

EZY-BILT This is an attempt to put a number of documents into chronological order and to note any points of interest. For convenience the following abbreviations and References are used:

E-B = EZY-BILT.

CPPL = Colton, Palmer & Preston Ltd., the first manufacturer of E-B.

EBL = Ezy-Bilt Ltd., the second Australian E-B manufacturer.

EBPL = Ezy-Bilt Pty. Ltd., this is believed to be the later name of EBL.

RSL = Rayon Surfaces Ltd., the New Zealand E-B manufacturer.

DOCUMENTS IN ASSUMED DATE ORDER

Ref A = Original page 3/4 of MCS. Illustrated List of E-B parts 1-27, made by CPPL.

B = Original page 3/4a of MCS. Illustrated Supplementary List of E-B parts 3a,5a,14a,20a,24a,25a,28-31, made by CCPL.

C = Page 6 of MCS. Contents of CCPL Sets 1-5, almost certainly from the same period as Refs A,B.

NB. Refs A-C were replaced by Ref E; A and B were deleted at that time but not C.

D = Manual for Sets 1-5, made by CPPL. Full details are given below.

E = Current pp 3/4, 3/4a of MCS showing Illustrated Parts and Contents of Sets 1-8. The maker is not stated but as will be explained, from the PNs it is likely to have been CPPL.

F = Manual for Sets 1-5, made by EBL and RSL. Almost identical to Ref D, see below.

G = Colour Leaflet from EBL showing range of sets, etc.

H = Price List of Sets, and Parts (some illustrated), dated February 1966; manufactured by EBPL.

From Ref C it can be seen that the parts listed in Ref A are all required in Sets 1-3, while those in Ref B are needed for Sets 4 and 5. So possibly 1-3 was the original range of sets with 4 and 5 coming later when the Ref B parts were introduced. The parts shown in Refs A,B look similar to later illustrations except:

- #17, the Base Plate is shown with the 2" Saw Blade slit as well as the $\frac{1}{2}$ " lateral slot (the slot only is shown in all later illustrations).
- #21 is described as a Rubber Clip, its illustration doesn't show it clearly but the models in Ref D show it as a short length of tube. In Ref D #21 is described as a Wing Clip and in the Illustrated Parts section it looks just like a MECCANO Spring Clip. In Ref E and H it is called a Spring clip. This sequence has been used to put the CPPL material (Refs A-E) in date order.
- #24, the Screw Driver, looks like MECCANO #36; in Refs E,G the wire handle has near parallel sides. The handle illustrated in Ref D could be taken as a squashed (sideways) version of Ref A, but it may be the way it was drawn. The same one is shown in Ref F, almost certainly because the Ref D plate has been used,
- #24a, 'Screw Driver (wood handle)'. This is shown in Ref B and was included in Sets 4 and 5 (Ref C). It was also in these sets in Ref D but not in Ref F, where the wire type was shown for all sets.
- #25a. This is described as '2 in. Barnet Glass Rubber Tyre' and presumably Barnet Glass was the name of a tyre manufacturer; no name is shown in any of the later lists but a Tyre which may be E-B has OLYMPIC AIR RIDE MULTI RIB moulded into it.

Apart from the differences mentioned above the parts and their descriptions are as would be expected in all the remaining CPPL literature. Ref D lists only the parts needed for Sets 1-5 and Ref E, which probably came from a 6-8 manual shows only those needed for those sets. There may well have been other parts at that time, for the No 9 Set if it existed then, and possibly others not used in any of the sets. As will be seen this was almost certainly the case later in the E-B story. Before leaving the CPPL era there is one anomaly in Ref D worth noting. The Set Contents shows that Sets 4 and 5 contain respectively 2 and 4 of both the 2" Pulley and the 2" Rubber Tyre, but although several of the models show the Pulley in use without the Tyre, all models that need 2" tyred wheels are shown fitted with #32 Road Wheels (as in MCS). This part is not included in Sets 1-5 or mentioned by name or No. anywhere in the 1-5 Manual, and this was also the case for Ref F.

Ref H has been judged the most recent of the three post CPPL items because by then the name of the company had changed to EBPL. Ref G is assumed later than Ref F only because it looks more modern. Ref F is, apart from minor changes, the same as Ref D but one of those changes is that on the front cover it says 'Copyright by Ezy-Bilt Ltd., Kilkenny, S.A.' and on the back cover is 'Manufactured in Australia by EZY-BILT LTD.' and 'Manufactured in New Zealand by RAYON SURFACES LTD'. In MCS it is said that the manufacturer after 1959 was EBL, later RSL, and this could be taken to mean that RSL was the last and at that time, sole manufacturer; but at the time of Ref F it seems that EBL still retained sole copyright but that the product was being produced in both countries by the named companies. It also says in MCS that the parts were renumbered for New Zealand but since renumbered parts are shown in Refs F and H it is possible that it was the same new numbers used for both the Oz and NZ parts.

Ref F contains the new numbers for all the parts listed, those needed for the 1-5 sets that is; Ref H has the full list of parts available and contains 130 parts (up to #177) against the 88 shown in

MCS. For this reason new MCS sheets are available which give full details, but the main additions are different lengths of Strips, and Angle Girders (up to $24\frac{1}{2}$ "), Flat Girders up to $9\frac{1}{2}$ " , more Screwed Rods, more Gears, and Sprockets. This leaflet lists Sets 1-9 but whether all the additional parts were used in the No 9 Set is not known, the latter cost \$53.65 against \$26.65 for the No 8. This Price List also lists Conversion Sets 1A-8A, and Star Sets Nos 3,4,5 which are cheaper than the corresponding standard sets, but no details are given.

