Various more or less unconnected items have come to light and may be of interest.

TRIX ENGINEERING MANUALS. Many readers will be familiar with the TRIX Complete Engineering Manual, a largish volume of 116 pages slightly smaller than A4 size. On p4 a list of Editions shows that it was first published in May 1947, and the last one in the manual that I have is the 19th (Reprinted) in December 1958. Whether there are any differences between the various editions is not known to me but an earlier 17th Edition is identical to the 19th except that the publisher is different.

This manual also appeared in French and German versions and the cover of the French one is in MCS under TRIX (3), and the crane on it is identical to that of the English one illustrated in TRIX (1) of MCS (FB). The Illustrated Parts in the French manual are identical to those in the English version and have the same Part Nos, and the pages reproduced in MCS have the same page numbers and illustrations as the English one. The only difference, apart from the text being in French of course, is that the dimensions of the drawing on p107 (MCS, p5c) have been changed from inches into millimetres, and judging by the 'roundness' of the inch dimensions (with halves, quarters and eighths) compared with the slightly tortured French ones, it is a fair bet that this manual was originally produced in English. As an example, $\frac{1}{4}$ " becomes 6.35mm and this precision would have been quite unnecessary had the original schema been in metric. Pages 8 and 9 of the French manual (MCS pages 6 and 6a) show the range of Units A-G, as in the English version, and not the earlier 1, 1A, etc shown in a French TRIX leaflet.

Information on the German version comes courtesy of Peter Kessler who lent me his copy for comparison. The front cover is different with a photograph of an excavator made from TRIX parts, but it contains the same number of pages as the English one and all of them correspond in terms of subject matter. All the models are identical and the same photographs are used, but unlike the French variant the Units, although the same, are designated 1, 1A, etc - details are given below. There is no positive indication of the date of publication but under the Index there is a '56' on the left hand side of the page and 'Copyright vorbehalten' on the right. So just possibly this might indicate 1956 I suppose. The differences between the two manuals are as follows with comments as appropriate -

Page 5: The Foreword of the English version has been rewritten with no photograph of or reference to Bassett-Lowke.

Page 6: The Illustrated Parts are identical to the English ones with the rounded Hook and not the flat-sided one which is shown on Page 3/4 of TRIX (3) in MCS(FB). Most of the parts have different letters to denote them, the better to describe them in German,

so the English	U W ER V P S N G	GB	C SU B WM A E1 E2 E3 E4 E5 E6 E7 E8 E9 E10 E11 E12
become the German	D B E R L G M KR*	KR**	H U S AS W LP GL MS MK F2 KL F1 JS KW DS UR L5

Except for the E parts any Numbers following Letters of UK parts remain the same. * With 'a' after the number so G10 becomes KR10a. ** With 'b' so GB10 becomes KR10b. The Spanner SP is called Schlüssel with no abbreviation, and the CHAIN becomes Kette.

Pages 8, 9: The designations of the Units compared with their English counterparts are

English:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
German:	1	1A	1B	1D	Elektro	11	Gummireifen 1C

The English Units are colour coded but no colours are mentioned for the German ones. Page 9 has been rearranged to make room for another item, a Packet SM 50 which contains 24 Nuts (M1) and 24 Bolts (S1). Also the photo of the Tyres is different and the tread shown looks crosswise rather the radial pattern on the Tyres that I have seen. A photocopy of these two items is shown opposite.

Pages 10, 11: The numbers of the Standard Construction Details are prefixed by Gf (Grundformen) instead of SCD.

Page 12: Three motors are shown, the d.c. 2050, the a.c./d.c. 2060 and the clockwork 2170. Details are given later. Since all the illustrations of the models are identical to the English ones neither the 2060 nor the 2071 are used in them. The 2050 looks exactly the same as the 2051 in the models.

Page 78: The photographs of the Standard Electrical Circuits are replaced by line drawings and each is given a number (1-7) in the text instead of being labelled SEC 1 to SEC 7.

Pages 79, 82, 87: The circuit diagrams have been redrawn with improvements in some cases.

Page 107: The drawings of the cab roof and crane chassis floor have been redrawn and, as in the French version, dimensions are given in millimetres. They are not exactly the same though and again their complexity (the equivalent to $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", a non-critical dimension, is 139.8mm; it is 140 in the French version) makes it fairly sure that the English manual came first. This is also evident from the Parts List for each model where the parts are listed in the order used in the English version but because

the Part Nos have been changed they are no longer in alphabetical order.

SUMMARY OF MANUALS

#Name: THE TRIX UNIT SYSTEM. THE TRIX complete ENGINEERING MANUAL #Details of maker: 17th Edition published by TRIX LTD., 11, OLD BURLINGHAM STREET, LONDON, W.1. 19th Edition published by DUFAY LIMITED (Sole manufacturers and distributors of Trix products), P.&O. HOUSE, 14-16 COCKSPUR STREET, LONDON S.W.1 #Dates &/or Ref Nos: 17th Ed, Dec 1955; 19th Ed (Reprinted), Dec 1958. Both have 10M/4045/655 and Printed by HARRISON AND SONS, LTD., ST. MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON on p114. #Page size: 214x280mm deep. #No of pages: 116 including covers. Pages 1-3, 6, 10-11, 114-116 unnumbered. #Language: English. #Printing: Halftone photographs of models. Cover has a black, non-TRIX crane on fawn ground shaded red on lower half. Lettering in black, red, fawn. #Page Nos of Parts List & highest PN: Parts shown on p6, again on 8,9. Motor 2051 on p12. Parts not numbered in sequence. #Page Nos of Set Contents & highest PN: 8,9 for Units A,B,C,D,E,F. #Sets covered: None. Models shown need various combinations of Units. #No of models for each set: 69 in all (27, 11, 9, 18, 4 in Parts 1 to 5, see below). #Name, Model No, Page No of first & last model of each set: The manual has 5 Parts; most models are not numbered. PART ONE. TO START YOU BUILDING: 90° ANGLE, 1, 14. TWIN-ENGINE MONOPLANE, -, 34. PART TWO. ADVANCED MODELS: SEWING MACHINE, -, 38. WINDMILL PUMP, - 59. PART THREE. GEARS: SPEEDOMETER, -, 62. QUEEN MARY TRAILER, -, 74. PART FOUR. UNIT E - ELECTRICAL PARTS: Bell, -, 80. BREAKDOWN LORRY, -, 94. PART FIVE. MASTER MODELS: PORTABLE JIB CRANE, -, 98. PENDULUM CLOCK (SELF WINDING), -, 109. #Other notes: None.

#Name: DAS TRIX BAUKASTEN SYSTEM. ANLEITUNGSBUCH FÜR DEN TRIX-INGENIEUR #Details of maker: Herausgeber: TRIX VEREINIGTE SPIELWAREN-FABRIKEN ERNST VOELK K. G., NÜRNBERG, Dammstraße 5-11. #Dates &/or Ref Nos: Kern Druckerei Nürnberg, on back cover. There is '56' followed by 'Copyright vorbehalten' after the Index on p4. #Page size: 208x280mm deep. #No of pages: 116 including covers. No numbers on pages 1-3, 6, 10-11, 115-116. #Language: German. #Printing: Halftone photographs of models. Cover has black TRIX excavator (which extends onto back cover) on red (left side) & fawn ground. Lettering in black, red, fawn. #Page Nos of Parts List & highest PN: Parts shown on p6, again on 8,9. Motors 2050, 2060, 2170 on p12. Parts not numbered in sequence. #Page Nos of Set Contents & highest PN: 8,9 for Units 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, Elektro 11, Gummireifen (tyres), SM 50 (nuts & bolts). #Sets covered: None. Models shown need various combinations of Units. #No of models for each set: 69 in all (27, 11, 9, 18, 4 in Parts 1 to 5, see below). #Name, Model No, Page No of first & last model of Each set: The manual has 5 Parts; most models are not numbered. Teil I. Modelle für den Anfänger: 90°-Winkel, 1, 14. Zweimotoriges Flugzeug, -, 34. Teil II. Modelle für Fortgeschrittene: Nähmaschine, -, 38. Windturbine mit Pumpwerk, -, 59. Teil III. Getriebe: Geschwindigkeitsmesser, -, 62. Sattelschlepper, -, 74. Teil IV. TRIX-Elektro: Klingel, -, 80. Abschlepp-Kranwagen, -, 94. Teil V. Meistermodelle: Dreibock-Schwenkkran, -, 98. Pendeluhr (mit Selbstaufzug), -, 109. #Other notes: Models identical to English version.

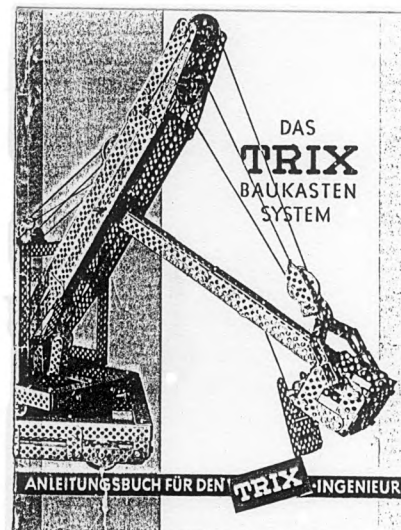
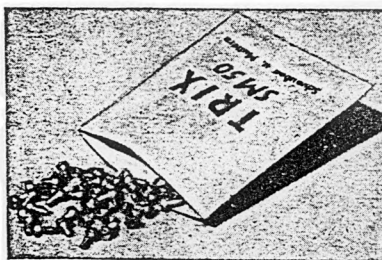
SM 50 — Diese Packung enthält 24 Schrauben S 1 und 24 Muttern M1.