The Clockwork motor is also listed, and it is included in Sets 8,9,7A. There is an illustration of it in the earlier Ref G, (reproduced in the new MCS sheets); it is shown red and measures $3 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ ". This Leaflet lists the same sets as Ref H except that the Star sets are not mentioned. The layout of the sets in their boxes is shown for Sets 1,3,6,8 and again these are shown in the new MCS sheets. The colours of the parts shown are as stated in MCS, red for all plates and green strips etc. Pulleys are red; small brackets, the Bush Wheel and the $1\frac{1}{4}$ " Disc are shown white so are probably plated. The Road Wheel which looks just like the original MECCANO pattern, is red with a white 'tyre' in the pictures of the sets but the 'tyre' is shown black in the models illustrated. The ones owned by Frank Beadle are red with dark grey 'tyres'.

The contents of Sets 1-5 did not change between Refs C and D except that in the latter Grub Screws are listed for Sets 2-5. The parts in Refs A,B are shown with the bosses fitted with Set Screws, possibly standard Bolts. Ref F is identical to Ref D except for the type of Screw Driver in Sets 4 and 5, as already mentioned, and the addition of a Spanner in each set. Ref E is the same too except that $4 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ " DAS are listed for Set 4 instead of three.

As far as is known E-B parts are not generally marked but one Base Plate seen is stamped EZY-BILT parallel to the $\frac{1}{2}$ " slot.

There are some references to E-B in the New Zealand NZFMMM. In the April 1979 Issue Bruce Baxter wrote 'during the years just preceding the war the Red/Green Australian Ezybuilt (sic) outfits were prominent in N.Z. toy shops, reappearing after the war with the Buz outfits in Red/Green. At one stage Ezybuilt for the N.Z. market was being manufactured in Auckland'. So E-B was available rather earlier than the MCS date of the 1940s. Whether Penrose, the address of RSL, is near Auckland is not known. A letter in the April 1987 magazine from Brett Gooden of South Australia mentions a metal box for the E-B No 6 Set as being $17 \times 9 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ " deep and goes on 'Ezy-Bilt parts were green and red. They were almost exact replicas of Meccano parts but not so well made, the holes in the strips were often not regularly spaced which lead to great frustration when model building. Ezy-Bilt was produced 1 mile from my childhood home in Adelaide by Colton, Palmer & Preston Ltd.' The address given for CPPL in Refs A,B,C is Adelaide; it is shown as Southwark in Ref D (and MCS).

SUMMARY OF MANUAL

#Name: EZY-BILT #Details of maker: Manufactured in Australia by EZY-BILT LTD., 630 PORT ROAD, KILKENNY, SOUTH AUSTRALIA. Manufactured in New Zealand by RAYON SURFACES LTD., 122A ROCKFIELD ROAD, PENROSE. [on back cover] #Dates &/or Ref Nos: PRINTED BY WHITCOMBE AND TOMBS LIMITED [on back cover] #Page size: 237×174 mm deep #No of pages: 36 plus covers [pp 1,2,36 are not numbered] #Language: English #Printing: Front cover has EZY-BILT in red at top, with THE MASTER TOY in black underneath.



Below is a red model of Sydney Harbour Bridge with one boy behind and another in front of it. There is a green band at the bottom with INSTRUCTION BOOK FOR SETS 1 TO 5 and Copyright by Ezy-Bilt Ltd., Kilkenny, S.A., both in black. The background is cream with green spots and the real bridge in green. Inside is black on white except pp 3-10, 11-26, 27-34 which are red, purple and red on white respectively #Page Nos of Parts List & highest PN: 2, 142 #Page Nos of Set Contents & highest PN: 2, 142 #Sets covered: 1-5 #No of models for each set: 25,27,32,35,45 #Name, Model No, Page No of first & last model of each set: 1: Kite, 1.1, 4; Bi-Plane, 1.25, 3. 2: Scales, 2.1, 8; Fire Engine, 2.27, 7. 3: Crane, 3.1, 12; Submarine, 3.32, 10. 4: Grab Crane, 4.1, 22; Flying Fox, 4.35, 19. 5: Steamer, 5.1, 33; Revolving Searchlight, 5.45, 25. #Other notes: The models are not arranged in order of Model Nos. On the inside front cover owners name and address can be recorded and at the back the date when the models in the book were built. An earlier version of this manual is identical except for the following differences:

#Details of maker: Manufactured by COLTON, PALMER & PRESTON LTD., SOUTHWARK, SOUTH AUSTRALIA. [on back cover, with similar on bottom of pp 3-35, as shown in MCS p5]

#Dates &/or Ref Nos: The Advertiser Printing Office, Adelaide [on back cover]

#Printing: Copyright by Colton, Palmer and Preston Limited, Southwark, S.A. on the bottom green band of the front cover. All the inside pages are black on white (but yellowed with age) [Cont. >]

#Page Nos of Parts List & highest PN: 2,84.

#Page Nos of Set Contents & highest PN: 2,84.

This article is based on material contributed by Gary Higgins and Ed Furness, for which many thanks.

NEW PAGES FOR MCS: EZY-BILT: X1.3/4,3/4a,3/4b,7. [2 Sheets] [The new 3/4 pages are additional to the existing ones.]

AMENDMENTS TO MCS (as necessary, depending on version)

Sets: 1-9, 1A-8A, STAR SETS 3-5.

Parts: 130.

Nuts: 111 in Set 8.

Colour: Red plates, pulleys. Green strips, A/Gs, large brackets. Road Wheel red with dark grey rim.