Gummireifen — Verseht eure Modelle — Wagen, Luftfahrzeuge, Lastwagen usw. mit TRIX-Gummireifen, diese tragen stark zur Natürlichkeit bei.

Enthält die folgenden 4 Teile:

Gummireifen klein	2 Stück
Gummireifen groß	2 Stück



TRIX MOTORS. In the German version of the Engineering Manual the 3 motors illustrated add a little to the information on TRIX motors in OSN 4, p52. The d.c. 2050 was mentioned there but with no details - the casing code is 0, that is uncased, the base is Type 2, and of course it would have been sold in Germany. It is stated to operate on 4-8 volts. The second motor, No 2060, is for a.c./d.c. (8-12 or 6-8 volts respectively), the casing is again 0 and the base again 2. The third motor, the clockwork 2170, is as listed in OSN 4 for Belgium/Holland. The illustrations of the motors in the Manual are quite good so those of the 2060 and 2071 are reproduced at the end of this piece, enlarged slightly. 'a' and 'b' of the 2060 are the terminals.

[cont. >]

cribed above]

- TRIX Ltd, 5 Conduit Street, London W1. [quoted in MCS(FB), dating uncertain relative to the others]
- TRIX Information Bureau, 91 Regent Street, London W1. [from several small TRIX manuals, in one this address had a printed line through it and the next address was printed below]
- TRIX Ltd, 11 Old Burlington Street, London W1. [in Electrical Engineering Manual, 1st Edition, Aug 1949; and Engineering Manual, 17th Edition, Dec 1955]
- DUFAY Ltd (sole manufacturers and distributors of TRIX products), P. & O. House, 14-16 Cockspur Street, London SW1. [in 19th Edition (reprinted) of Engineering Manual, Dec 1958]
- TRIX, 310 Summer Lane, Birmingham 19. [from EXTRA-PAKS leaflet, see below, and, as the address for TRIX Construction Sets, on the Instruction Sheet in the Set 2 described above]
- BRITISH TRIX Ltd. [name on the Junior Mechanix set above, with the Courtaulds label over the address]

EXTRA-PAKS. As already mentioned these were from the Summer Lane era and the Instruction Leaflet from the Set 2 mentions the extra 'blue-prints' which were also available, see below. The details which follow have been reproduced from a leaflet contained in an Extra-Pak, slightly compressed to fit across the page; also in the leaflet is a photo of all the TRIX parts, an ad for the 2051 motor, and instructions for building a Windmill Pump.

TRIX

EXTRA - PAKS

These Extra-paks are used in conjunction with the Trix Construction Sets, and the models on which they are used are fully illustrated and described in the four different sets of assembly blue-prints which can be obtained.

Set No. 1/13/H ... 13 simple models.

Set No. 2/11/H ... 11 more advanced models.

Set No. 3/15/H ... 15 very advanced models.

Set No. 4/9/S ... 9 electric battery-operated models.

Leaflet SCD illustrates 50 Standard Construction Details, including Double Disc Wheels; Crank and Pulleys; Piston and Cylinder; Hoist Mechanisms, etc. In addition to illustrating and describing the famous Trix Permag Electric Motor No. 2051.

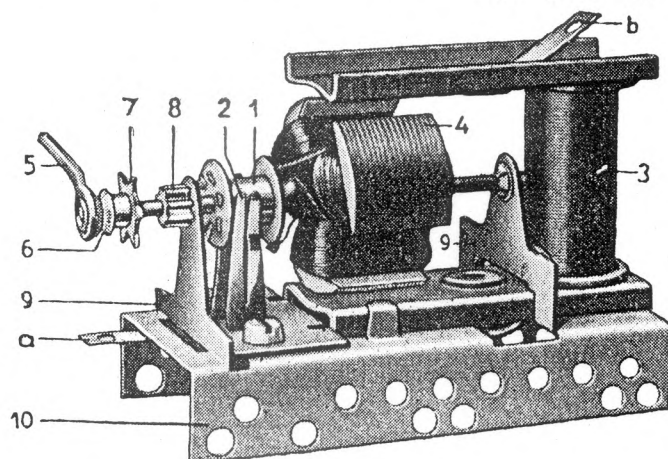
Any two of the above will be sent post free on receipt of 1s. stamps, or the whole set of 5 will be sent for 2s. 6d.

TRIX

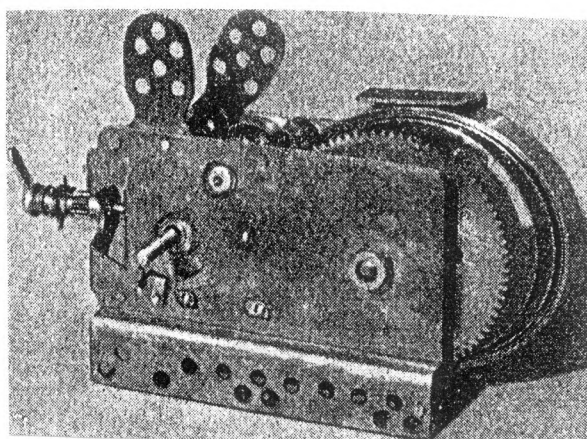
310 SUMMER LANE, BIRMINGHAM 19

Patent Nos. 363547, 413963, 421924, 539851 and patented abroad

Part No.	Description	No. Used per Pak	Part No.	Description	No. Used per Pak
EXTRA-PAK No. 11			EXTRA-PAK No. 1		
F5	Flat Strip ...	8	P49	Pierced Disc ...	2
F17	Flat Strip ...	4	S87	Spindle ...	1
EXTRA-PAK No. 12			SU1	'U' Piece ...	2
F9	Flat Strip ...	10	SU2	'U' Piece ...	2
F13	Flat Strip ...	3	U3	'U' Piece ...	2
EXTRA-PAK No. 13			V35	Dished Pulley ...	2
B2	Grub-Screw ...	4	EXTRA-PAK No. 2		
C1	Crane Hook ...	1	A9	Angle Piece ...	2
E5	Brass Strip ...	1	E12	Lamp Holder ...	1
E8	Fibre Insulator ...	2	S87	Spindle ...	1
ER1	Eccentric Washer ...	2	V35	Dished Pulley ...	2
N2	Connecting Nut ...	1	EXTRA-PAK No. 3		
P29	Pierced Disc ...	3	A1	Angle Piece ...	1
S25	Spindle ...	2	B1	Bolt ...	12
S55	Spindle ...	6	F5	Flat Strip ...	2
S120	Spindle ...	1	N1	Nut ...	24
W16	Washer — Large ...	4	U1	'U' Piece ...	1
EXTRA-PAK No. 14			U2	'U' Piece ...	2
G10	Gear Wheel ...	1	W10	Washer — Small ...	1
G20	Gear Wheel ...	1	EXTRA-PAK No. 4		
GB10	Gear Wheel with Boss ...	2	A18	Angle Piece ...	1
GB20	Gear Wheel with Boss ...	1	E6	Contact Spring ...	4
GB40	Gear Wheel with Boss ...	1	E7	Commutator Brush ...	2
EXTRA-PAK No. 15			E8	Fibre Insulator ...	2
CH	Chain ...	1	E10	Connecting Coil ...	2
EXTRA-PAK No. 16			W10	Washer — Small ...	4
U1	'U' Piece ...	4	EXTRA-PAK No. 5		
U2	'U' Piece ...	4	A1	Angle Piece ...	1
U3	'U' Piece ...	2	A18	Angle Piece ...	1
V35	Dished Pulley ...	4	E4	Core ...	1
EXTRA-PAK No. 17			E5	Brass Strip ...	1
35	Tyre — Small ...	2	F5	Flat Strip ...	2
EXTRA-PAK No. 18			F9	Flat Strip ...	2
49	Tyre — Large ...	2	EXTRA-PAK No. 6		
EXTRA-PAK No. 19			A27	Angle Piece ...	2
B1	Bolt ...	24	EXTRA-PAK No. 7		
N1	Nut ...	36	E3	Bobbin ...	1
EXTRA-PAK No. 20			EXTRA-PAK No. 8		
A1	Angle Piece ...	5	B1	Bolt ...	24
A18	Angle Piece ...	2	E11	Commutator ...	2
EXTRA-PAK No. 21			ER1	Eccentric Washer ...	2
A9	Angle Piece ...	2	P29	Pierced Disc ...	2
SU1	'U' Piece ...	2	S25	Spindle ...	2
SU2	'U' Piece ...	2	EXTRA-PAK No. 9		
S87	Spindle ...	2	E2	Bell ...	1
EXTRA-PAK No. 22			E9	Crank Axle ...	1
E1	Base Plate ...	1	N1	Nut ...	24
E4	Core ...	1	EXTRA-PAK No. 10		
E6	Contact Spring ...	2	DS	Double-Ended Spanner ...	1
E10	Connecting Coil ...	1	SD	Screwdriver ...	1
W10	Washer — Small ...	1	SP	Spanner ...	2
EXTRA-PAK No. 23					
P49	Pierced Disc ...	2			
WM	Worm ...	2			



Wechselstrom-Motor 2060



Uhrwerkmotor 2170

QUERIES.

1. In OSN 2 and 3 it was stated that the thread of British TRIX is 4BA and certainly all the threaded parts commonly found have this thread; however Peter Page has some TRIX which he is 99% sure is prewar British, and the thread is much coarser than 4BA, he thinks it is probably the 3.5x.8mm referred to in OSN 2, p17. In the next issue will be some information on old Belgian threads sent by Gaston Marette, and this includes one with a diameter of 3.5mm and 32tpi. The equivalent pitch is .794mm so if the Belgian standard was the same as that used in other continental countries it is just possible that the TRIX thread is the bastard 3.5mmx32tpi.

11. Thanks to a number of readers who wrote explaining what VEB means (OSN 6, p113). Geoff Davison's letter arrived first saying 'VEB stands for Volkseigener Betrieb, which means a business belonging to the people. It was used in the former DDR (GDR) for what we would call nationalised industries; as the Treuhandanstalt gradually privatises these firms, the use of the term will of course gradually die out.'

12. Several readers were also good enough to send the info on PRIMUS prices requested in the last issue, p113. Enough is to hand to allow one or two tentative conclusions to be drawn, it is hoped in OSN 8. but if anything new turns up please send it along.

13. Back to TRIX, Geoff Wright and others have asked if anyone knows how TRIX hole spacing came to be what it is. Although variations do occur, typically the spacing along strips is between 7.810mm and 7.815, giving a diagonal spacing of around 11.05mm. Converting these figures to inches doesn't improve their roundness. One number is no doubt as good as any other, but few if any OS venture beyond one decimal place in their nominal spacing, unless of course straightforward fractions of an inch are used. So why 7.81? for TRIX?

14. Has anyone come across ALCON as an OS name? I thought I had but I now can't find it in the MCS Index or anywhere else. I was looking for it because I came across an advert for it in the MM of 12/49; one set was on sale at 7/9 'containing over 1000 pieces', and there is an illustration of a skeletal 'Suspension Bridge, 2ft.4in. long'. ALCON conjures up 'aluminium' and 'construction' in my mind but there is no mention in the ad of the material used or how the different elements were joined together. A thousand parts for 7/9 sounds like good value when a No 1 Dinky Builder set, advertised in the same MM, was 10/6. So maybe the parts were wooden or even plastic, perhaps glued together. There were two further mentions of ALCON in MM, in Gamages' ads in 1951, where it was said to be 'Based on an entirely original idea with only seven basic components.'

STOKYS PARTS, 1989. The last Illustrated Parts List I had was No 40 from 1981 but last December Harry Mariën sent me one, not numbered, dated 1989, and I understand that when it was sent, it was still current. There is no List of Parts in MCS (p3), just an illustration of some of them, so I'll compare the new List with the No 40. Quite apart from a few parts being deleted and a fair number added, there have been two major changes since 1981, the PNs have been changed and the screw thread, which was 5/32"BSW, is now M4. The new PNs start with a letter which is sometimes the initial letter of the part in question, for example Z for Zahnrad (gear, everything is in German), followed by a two figure number; fortunately both the old and new numbers are given.

To avoid confusion between parts with the old and parts with the new thread, it is stated that bosses tapped M4 are silver colour and those with BSW are yellow (brass I suppose); also that metric Bolts are black and the 5/32" ones are yellow. Nuts are not mentioned but in the List both the M4 and 5/32" variety are included, but only M4 Bolts. Most of the other threaded parts are noted as M4 but in two cases (Threaded Pins) versions with both threads are shown, and sometimes eg the Coupling, no thread is mentioned.

Deletions since 1981 are the transparent version of the Plastic Flexible Plate; the separate parts of the Universal Coupling; the large diameter 3-hole Collar; the Buffer; the Potter's Wheel and Clay; the Meccanograph (if STOKYS will forgive the word) Table and Paper for it; and the two special Brackets, #646 and 648. The deleted parts that are not illustrated in MCS are shown below.

There are over 50 additions and in outline these are:

- 78-hole versions of the standard, Z, and U section A/G.
- 6 extra lengths of the 4-hole wide Perforated Plate, up to 78-hole long.
- 6 lengths of 5-hole wide Perforated Plate from 7 to 78-hole.
- Flat Girders (like MECCANO not 2-hole wide Strips) in 19 lengths from 1 to 78-hole.
- A Wheel with wide Tyre, 47mm dia o/a; and 6 Wheels with large tyres (Ballonräder), diameters from 50 to 120mm.
- Misc items - a 22-hole Rack; what looks like a Geared Roller/Ball Bearing, 115mm dia; different lengths of Screwed Rod and Bands; bulb holders and a range of coloured bulbs. holders.

bullet 30 yards.' He added, as if to appease parents, 'Fine for practicing in the garden.' However, the Gilbert Nurses Outfit was not available here - presumably British lads just had to be more resilient than their peers in the U.S.A.

David has also tracked down the French patent for **AJUSTO** (12/315): it turned out to be No.750927 and not the number on the Manual, which had nothing to do with toys. The date of application was 17 February 1933 and it was in the name of Robert Tassel, resident of Eure (to the east of Paris). Of the various clips shown in OSN 12, only types A and B are shown, but an alternative form of A is included (Fig. 3), and also clips to unite various sections other than semi-circular, rectangular for example (Fig.12). A method of joining solid rods is also given (Figs.15-17) - one rod is held in the clip l, which engages in the slot in the thin metal cap o, whose arms are bent down over the other rod and are held by the spring clip q.

And as a footnote, the TUPO ball and socket joints (12/307) reminded David of a 1927 patent No.302303, classified under 'constructional toys, figures'. The claim is 'A model of chocolate representing a human or animal figure comprising two or more parts resting one upon the other without positive engagement, the contacting surfaces being shaped so as to establish a ball and socket joint. The moulded parts may be hollow and weighted at the base by an extra thickness of chocolate.' In David's words, a very rare and short-life construction system.



4. Josep Bernal sent a copy of the cover of a 1921 **STABIL** Manual for Sets 49-52 in Spanish. It is basically the then normal STABIL standard with the righthand panel like the DEN LILLE INGENIØR one in 7/157 and on the left, „Stabil“ and the text details in Spanish.

5. John Hanby wrote that he had recently acquired a **JUNEERO Engineer's Set** (see 8/178, 9/216) and that it is almost certain that it was originally bought at Xmas 1940. The metal Discs in it were 2.50" and 1.75" dia, different to the postwar ones described in OSN 8, and those in my Engineers' Set were different again at 2.13" and 1.68". All were the same thickness.

6. Don Redmond has discovered that at least from 1936 to sometime in the 1960s, the major occupant of the address given for **THE ENGINEER** (12/328) was Armstrong Bros., machinists (Armstrong Bros. Engineering from about 1945 on). He also notes that the Screwdriver shown may have been a commercial, bought in item, and is similar to the **AMERICAN MODEL BUILDER** one, and to those supplied with White sewing machines ca.1919.

He also noted a new OS name, **AIMANTO**, Lot No.21 in a Jean Estève Objets list.

In a later letter Don wrote that in the *Canadian Encyclopedia* under *Toys*, it is said that the **Manual Construction Co.** and the **Reliance Toy Co.** both made steel construction sets. Reliance is one of the big firms in Canadian toys but so far no details about Manual are available. For **STRUCTOMODE** the same article gives the dates 1920-29 under Canadian Toys Ltd. [A Canadian Toys manual has a Price List dated 1918 in it. The maker shown in another manual is Structomode Ltd., again of Hamilton, and fewer

sets are listed, 00 to 3 against 0 to 6 plus 1M and 2M - the prices of corresponding sets are higher, \$6 for a #3 against \$4. The Little Hustler motor and the distinctive Braced Girders are no longer in the Parts List although the manual cover shows some of the latter but with **MECCANO** cutouts. The right-hand boy on the cover is wearing a jumper with a 'diced band' around the bottom, instead of that rather fancy jacket (see MCS). The Windmill Sail shown is also **MECCANO**-like with an arm, 6 bumps and rectangular holes, instead of the round holes in the Canadian Toys manual. Mainly because of the jumper I'm inclined to think that Structomode Ltd. came after Canadian Toys.]



7. Roger Baker bought a German set called **MECANIC** recently with parts that seem the same as those for the German **MEKANIK** in MCS. [In MCS Part 5 there's a Swedish **MECANIC** which is virtually the same as their **MEKANIK** - does anyone know anything of the change from 'Cs' to 'Ks' or vice-versa?]

8. Kendrick Bisset wrote that he has been told that the **MODELIT** Motor No.10 (12/327) was a Weeden product with the nameplate changed; also that he remembers seeing an ad for a motor similar to the one in the Loom (12/332), and it may have been a 'Little Hustler'.

On differences between similar parts from different systems he has found that the small hole for cord in old **MECCANO** Crank Handles is 1½" from the end, while **AMB** holes are 1½" from the bend.

9. Keith Cameron wonders at the number and variety of Other Systems, and the originality of some, but notes that the survivors, like **BRAL**, **TEMSEI** and **MÄRKLIN**, are all cousins of **MECCANO**, and share its greater adaptability and appeal.

He also comments on the difficulties of making sense of the various 'Groupes', Outfits and 'Albums' within **MULTIMOTEUR** (12/304), and hopes that someone who knows the system will kindly explain all. [Jeannot Buteux's comments above are a great help and perhaps later he will be able to give more details, for example the meaning of the titles of the different Groupes, and their scope.]