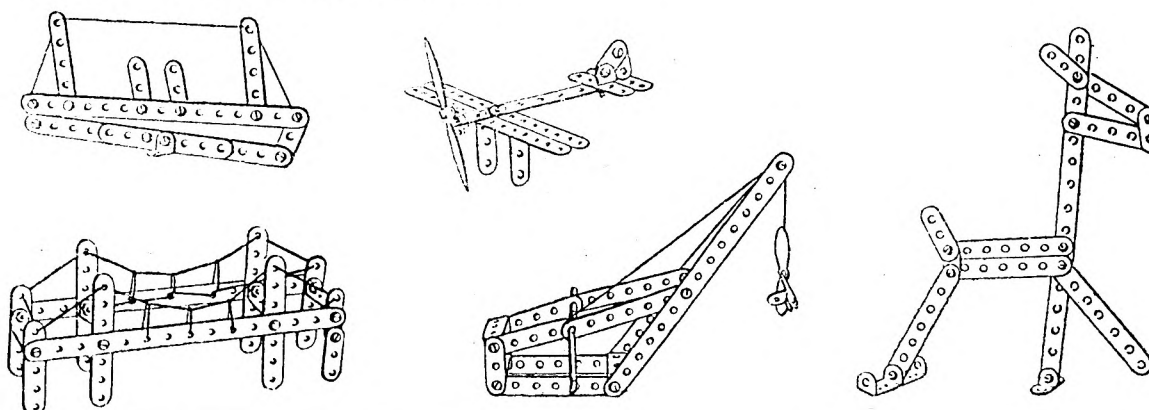
Motor: 1 C/W.

Period: Known late 1930s to 1966.

Manufacturer: Originally Colton, Palmer & Preston, Adelaide, later Southwark, South Australia. From 1959 EZY-BILT Ltd., 630 Port Road, Kilkenny, South Australia. Also manufactured in New Zealand by Rayon Surfaces Ltd., 122A Rockfield Road, Penrose during the EZY-BILT Ltd phase.

Comments: Almost identical to MECCANO of the period. Parts renumbered for EZY-BILT Ltd/New Zealand phase.

NEW SYSTEM: CONSTRUCT. Tony Homden came across this little set recently, and 'little' describes it in all respects. Its box measures 7"x4½"x1½"; it contains 23 aluminium alloy parts, plus a steel Crank Handle, and 10 each of steel, unplated, standard sized 6BA cheesehead Nuts and hex Bolts; the parts are quite small with a hole spacing of 3/8"; and 11 models are shown on one side of a single sheet 6½"x4¼". The usual details will be given in the new MCS pages listed at the end; shown below are some of the models to give an idea of the parts.



All parts are left in their natural metallic state. They are accurately made with no rough edges, although the width of the Strips, nominally 3/8", varies slightly (± 0.007 ") depending on the length; the ends of the Strips are fully radiused. The aluminium parts are all the same thickness, .024", and the longer Strips feel rather flimsy. The range of parts is about what one might expect in a set of this sort, Strips of different lengths with Angle Brackets and DAS. But there are one or two surprises - there is no base plate, or indeed plate of any sort, but there is a Propeller; there are no axles, the two Discs included are attached by the ¼" long Bolts (the Nuts are the thinner 'halfnut' sort); there are no slotted holes but the Bolts have some play in the 3.1mm dia holes.

The box is basically red in colour but the lid is nearly completely covered by a label, orange with white areas in which models from the Instruction Sheet are shown, and also a B&W photo of a happy looking 6-year old putting the finishing touches to the animal model shown above. It's quite a nice looking animal, I think, and it rings a bell but I can't quite put a name to it. The set was made, it says on the lid, by Allwrights Mechanical Productions at Clacton-on-Sea, probably, at a guess, soon after WW2. Also on the lid - 'contains 44 parts,' - which agrees with the number found in the box. All of them looked as if they had never been disturbed since being packed, and the method of packing is unusual, the blue card packing board has pairs of slots cut in it, about 1/8" apart, at suitable points, and the part between is pressed up to form a 'tunnel', through which the Strip or whatever, passes.

I've just realised, the set doesn't contain a spanner or a screwdriver, or any tools at all. Also I should have said that the Crank Handle has a diameter of 2.67mm.

NEW PAGES FOR MCS: CONSTRUCT: X1.1, 2/5, 3/4/6 [=2 sheets].

A MASTERBUILDER CARFAX SET. Shortly after OSN 8 appeared, with its article (p184) on the later MASTERBUILDER Outfits, I was able to see, courtesy of Geoff Wright, a #6001 CARFAX Set, still strung in its box. Said box measured 10"x14" and had a white label showing 5 manual models from one or other of the 3 Auto/Railway Sets. They were shown with yellow parts except for red Mudguards, and red 11 hole Strips in one model. The parts in the box were blue except for yellow Strips and Mudguards, and metallic black Angle Brackets, Rods, Spanner and Screwdriver. As far as could be seen the contents corresponded to those given in MCS X1.6 (plus the Screwdriver and a Spanner), but the N&B and no doubt the 1" Rod were hidden away in a red Carton with MASTERBUILDER in white on it. Rod #1027 was 3½" long as surmised. The Manual was identical to the one described in OSN 8. Conclusion: later MASTERBUILDER parts can be any colour so long as it is yellow, orange, red or blue, or even grey (see 4/73).

AND ANOTHER MASTERBUILDER No.1 SET. In OSN 8/184 a No.1 Set, which may have been an early one, was described briefly. Now again courtesy of Geoff Wright, I've been able to look at another, probably later, No.1. It was still strung in its box and appeared complete. The box, about 8x10", is the same size as the first but has fold out 'wings' with parts strung on them. The lid has red and cream stripes with a large, central photo of a model; it carries the EREKTOR WORKS, MOUNTSOREL address and the Ref No.K.W.1266. The earlier Set had a red lid with a plain white label with the QUORN address and KW1261-1. Both sets had basically similar contents: differences, and notes on the finish of the parts follow:

- In the later Set the Shackles, KW1052, and the Straight Connectors, KW1044, were the shorter types (see 6/119), and the Sockets, KW1051, were also shorter, approximately 7/16" long against 3/4". The Collars, KW1045, and the bosses of the End Brackets, KW1111, were 5/16" dia; all the other parts were 3/8", as in the first Set.
- There was a tiny brass Loose Pulley in the later Set, .377" dia, which I hadn't seen before: it may be the part without a PN in MCS/FB, p3/4 rhs. There wasn't one in the first Set, it may have been missing but there was a 1" Pulley, KW1091, which wasn't in the second Set. The Railwheels in the latter were the 1" steel type described in 6/119, against the ½" KW1081 sort in the early Set.
- Both Sets contained Spring Cord, another part I hadn't seen before; its diameter was .152" and it was plated a dull grey colour. Apart from that all the metal parts in the first set were nickel plated except the brass plated N&B and the black metallic finished Rods; the later parts all had the black finish except the brass gears and all the 'brassware', which were their natural colour, and the steel Railwheels. The N&B couldn't be seen only brass plated steel ones have ever been reported.