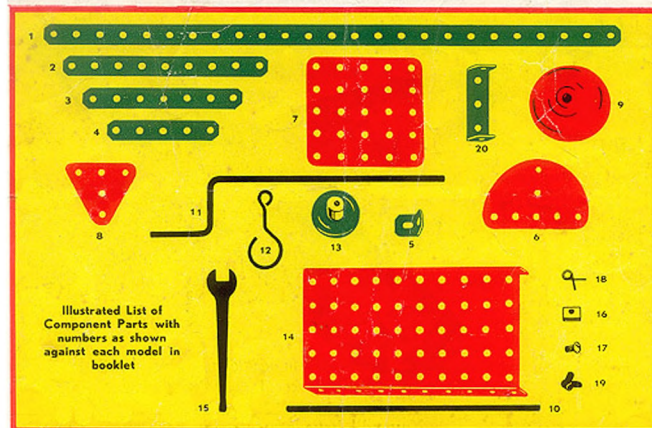
10. On **JUNIOR MECHANIC** (12/327), Al Sternagle wrote that he has a smaller #101 set in a 11½"×8¼" box, and thinks that it dates from the 1950s. As with the 201 there were no tools or manual with it, but 6 models are shown on the lid. The thread is 5-40 with the same length Bolts as in the 201, and the Nuts are 5/16" A/F and 1/16" thick. The thread on the end of the Crank Handle is 11/16" long.

11. Tony Matthewman, in reply to a question, said that **TRIX** Angle Girders were not introduced until after WW2, and that Continental ones were, and are, steel, and not aluminium as in the UK. He also mentioned that a German mail order house called *Quelle* has for several years sold 3 of the current **TRIX** sets under the name **QUELLE GOOD PLAY**, but 'TRIX' is also on the box lids in small letters.

CORRECTION On **Gilbert MECCANO**, several readers wrote to point out that the disc and vee of the 1" Pulley shown towards the bottom of 12/319 are formed, perhaps spun, from one piece and not two as shown. Also Kendrick Bisset added that the Pulley was at one time a standard **ERECTOR** part.

New System - METALCRAFT Chas Shrubsole came across the back page of a manual in Canada and kindly send a copy (opposite) via Don Redmond. That is all that's known of this system, but apart from there being no A/G, the page is virtually identical to the back cover of the PIONEER manual, as shown in MCS. The pages are the same size, and the layout of the parts and the PNs are the same; there are the same strips on either side of *MODELS* under the name, and the same 'Designed and printed in Great Britain' underneath. The PIONEER heading is shown opposite above the METALCRAFT page. So it must be likely that the two systems were made by the same manufacturer. It isn't known for sure who made PIONEER but because of the obvious resemblance of the parts to VOGUE, it may have been Vogue Playthings Ltd. of Melton Mowbray. Whether METALCRAFT was intended for the Canadian market isn't of course known. Looking at the PIONEER and METALCRAFT back covers it does look as if the latter came first and the 11h A/G was squeezed in afterwards. Of the 25 models in the PIONEER Manual, this part is used in 8 of the last 11. A new MCS Sheet will be prepared for METALCRAFT later, in case in the meantime anyone comes up with anything else on it. Metalcraft Corp. was the

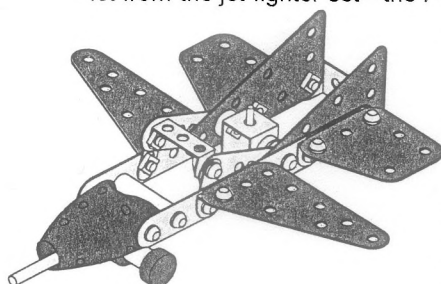
PIONEER MODELS METALCRAFT MODELS



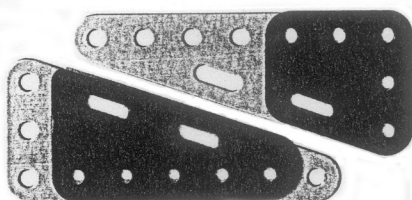
Designed and printed in Great Britain.

name of the American company that made METALCRAFT aircraft and train constructional sets, and so the new system will be listed as METALCRAFT [1].

THE STEEL TEC F-18 FIGHTER 'SK' SET In OSN 12/323 I mention the various SK sets shown on the Leaflet for the Motorcycle. Chas Shrubsole has now kindly sent the Leaflet from the jet fighter set - the *F-18 FIGHTER WITH SPRING SUSPENSION* - and again it's labelled item #7080, © 1993. It contains 78 parts and there are one or two points of interest.



F-18 FIGHTER WITH SPRING SUSPENSION



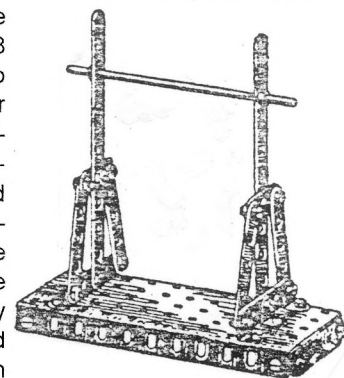
The nose is a 5*3 hole blue Plastic Plate curved around and fastened underneath by a N&B. The latter also carries a Rod and Strip Connector which holds the Rod that comes out of the nose. The Triangular Plates, all red, are shown with different hole configurations in the different illustrations in the Leaflet, but the actual ones are as shown opposite, superimposed on the 3*7h MECCANO part. Pairs of black Wheels, CR and GP, push onto axles that pass through the yellow front and rear undercarriage members, CT and CA. The rear unit is shown with a Spring, AS, but it seems not to do anything because the Axle HD passes through the bottom (round) holes in the Double Bracket, M. But that's odd too because the other parts M are 1*2*1h DAS (plus a centre hole) and there's no Double Bracket shown in the Set Contents. One of the DAS, M, can be seen over the cockpit and it looks as if it ought to be the NS style, but in the set it's of normal width.

QUERIES 1 and 13. On the TRIX thread, from 9/224, and the hole spacing, from 7/166. Tony Matthewman kindly sent copies of postwar UK official workshop drawings for a Strip and an A/G, and the pitch of the holes is shown as .307", both lengthways and crossways. That works out at 7.798mm and so probably the original German dimension was 7.8mm. Why 7.8? Tony suggested that it might be the minimum value to ensure that the Nuts in the different holes didn't interfere with one another, and in fact if all the holes in the outside rows have N&B in them there is just room for the Nuts to turn. The centre holes are all free but with no room for a Nut or Bolt in any of them.

So if the idea was to have the Strips as small as possible given the size of the Nuts, why that size of Nut? Perhaps because it was the standard for whatever thread was originally used. But we don't know exactly what thread that was; its diameter was probably 3.5mm or .138", and the pitch was .8mm or, almost the same, 32tpi. The Belgian No.19 thread (OSN 8/203) might fit the bill but would a German firm have used a Belgian thread? Can anyone suggest an equivalent German or Continental thread, now obsolete.

Another point from the drawings, the hole size is .145", very close to 3.7mm, the probable German diameter.

22. Richard Symonds kindly sent a copy of the 2 panel model leaflet for Australian CONSTRUCTO, with illustrations that look just like the MCS entry. Most of its 18 simple models appear to be direct copies of prewar MECCANO manual models, and include all 4 patterns of 5½*2½" Flanged Plate. But I don't recognise two or three of the models and they have Flanged Plates with only the two long flanges, and with elongated holes in them. For example in the Horizontal Bar opposite.



HORIZONTAL BAR

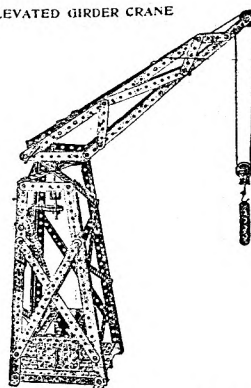
So I'd like to know what the CONSTRUCTO Flanged Plate, and the other parts, were really like.

Instruction Leaflet has 4 panels and models are shown on 6 sides: with #10 models, 1-22, from LAWN MOWER to MONOPLANE (though #12 & #14 are wrongly numbered 11 & 3), and 10 for Set 25, from #23 HAND TRUCK to #32 TABLE. Some of the models are in the Monroe manual and some not. One of the other sides is an intro; the other shows a selection of more advanced models made from larger sets, which include parts not in the Monroe manual, and the 26 Letters of the Alphabet. These are made from special 50c & \$1 Sets, with the slogan 'Builds Letters, Spells Words, Makes Real Signs'.

Richard Symonds has contributed a copy of a #10 Leaflet, probably later still, with 4 panels of about the same (4¼"×5½" deep) size. On 5 sides are 22 #10 models, as in George's, but in a different order, from #1 TABOURETTE to #22 MONOPLANE. The other 3 sides are the intro above, a wider range of models built from the larger sets, and the Alphabet ad but with the Letters in random order from L to R.

Richard also sent a copy of what is probably a label from inside a later #2 Set, which shows the Contents, and the layout of the parts in the box. The Flanged Sector Plate has the 2 extra diagonal slotted holes, as in MCS, and the small parts are in 2 packet (or card boxes) with M B and other wording on their lids. Also shown as a plug for the #2A Set, is the Crane opposite, with a chain drive to slew the jib.

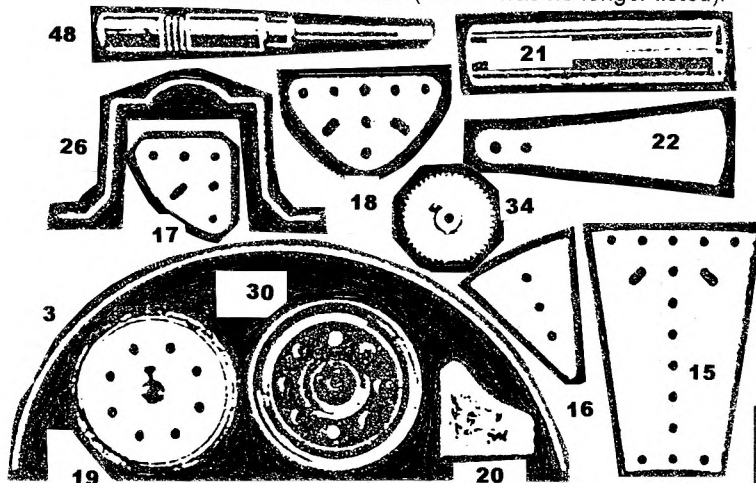
ELEVATED GIRDER CRANE



Between the Monroe manual and the Contents list in MCS, 20 new parts had been introduced, some of them quite specialised. They are all described below and again a PN indicates that the part is illustrated. (By this time most of the PNs had been changed.)

- Structural parts: a Flat Bracket (called a 1" Strip but with 1 round and 1 elongated hole); a Corner Batten Plate and T Batten Plate (#17, #18), in which the slot is neither ½" nor 1" from the corner hole; a V Plate (#16) which with only the 3 holes shown would seem to be of limited usefulness; and a circular Base Plate (#19) of about 3" Ø which appears to be flanged, but even in the largest set only one was included. There are also 3 Strips ready formed, the 12½" (#3) & 5½" Round Strips, and the Radiator Bent Strips (#26) which looks to be 15h long. As already noted the Flanged Sector Plate (#15) has the 2 diagonal slotted holes.

- Circular parts: a 1½" Pulley & 1½" Gear (#34), neither of which have any holes in the face; and a 3" Wheel (#30) with a formed rim of some sort, and a formed centre of perhaps 1" Ø - a tapped boss can't be seen but perhaps it's on the inside. Also 1" & 8" Axles (the 3" was no longer listed).



- Special parts: a Rudder (#20) which may have holes in it that can't be seen in the poor illustration; a Propeller Blade (#22) which scales at 4" long; and a 4" long Tube

(#21) of about 1" Ø, with no holes visible and of purpose unknown.

- A 'Wood Screw Driver' (#48); a 1" Spring, tension probably; and ½" Bolts (the shorter ones are listed as ⅝").

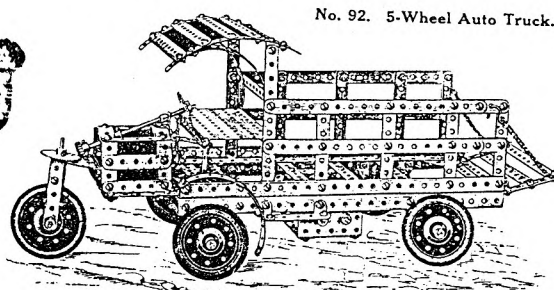
Mention is made in MCS of a 4½v motor, said to be similar to the 1914 ERECTOR one, and this may be the 'Speeder' which is in the ad on MCS p7, and is referred to in the #25 Leaflet above as 'a Wonder. Just the Thing for Running Your Models'.

Sets 10-3 didn't change a great deal between the time of the Monroe manual and the Contents in MCS, and #10, 20 and 25 didn't change at all. (In passing I was amused to note that the only difference between a #10 and a #20 was 2x2½" Strips and 2 N&B.) Minor changes were made to #50-#2, including one or two of the new parts. These carried over to the #3, and as well there were 12 of the Batten Plates and 2 Flat Brackets, but 14 fewer Strips, 6 fewer Angle Brackets and 20 fewer N&B. The new outfits 4, 5 & 6 had 6, 10 & 14 A/Gs respectively, and 175, 210 & 260 N&B. The parts in the #6 included 9 Flanged Plates, 5 of the 3" Wheels, 3 Pinions, and 2 of 1½" Gears.

4 straightforward but quite attractive #6 models are shown in MCS, including the Truck below. As well as its unusual steering, there's mention of a gearbox of some sort, although with the number of gears in the set, it can't have been very elaborate. The Radiator Strips are used at the front and rear of the engine compartment.



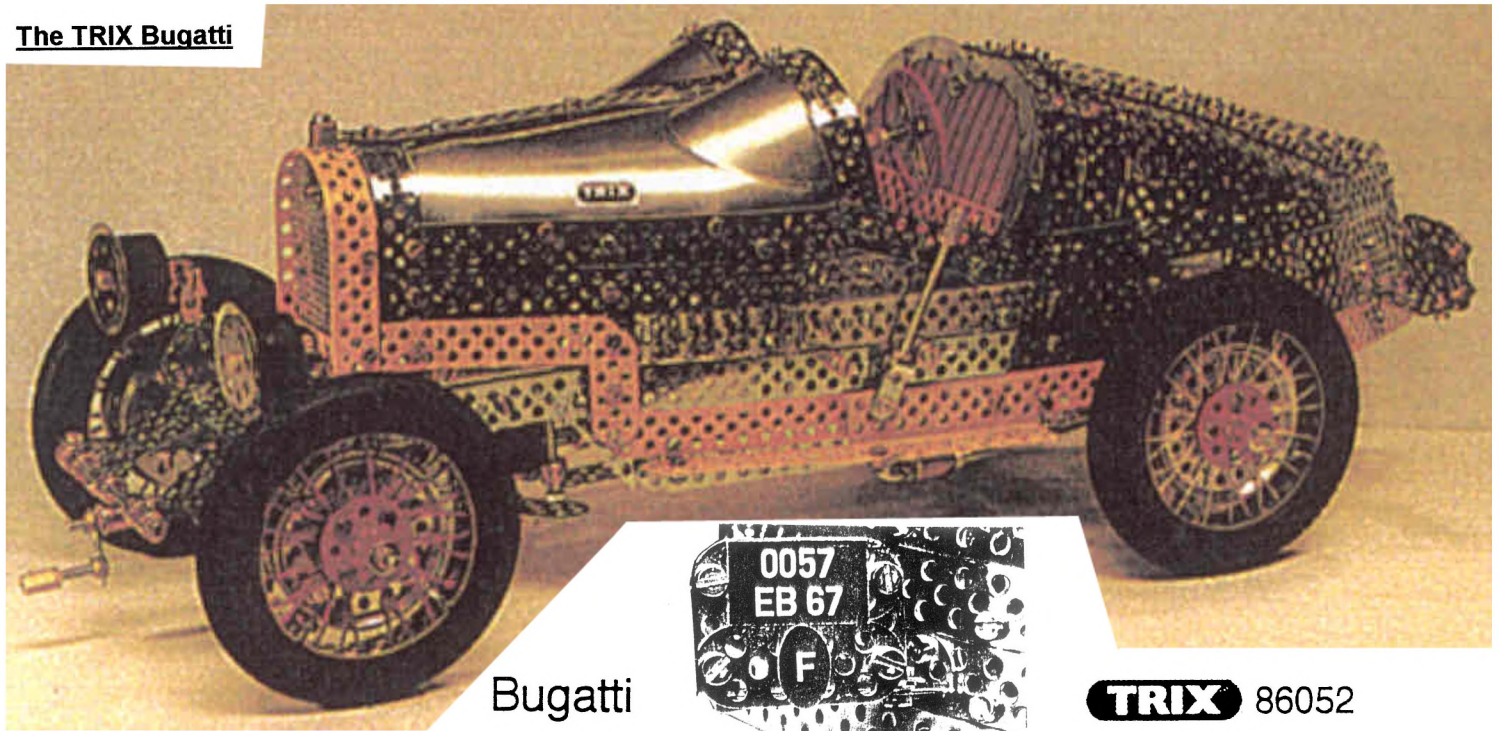
No. 92. 5-Wheel Auto Truck.



For gear box construction see Page 2, Fig. 13. Fork of front wheel uses a single bent strip.

The name of M B's manufacturer isn't given on any of its products, just references to The Master Builder at 468 Broadway, New York City. Kendrick pointed out that a logo (above left) looks like an acorn, and is often shown on M B leaflets, labels, etc, with the wording 'M.F.G. CO. NY.' in it. He suggests checking to see if an Acorn Manufacturing Co. ever existed. I also have a note that M B was made by M. Gropper & Sons but I don't know where it came from. Kendrick also noted that there are similarities between M B and ENGINEERO (another old U.S. system that has Strips with diamond shaped holes and V notches in the sides between each pair of holes), and wondered if M B became ENGINEERO, possibly to avoid any risk of infringing Hornby's patent, or simply to give it a more distinctive appearance. Some of the parts in the simple models shown in MCS look alike, such as the 5×4 Flanged Plate and the 4-hole Wheel Disc, and apart from that the numbering of the smaller sets is similar, and so are some of the models. On the rather odd numbering of the sets, Kendrick noticed that the M B Price List in MCS shows that through #3, the set's number is its price in cents, or dollars for the #1 upwards. ENGINEERO used a similar system but stayed with cents, right through to #500 at \$5. It can't have easy selling a #1 M B set when the one smaller was a #50. The Engineero Co.'s address was 369 Broadway, New York City.

Märklin buys Trix News from Tony Matthewman that Märklin bought Trix last November. It is understood that constructional sets will continue to be produced, the present range perhaps, and possibly plus some of the small Unit packs that were so successful years ago.



Bugatti

TRIX 86052

During 1997 Trix produced a limited edition of 333 sets to build a 20" long Bugatti. These notes are based on a copy of the manual that Thomas Morzinck kindly sent, together with some accompanying remarks.

The Set (#86052) cost DM 500 and was packed in a well finished wooden box, 27*21*62cm, large enough to take the completed model. The main mechanical features are steering with Ackermann geometry, leaf springs front and rear, and a differential. An electric motor with built-in gear reduction (Fa. Conrad 240745-44), powers the model, with 2 Universals in the propeller shaft drive to the diff. The appearance is enhanced with imitation wire wheels and special Tyres, aluminium bonnet panels, a special made-up steering wheel, and special material for the radiator, the seat backs, and the dash. The bulk of the model is in shiny BZP but the Strips etc along the bottom are in the alternative TRIX yellow finish.