I've several times referred above to the Sets as later or earlier, and I've no positive proof of that. But there are some pointers, the PNs of the Sets for instance, and the brighter lid design of the 'later' one. My guess is that the change from nickel to black came in about 1951-52 when nickel was in very short supply; brass too was difficult to get and this might account for the reduced size of some of the brass parts.

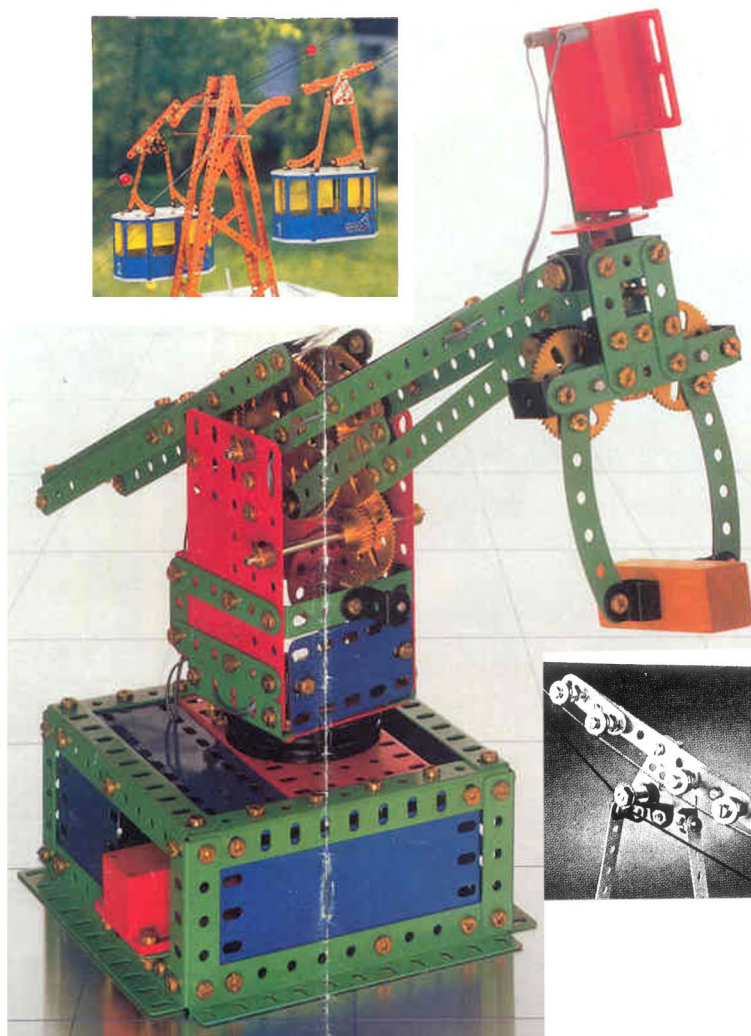
EZY-BILT. Following the account in 7/144, Roger Baker sent copies of Lists for August 1960 and July 1961; in the first Sets 1-8 and 1A-7A are shown, in '61 there are in addition, Sets 9 and 8A, and the Clockwork Motor. So that nicely pinpoints the date of introduction of those items. The last PN in both Lists is 161, so the Sprockets, and Gears #176 and 177, had not yet been introduced; nor had the Chain, #149, it isn't in either List. Also neither contains the name of the manufacturer, but it must have been Ezy-Bilt Ltd because Ref F (see OSN 7) from EBL uses the old PNs and so must be before 1960, and Ref G equally from EBL, shows Sets 8A and 9, and the Motor, and so must be from 1961 or later.

TEMSI HOLE SPACING. With the last copy of Meccano Nieuws from the Meccano Gilde Nederland, Don Redmond received a copy of Peter Duyff's 1992 booklet on Meccano, Actuele Onderwerpen No.2449. In it was noted a difference in hole pitch between MECCANO and TEMSI; that for TEMSI being 12.729mm against 12.7 for MECCANO. So over 25 holes that's a difference of about .7mm, enough to cause difficulties in long frameworks if parts from the two systems were used together. I measured up some TEMSI parts which probably dated back to the 1960s or 70s, and sure enough they showed about the same difference. And not only for Strips and A/Gs, which all appeared to have been cut from a continuous length, but also along and across an 11x5 hole Flanged Plate. It was easy to detect the difference in the long parts and it was measurable with care even along 5 holes.

SMALL AD. FOR SALE. PALIKIT No.3 Set. Complete with manual, and parts still strung, but some rust damage. £15 plus carriage - Malcolm Hanson, 11 Willow Close, Long Ashton, Bristol. BS18 9DT. Tel: (0275) 392321.

disappointing for a set that cost so much, though it does contain 4 motors (albeit 6v).'

• 'I also have the **Cable Car Set** and it makes up into a very attractive model that works quite well, and follows real practice in some respects, with steel cable, well articulated pulleys that move nicely over the saddle on the intermediate tower, etc.' [The Robot Set, #1007 was mentioned in 2/16, and the Cable Car, #1057, from the mid-1980s, in 10/266. In neither case was there an illustration but the ones below



will give an idea. The Car is made from special parts, and the body is shown blue with a white roof, and yellow tinted

windows; all the Strips and Girders are orange.