Apart from the items mentioned above, plus a double-tapped Collar, SR1, a 12mm Bolt, S3, and a 'proper' 10t Pinion, ZRK10b, the model is made from the parts shown for German TRIX in MCS TRIX (2). Some of them were never in the prewar or UK ranges, and the relevant 'extra' ones are: a Rubber Wheel, GR1, used to make the body of the headlamps; a 55mm Ø version of the formed Pulley Disc, RR55; and a Universal, KG1.

The 'made from' 6 lines up needs explanation because many of the parts in the Set are standard Strips that have been cut to length, bent, curved, made into special DAS, etc; or modified circular parts like the 40-tooth Gear without its teeth, or reduced in diameter to become a bush wheel.

The Manual is A4 size and consists of 3 sides of introductory text (don't lose the Grub Screws, drill extra holes if the body parts don't quite line up); 15 sides of good-sized colour photos showing the 23 building stages; and a list of the packets of parts in the Set, one for each stage plus 4 others for NBW. In addition 2 sides of specific comments on the different stages, & 19 sides giving the parts needed for each stage. The PN of each is given and, where appropriate, how it has been modified; also for many of the technical name of the part in the car to help to see what is what, and occasional comments on how the parts fit together.

A handful of the photos are reproduced on p588, much reduced in size. Unfortunately they don't copy well but perhaps some of the main features can be seen. In what follows the numbers in brackets refer to the photos. The bare chassis (4) is made from Strips & AVGs. The diff (2) is 4x 10t Gears mounted between two 40t Gears - one reduced

to 40mm Ø, and the other to 50mm, to act as the crown wheel. The cage is made from Strips and two more 40t Gears reduced to 40mm Ø. It is suspended from the ends of a 5-leaf transverse spring, located by f&a radius rods (1). The front springs (5) are made from lengths cut from Spanners, with the front axle (3) bolted to them.

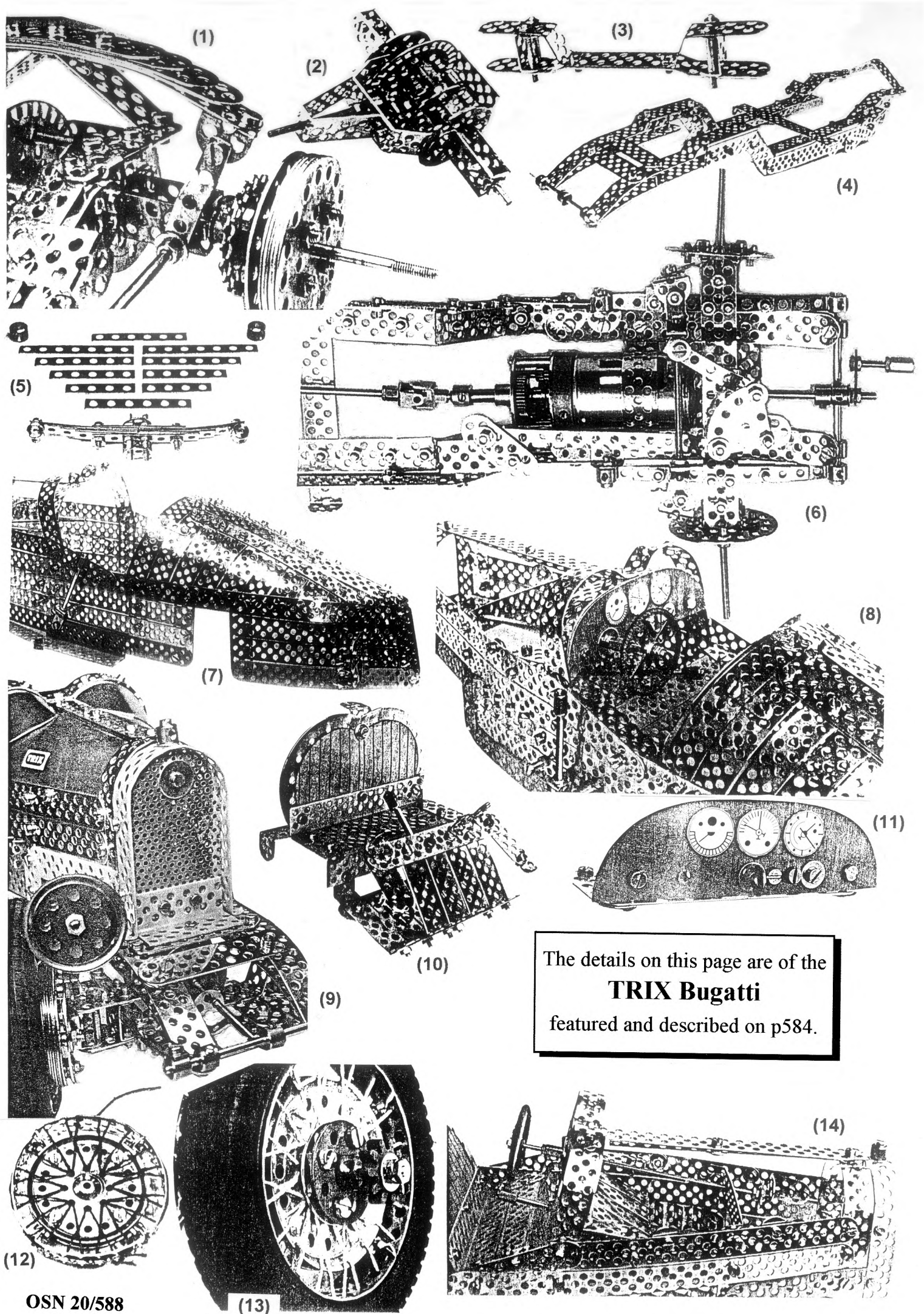
The steering is very high geared - motion from the near horizontal steering column (14) is passed to the track rod via: a pair of 10t Gears to a vertical shaft, a crank arm (a 5h Strip nutted to the bottom of the vertical shaft), a link (half a 17h Strip, cut lengthways, shortened to 14h,) from the arm to a quadrant (cut from a 49mm Disc), and another link (6 holes of a Spanner) from the quadrant to the track rod (6). (I can't see how the steering would work properly with the geometry of the linkages in the photo, so I may have missed something in the foregoing.)

Each wheel is made from a pair of 55mm Formed Discs surrounded by 4 special, curved DAS bolted together by their lugs to form a circle. Cord is then used as shown to form 'spokes' (12) and a 29mm Disc is bolted onto the centre, with another (painted red) outside it, and a Pinion (ZRK10b) outside that (13). The Tyre sits on the DAS and is listed as '16.5 - 70(mm)' - with 70 probably the i.d. Inside the wheel, as at the rear, are a pack of 49mm Discs to represent the brake drum (1,9).

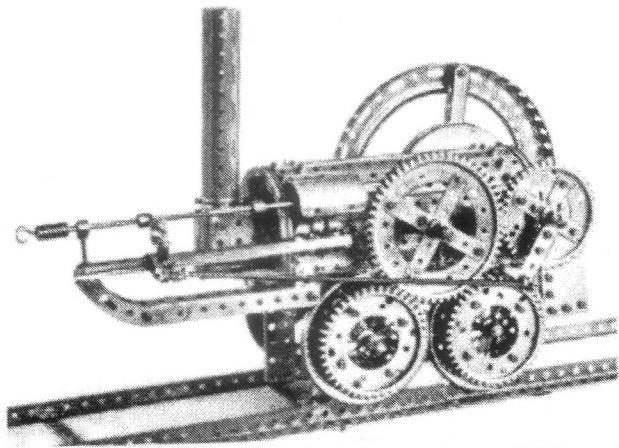
The bodywork is made up separately and then mounted onto the chassis. The rear (7) looks particularly well done in the photos. The radiator (9) is cut from closely perforated sheet metal; the seat back (10) is printed card, and the dash (11) is 1mm thick wood with the 'instruments' glued on. The steering wheel (8,14) is a cross made of two 5h 'spanner strips', joined to a 40mm Ø metal ring by cord which is bound around the ring and through each end hole of the strips. Finally headlights, each made from a stack of 5 GR1 Wheels with a disc and Formed Disc at the front (9), a number plate, and an imitation outside brake lever.

This doesn't appear to me a model for the inexperienced or faint-hearted, though no doubt it would all look much easier if I could read the German text. Thomas wrote, 'The Bugatti is a real beauty', and so it is, but purist, avert your eyes.

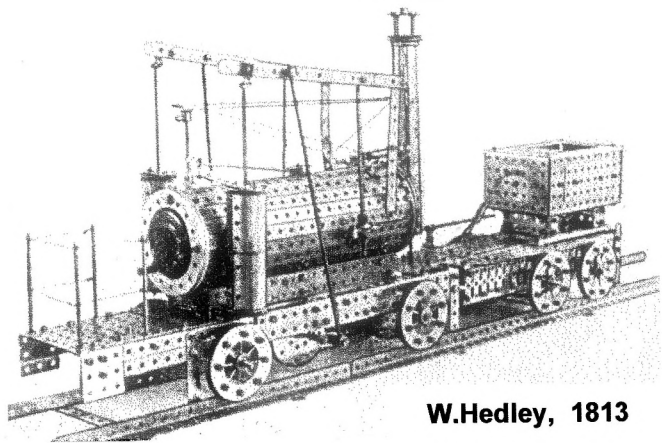
Thomas also mentioned that he rang Trix in Nürnberg last autumn, and they said that the future was uncertain, but that for the moment, the regular sets were still available. The customer service address given in the Manual is EP Konstruktion, TRIX Sonderkundendienst, Neckargrün 7, 68259 Mannheim.



The details on this page are of the
TRIX Bugatti
 featured and described on p584.

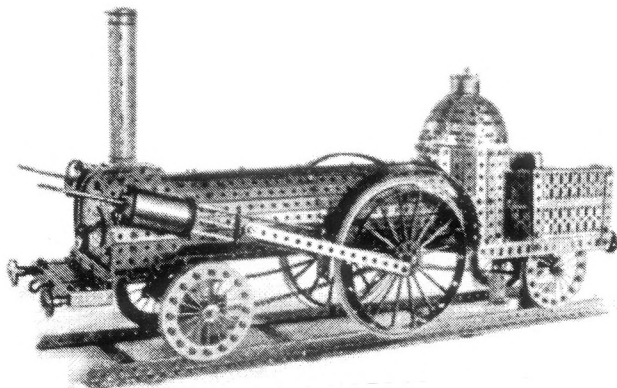


Trevithick, 1803

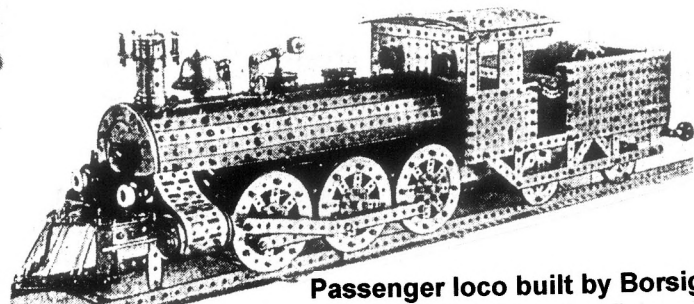


W.Hedley, 1813

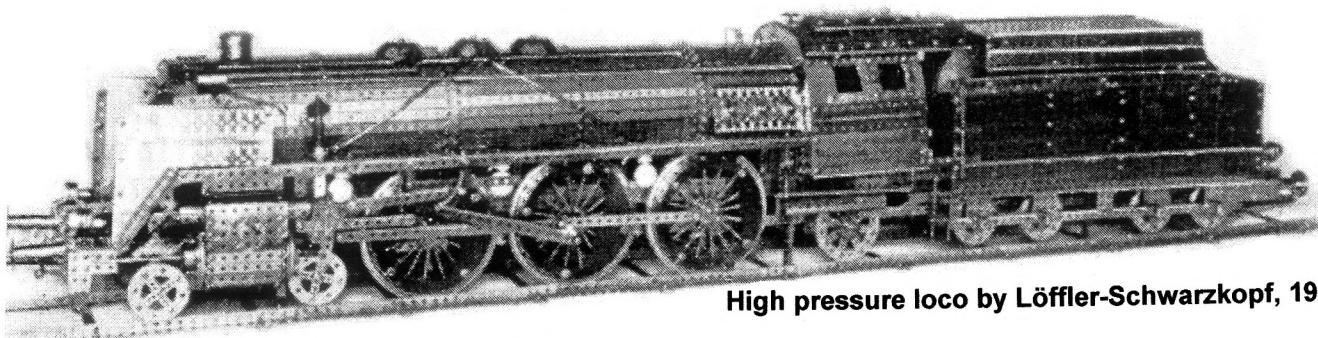
These are the 6 STABIL models mentioned in 20/571, that were used to illustrate an article on loco history in *Stabil- und Record Zeitung*.



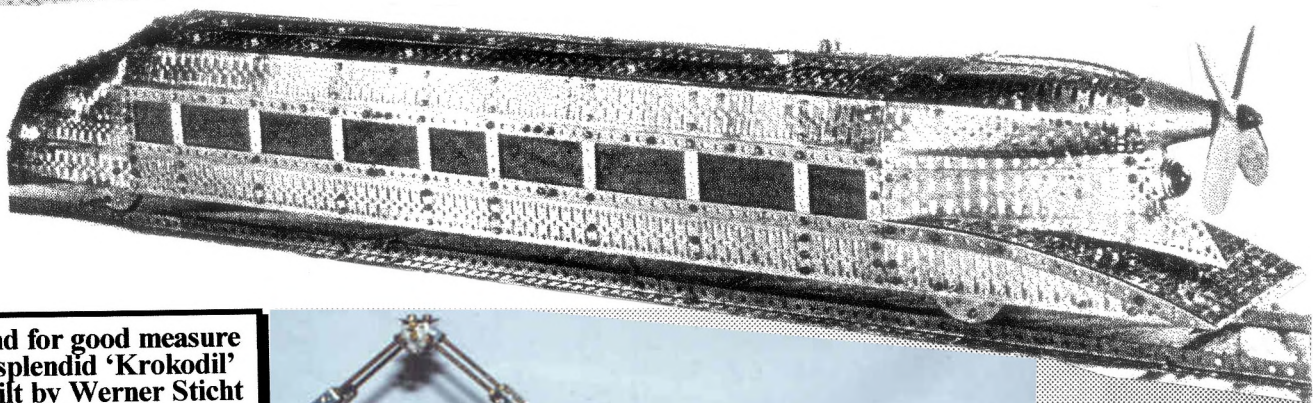
1st German built loco,
by Uebigau of Dresden, 1838



Passenger loco built by Borsig, 1870

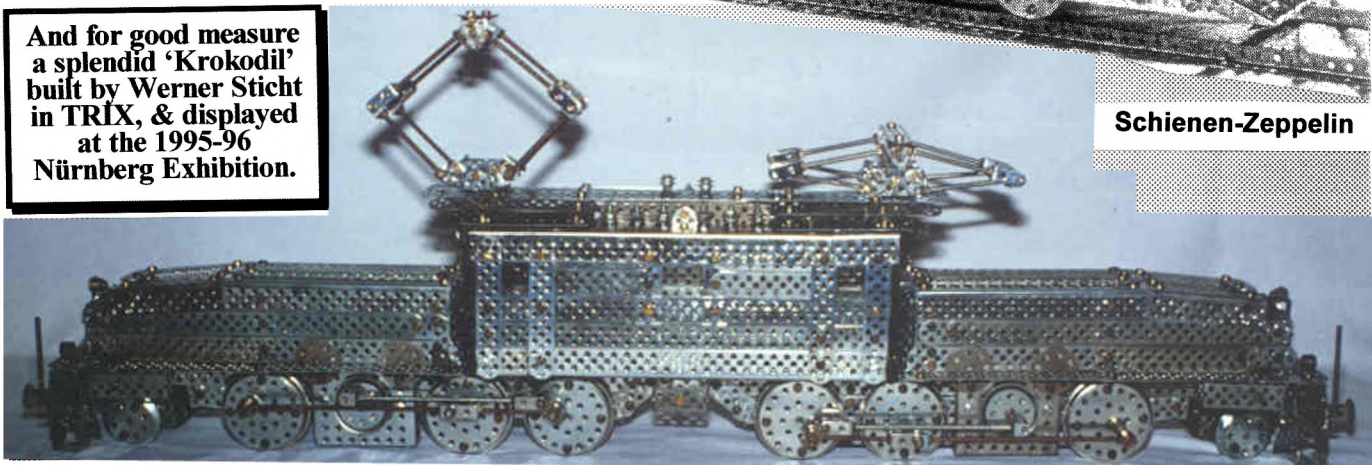


High pressure loco by Löffler-Schwarzkopf, 1930



Schienen-Zeppelin

And for good measure
a splendid 'Krokodil'
built by Werner Sticht
in TRIX, & displayed
at the 1995-96
Nürnberg Exhibition.