7. From Don Redmond. • The **EZY-BILT** Contrate is distinctive with a very rounded edge ($\frac{1}{8}$ " rad.) and the teeth actually cut into the curvature. It is nickel with a brass boss.

• On **DÖCO** (15/413), it was displayed in a 1920 Canadian Centre for Architecture exhibition at Montréal, and the catalogue describes it as 'a wood and metal system; split-pin rivet assembly; includes design book; box 10.5*37*24.9cm; parts: bars 24.7*0.8cm, clamps 0.8cm, discs 6.8cm; punch press 8*34.3*13.9cm.'

• The **STRUCTO** Worm (see 15/424) is a rather crude looking item of the same alloy (zinc?) as the Gears, and with noticeable flash and mold marks. The teeth look rather chewed but it has probably had much use.

• In a mixed lot, a yellow plastic Wheel, with a square-section rubber Tire, 1.5" o.d., marked **BILDIT**. That's a new name but was it a constructional system? The bore appears to have been drilled out to about $\frac{3}{16}$ ".

8. From Jeannot Buteux. • The French patent for **SPEDICON** (see 17/470) is No.923760, and it was granted in 1947.

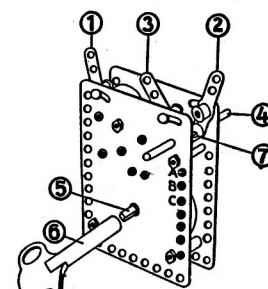
• **MAC et NICK** (17/472) was also patented, by a M.Cosneau in 1948, No.936145. [No equivalent UK patent is known.]

• Manuals in French have turned up for **STRUCTATOR** and **KLIPTIKO**.

• A **PYGMÉE** (16/448) set has been found for the first time: it's in a metal box and includes a complete manual.

9. Following the notes on the **MÄRKLIN** Chassis in 17/482, Josep Bernal sent a photocopy of a 4-page Leaflet in French (Refs: Ta 07 33 m & F. M446) showing the parts in the Nr.1105L **Motor Truck Body** Set, and how to assemble them onto the Chassis. The details of the parts have been included in an Extra MCS Sheet.

10. Thomas Keel sent a photocopy of the Instruction Leaflet, in German, for the **MIGNON C/W Motor** Nr. 250 (right), which was described in 10/262. The holes A,B,C in the side-plates allow a 12t Pinion on the output shaft, 4, to mesh with the other 3 Gears in the system, or their positions can be reversed for higher speeds.



Nr. 1 = Schnell- und Langsamgang
Nr. 2 = Abstellhebel
Nr. 3 = Vor- und Rückwärtsgang
Nr. 4 = Arbeitswelle
Nr. 5 = Aufzugschraube
Nr. 6 = Aufzugsschlüssel
Nr. 7 = Arbeitswellenrad mit Gewindestift.

EXTRA MCS SHEETS The Sheets listed here are available at 15p per Sheet plus postage. That makes £4.65 for all 31 Sheets.

MCS Amendments, List No.6 [1]

AKRON: X1.1,2/6,5,5a [2]

ENGINEERO: X1.2,4,5,6 [2]

E.Z.: X1.1,2,4,5 [2]

FAC: X1.1, [1]

FAC [a]: X1.3/4,3a/4a,5 [2]

FAC [b]: X1.6,6a [1]

FAC [c]: X1.2,3,4-4l,5-5b,5c/6,6a,6b [9]

INSTRUCTO: X1.1,2,4,5 [2]

KONSTUKTOR [10]: X1.1,2,4,5 [2]

KONSTUKTOR-MEKHANIKA [2]: X1.1,4/6,4a/6a/7,5 [2]

KONSTUKTOR SHKOL'NIK: X1.1,2,4/6,4a/6a,5 [3]

MAKUMAL: X1.1,5 [1]

MÄRKLIN: X2.3a/4b,5 [1]

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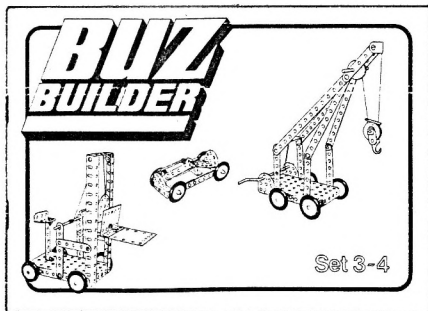
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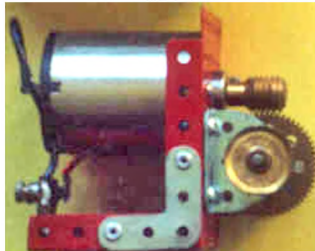


of models. •Page No. of Illustrated Parts List & highest PN: BC,144. •Page No. of Set Contents & highest PN: IBC, 141. •Sets covered: Nos. 3,4. •No. of models for each set: 32,36. •Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 3: HALL STAND,59,1; SLIPPERY DIP,90,10. 4:

GUILLOTINE,91,1; COAL LIFT & LOADER,126,12. •Other notes: details from photocopy & actual page size may be bigger. Ads for the Motor & Gear Set are on the first unnumbered pages.

A photo of a No.4 Set shows a yellow lid with two-fifths of it taken up with a see through panel; the remainder is printed similarly to the Manual cover above with the models in their correct colours (see below) on a white ground. The box scales at the same size as the 1960s No.4, and the moulded tray and layout of the parts look the same. A/Gs and Strips of 5½" and upwards are yellow, all Plates, the 2" Pulleys, Bush Wheel, and Flat Trunnions are red, and the rest of the parts are silver, probably BZP. The 2" Pulley is like the early Australian version, while the 1" Pulleys have an almost cast look to them. Tyres are grey; the Screw-driver is missing. The N&B etc in the Australian No.4 were in what looks like a small card box with BUZ on it; in this Set there's a clear box of the same size.

There was a new Motor unit during this period. It's a 6-



12v 'can' motor, which scales at 2"x1¼"Ø, mounted, as may just be visible in the photo opposite, on what looks like a modified, red 5*5h Flanged Plate. Another such forms the base, and the flanges are joined by Bell Cranks riveted on. Terminals and wire can be seen at the back of the base. A Worm on the output

shaft meshes with a 1½" Gear on a cross shaft that is journaled in 2 (non-standard looking) trunnions on the front face, with a 1" Pulley at the end. Unloaded it is said to consume .9 amps at 8000 rpm; at maximum efficiency 3 amps at 6000 rpm, with a torque of 150 gr.cm / 2.08 oz.in. If that is the torque at the motor's output shaft, it would be a very powerful motor, and if at the cross shaft, a very feeble one. Probably the former given the high current consumption.

Later New sets, new manuals, and new models. A 3-4 manual has a blue cover of totally different design (below) and is from BUZ Builder Ltd., P.O. Box 23065, Auckland. (An identical cover, but of unknown colour, has on it: Tri-ang Pedigree (N.Z.) Ltd., P.O. Box 14-146, Auckland 6. That was 127 Pilkington Road, so no doubt that cover was from a manual earlier than the blue one.)

The 'blue' Manual has the Contents of Sets 1-4 and they differ considerably from their predecessors. All have many more Plastic Flexible Plates, and N&B. There are numerous other changes to the No.1 with a 5*11h Flanged Plate instead of the 5*5h, fewer Strips and more Brackets, and the 1" Pulleys & Tyres reduced from 4 to 2. Excluding NBW, 47 parts, 4 more than before. The changes to the No.4 are less dramatic apart from 11 Flexible Plates instead of 3, and 76 N&B instead of 42.

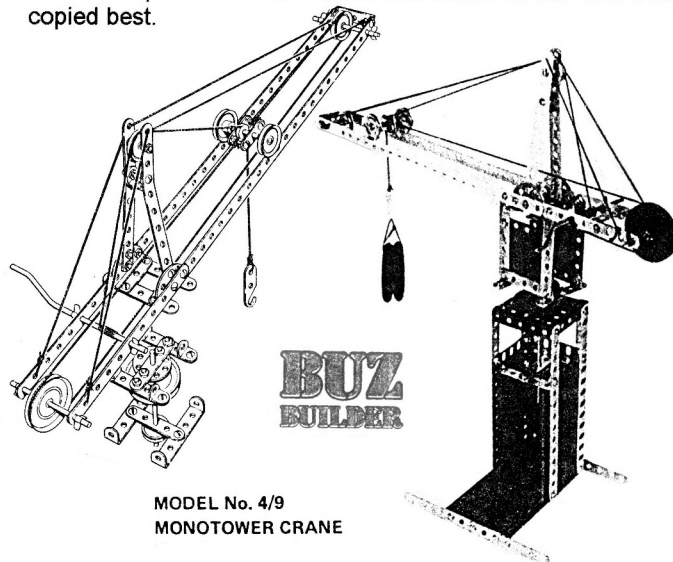
4x 3h Strips have been added, with 2 less Flat Brackets, and one of the 5*5h Flanged Plate is replaced by a 5*11h.

MANUAL SUMMARY

•Name: BUZ BUILDER
•Details of maker: BUZ Builder Ltd., P.O. Box 23065, Auckland. •No dates/Ref Nos. •Page

size: 182*252mm deep but non-model pages are landscape. •No. of pages: 16 inc covers, unnumbered. •Language: English. •Printing: photos of models + line drgs of details; blue cover. •Page No. of Parts List & highest PN: 16,144. •Page No. of Set Contents & highest PN: 3, 125. •Sets covered: 3,4. •No. of models for each set: 11,9. •Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 3: WHARF CRANE,3/1,4; CONCRETE TRUCK,3/11,9. 4: MOBILE CRANE,4/1,9; MONOTOWER CRANE,4/9,13. •Other notes: details from photocopy. There seems to be no introductory material & the Constructional Hints are after the models on p14.

On the whole the models are much better than the ones they replaced, and are mostly simple, but quite realistic representations of cranes, commercial vehicles, and agricultural machinery, plus the odd radar scanner, etc. There's a photo of each model with a line drawing of part of it, and a list of the parts needed. The model below is the one that copied best.



MODEL No. 4/9
MONOTOWER CRANE

A photo of a No.3 Set from this time shows a blue box, scaling 17½*14", with 4 of the Manual models on the lid in the correct colours. The parts are pinned into recesses in a white foam block and they are in identical colours to those in the earlier No.4 Outfit, except that the 1" Tyres are black and look to be treaded. There are no 2" Tyres in this Set.

An ad for what seems to be a No.4 Set of this series was reproduced in *The Meccanoman's Newsmag* of August 1982. It was from a local Australian newspaper of Sept. 1979 and shows a box similar to the No.3 above. There are models on the lid and the two that can be seen fairly clearly look like Models 4/1 & 4/4 in the Manual above. 4/4 is also in the foreground of the ad and is unmistakable. The only false note is '2B. BUZZ BUILDER' in the ad's text.

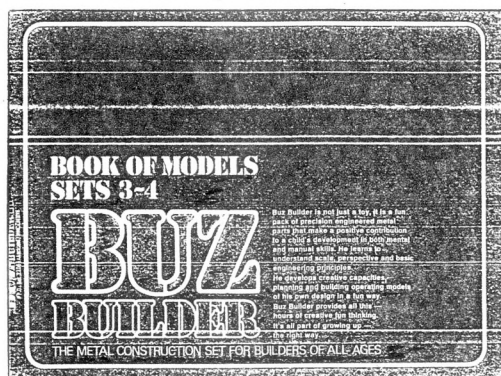
Footnote In a letter in the April 1990 N.Z.F.M.M. Magazine Lindsay Bond wrote that a firm called Underwood Engineering of Inglewood had bought all the dies from the 'now defunct Tri-ang Pedigree (N.Z.) Ltd., and still have them'. He also mentioned a very powerful 6-12v Johnson Motor with a MECCANO-sized output shaft, but it isn't absolutely clear whether it was associated with Tri-ang or with Underwoods.