OSN 21/620

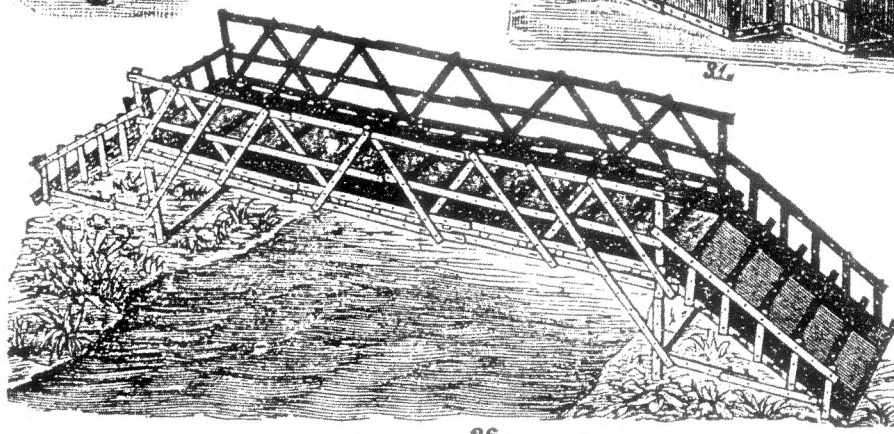
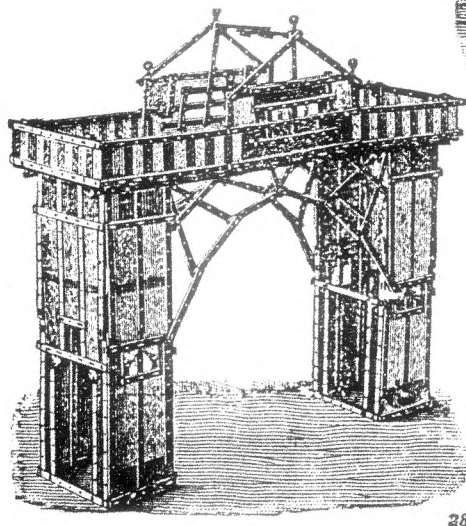
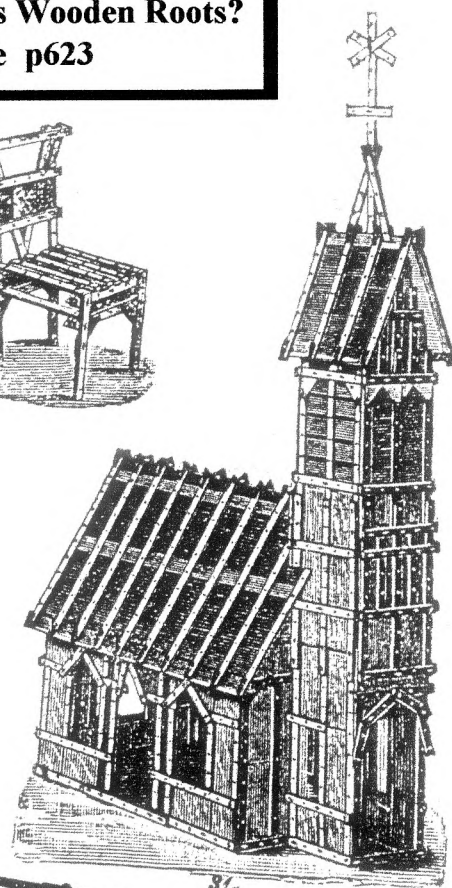
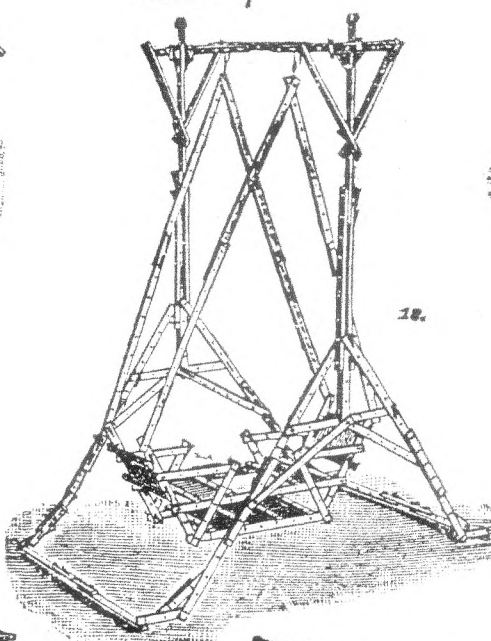
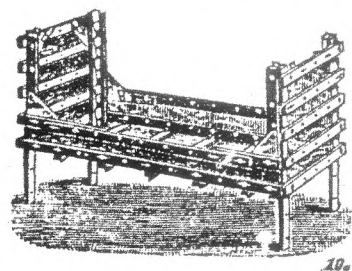
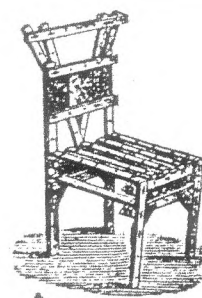
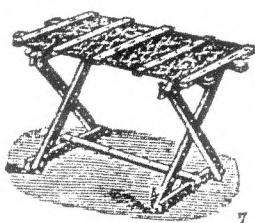
EDITORIAL Most readers will have heard by now that the future of Märklin's METALL & TRIX ranges of sets and parts is in doubt. In fact most reports say that production has already stopped, or that it will shortly. One other though, says that no final decision has yet been made, and yet another that the large 'supermodel' sets may continue to be produced from time to time.

For anyone who wants to buy MÄRKLIN, I understand that Frizinghall now have some parts & sets in stock, though what the situation in future will be is obviously unclear. Their phone/fax is 01274 542515/498281.

In OSN 19 I asked if sets such as GEOBRA, to make a single model, should be included in MCS. Several replies have now been received, all in favour; the reasons being to provide more detail, and to have a record of all MCS parts in one place. So Extra Sheets for GEOBRA are now listed, and any similar sets will be included in future, as enough material on them becomes available.

Some 'mystery parts', similar in concept to GEOBRA, will be included in the next Issue - they are clearly intended to make a Crane, but no one so far has succeeded in assembling them correctly.

The MCS has Wooden Roots?
See p623



THIS NEWSLETTER IS SUPPLIED ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS FOR THE PERSONAL USE OF THE RECIPIENT FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY

EDITORIAL First, apologies for the Eitech update items in the last issue which had already been covered in OSN 43. Old age & senility creep on! Otherwise, steady as she goes. I little thought when I typed out, pasted up, & photocopied the first, 8-page OSN, that it would continue for 22 years, and that eventually all the pages would be concocted entirely on a computer and printed at home on a little colour printer. Who knows, we might reach No.50, and I say 'we' advisedly, to include all who help, or have helped down the years, with contributions, comments & support. And thanks too to Ebay for all those interesting Snippets.

Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. Snippet. 'New' Italian System: **IL MECCANICO 900**.

The photos of the manual below were taken from the Italian Ebay and it was said to contain 24 blue pages, and to date



FIG.1

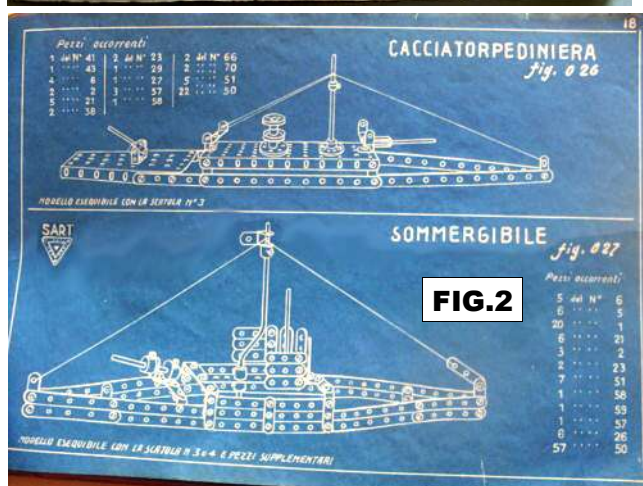


FIG.2

from the 1940s. Also that the maker was SART of Torino (Turin), a name that can be seen above the triangular logo on the cover & the model page above. At first I thought the '900' might refer to a set size but along the bottom of the cover it says that the system comprises 5 sets, Nos.0-4. The 2 models shown, Nos.26 & 27, are on p18 and are for Set 3. The parts look conventional and a 5*11h Flanged Plate & an 8h long Flanged Sector Plate can be seen in the Destroyer. The highest PN in the lists of parts is #70.

IL MECCANICO 900: S1

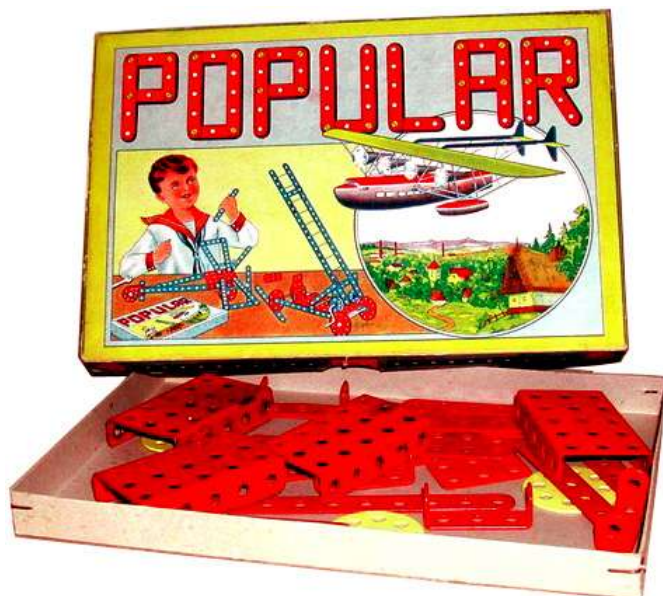
[45/1356]

2. **The History of German TRIX.** Werner Sticht has written a really comprehensive account – go to www.trix-metaal.nl & click on the link 'Eine Geschichte des Trix-Metallbaukastens'. It is all in German of course but a Google translation works well and there are numerous images and links to others.

TRIX: S6

[45/1356]

3. **'New' Czech System: POPULAR.** The set below is shown on Merkur's website with a date of 1932. It is said to have



been introduced in 1930 and may have included some new parts. It was produced alongside the MERKUR sets but it isn't clear if it was intended for export or as a cheap addition to the regular range. The lid's appearance is radically different to the MERKUR designs of the time and the Set was not mentioned in 1932 & 1933 Czech ads for MERKUR & METROPOL. If the 5*3h Flanged Plates in the box are original they may have been a new part, which was never, as far as is known, used in other sets until the M1 motorisation set in 1970, and then in the 201/202 sets introduced in the 1980s.

POPULAR: S1

[45/1356]

4. **'New' System: JEULIN** From Jean-Pierre Guibert, a new page from his Encyclopédie (see 43/1292, & 44/1324 for J-P's correct email address). Jeulin was an established educational supply house which specialised in scientific and technical material, and produced a series of sets aimed at schools & colleges from 1963 to 1970. The parts were mainly bought-in from Meccano in the standard blue/gold/dark red colours of the period and included Elektrikit items as appropriate. Special parts included Hooks & Weights for use in balances etc, and zinc electrodes in the electrical set.

[Cont. >>]

SMALL AD

[45/1356]

Wanted Anything relating to **CHARPENTO**, and I would welcome contact/correspondence with others about it. Please ring Gary Maslin on 01635 200460 or write to 'Carlisle' Curridge Road, Curridge, Thatcham, Berks, RG18 9DH