EZY-BILT

These notes on this MECCANO look-alike add to those in 7/144 & 9/225. Recall that E-B, CPPL, EB(P)L, stand for EZY-BILT; Colston, Palmer & Preston Ltd., the first manufacturers; and Ezy-Bilt (Pty.) Ltd., who replaced them. Also, the References in OSN 7 will be used again.

Early Days In OSN 7 there seemed good reason to believe that E-B appeared before WW2, and this is confirmed by a TAHC reader who recalls it from as early as Xmas 1935, or perhaps 1937-38. He also remarked that the quality of the parts wasn't as good as MECCANO, with holes imperfectly matched, and the Flanged Plates less crisply folded.

The manual described overleaf is the earliest seen and probably dates from before WW2. The cover may not re-



produce well but the boy is wearing a tie, and the model is a slightly simpler Sydney Harbour Bridge than the 7/145 one.

The manual is in 2 sections: the first, for Sets 1-3, starts with a photo of 2 boys playing with a model in front of a blazing fire; the first page of the second is exactly the same as the front cover, except that the Set Nos. '4 & 5' replace '1,2,3,4 & 5'. (It is used below because it has copied better.)

The Illustrated Parts & Set Contents are as in Refs A-C. The contents of the sets don't seem to closely parallel any MECCANO outfits, and are marked by the inclusion of 7½" Strips from No.3 upwards and 2" Pulleys with Rubber Tyres from No.4 on. Unusual parts in the No.5, a quite small set with 32 Strips, 27 Brackets, and 54 N&B, are a ½" Pinion, a 1½" Contrate, and 30" of Spring Cord.

There are lots of models, 175 in all, each represented by a small rather blurry photo. Most are simple but a Parts List would have been a help for a few of the larger ones. Many remind one of some of the MECCANO models before Flexible Plates were introduced but few are exact copies. The only clue to date is Model 5-159, 'Aeroplane (Bristol Bulldog Type)'. I believe the Bulldog was in service with the RAAF before WW2 but I don't know when it was introduced.

SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: EZY-BILT BOOK OF MODELS 1,2,3,4 & 5. •Details of maker: Colton, Palmer & Preston Ltd., Adelaide, Australia. •No dates or Ref Nos: •Page size: 221*149mm deep. •No. of pages: 36 unnumbered inc covers. •Language: English. •Printing: photos of models, and boy & Bridge on light brown cover, with real bridge behind.

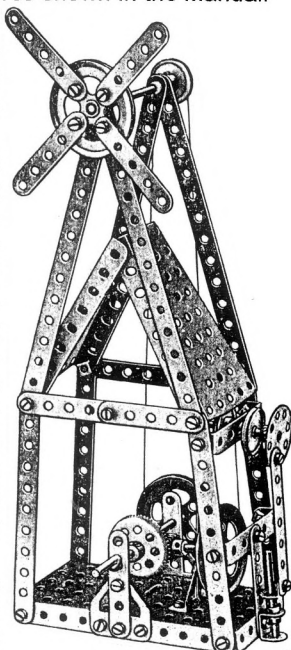


•Page Nos. of Illustrated Parts List & highest PN: 18,27 & 34, 31. •Page Nos. of Set Contents & highest PN: 4,27 & 20,31. •Sets covered: 1-5. •No. of models for each set: 27,31,32,38,47. •Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 1: Battle Axe,1-1,5; Bi-plane,1-27,7. 2: Scales,2-28,8; Fire Engine,2-58,12. 3: Crane,3-59,13; Submarine,3-90,17. 4: Grab Crane, 4-91,21; Polishing Machine,4-128,26. 5: Steamer,5-129,27; Battleship, 5-175,33. •Other notes: Manual is in 2 sections, for 1-3 & 4-5 sets. Covers 2,35,36 are blank.

A manual with a similar cover, though probably slightly larger, is believed to be from just after the war. It has a label stuck on it saying that there is no Cord or Tyres in the set 'Owing to National Security Regulations, restricting the use of Rubber and Cordage'. A No.5 Set with this label is known from Dec. 1945 and included 4 Road Wheels to use instead of the 2" Pulleys with Tyres shown in the Manual.

The 1950s The presentation of the CPPL 1-5 manual described at the bottom of p145 of OSN 7 is far better than the early one above, with larger, clearer illustrations. The Set Contents are the same apart from the introduction of Grub Screws. There are nearly as many models as before and though many have been redrawn, I didn't spot any new ones. The Windmill opposite is one of the larger models. The oddity of the 2" Pulleys with Tyres on them being replaced by M187-type Road Wheels in the manual models, but with no mention of the latter in the Set Contents was noted in OSN 7.

An earlier version of the CPPL 1-5 manual is known which is identical inside (its



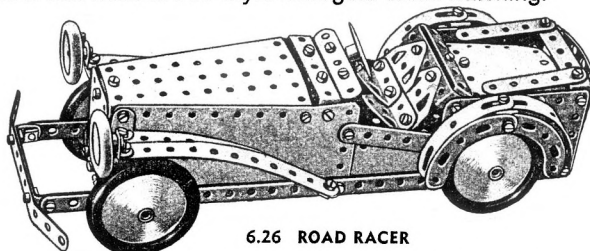
5.9 Windmill

covers are missing) except that there is no Grub Screw, #84, in the Set Contents. So the last item is #31 (which is listed as 30" Length Strong Cord, but this is probably a mistake for Spring Cord, as in all other manuals).

Sets 6-8 are thought to have been introduced during this period, or even in the late 1940s. The next manual is from CPPL for these sets, and it is different from the 1-5 manuals above in two ways. First, the cover has a No.8 model on it, the Golden Hind, and very nice it looks too with its decorated sails. Secondly, although the style of the rest is similar, each model has a Parts List and some explanatory text.

The Sets are based on the prewar MECCANO Nos. 4-6, and don't have any of the few additions made after the war. However all 3 sets have the parts needed to make them progressive with the smaller ones - 4x 7½" Strips, 4x 2" Pulleys & Tyres, the Pinion & Contrate, and the Spring Cord - even though none of these parts are used in the models. 4x 1" Tyres replace the MECCANO Rubber Rings, and all the sets have 4 Road Wheels as well as the 2" Pulleys/Tyres. The Road Wheel is now shown in the Illustrated Parts & on the models. Apart from these differences, and give or take a couple of Axles, Nos.7 & 8 are then identical with their MECCANO counterparts. The No.6 though has a few extra parts, 2 Strips, 5 Brackets, 4 Spring Clips, etc., but doesn't have the Hinged Plate, although it's called up for some models - a misprint perhaps.

The models are most of the MECCANO ones from the appropriate sets, all redrawn, renamed, and often slightly modified, sometimes for the better. A No.6 model is shown below. The No.6 models include most of the MECCANO No.3 models as well. One model, 8.1 Air Liner, did not appear in a MECCANO manual until 1940, so that seems to definitely place the 6-8 sets after the war. A TAHC reader wrote that in his 6-8 Manual the Strip Plate in the Illustrated Parts has MECCANO-style blue/gold cross hatching.



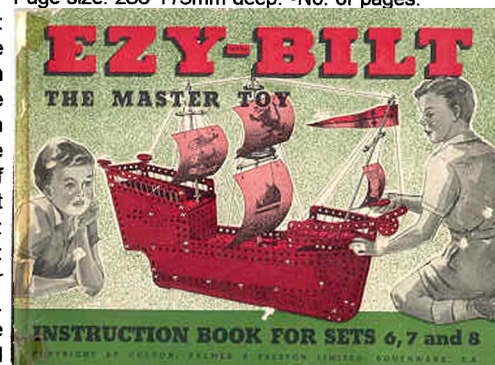
6.26 ROAD RACER

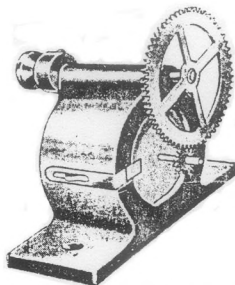
SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: EZY-BILT INSTRUCTION BOOK FOR SETS 6,7 & 8. •Details of maker: Colton, Palmer and Preston Ltd., Cawthorne Street, Southwark, South Australia. •Dates &/or Ref Nos: R. & Mc. on back cover. •Page size: 236*179mm deep. •No. of pages: 72+covers. •Language: English. •Printing: the cover has the Galleon model but is otherwise similar to the one in 7/145; the models are halftones. •Page Nos. of Illustrated Parts List/ Set Contents & highest PN: 2-3,84. •Sets covered: 6,7,8. •No. of models for each set: 46,20,25.

•Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 6: ELEVATED CABIN CRANE,6.30,4; STEAM CAR AND WAGON,6.11,32. 7: MOAT BRIDGE,7.18,34; RAILWAY WRECK CRANE,7.9, 47. 8: ELECTRIC TRACTOR AND TRUCKS,8.24,48; OBSERVATION TOWER,8.12,71. •Other notes: models are not in numerical order; list of models on p72 & IBC.

The 1960s A List dated 1960 shows that the range of parts had already been extended to far exceed those used in Sets 1-8. The parts had also been renumbered. A List from 1962 shows all the 1966 parts (see OSN 7) except the Sprockets and Chain. Incidentally the currency changed from pounds to dollars in Feb. 1966.

As noted in OSN 9, 1961 saw the introduction of the C/W Motor and the No.9 Set. Nothing is known of the latter





but the Motor was apparently made by a company called Robilt in Melbourne. It has been described as 'very substantial with a fully controllable governor with forward and reverse gearing'. There was no official electric motor but a small one, The Mighty Midget Motor (left), made by Medo Distributors, 82 Rose Street, Prospect, Sth. Aust., was advertised as being suitable for E-B or MECCANO models. It cost 12/6, weighed 1¼ oz, and ran on 3-6v batteries.

CPPL closed in the mid-1960s and the first EBPL Price List to hand is for 1966 (Ref.H). The 1967 edition shows the same parts and sets, and so does the 1968 except that the C/W Motor, although still in the Sets, isn't listed separately.

Colours The standard colours were red and green, with the parts in 1950s MECCANO colours except that the Bush Wheel and all Pulleys except the ½" were red. In a photo of some parts (from New Zealand) there's a green as well as a red 2" Pulley, and also a Bush wheel that may be green. The Contrate was described as brass in the CPPL literature but the ones seen are nickel on steel with brass bosses (see 18/523).

The N&B found in a CPPL parts tin seem to be plain steel. [They are larger than MECCANO, the square Nuts are 5/16" (7.9mm) A/F, and the cheeseheaded Bolts, 6.0mm Ø, and about 6½mm u/h.]

In an EBL leaflet (Ref.G) the Bush Wheel, Wheel Disc, all Brackets including M44 & M45, and the Road Wheel 'tyres' are shown white, like the Axles and Tools.

Yellow E-B Strips exist but it isn't clear whether any were ever included in sets. It seems that at the end, bags of yellow Strips and Wheels were bought at the factory (the CPPL Southwark one I think, but it's not quite clear, so possibly EBPL at Kilkenny).

Packaging In TAHC it is said that small sets were in cardboard boxes with the parts tied to a backing cards with green cord; from about Set 4 wooden boxes with heavy sliding card lids were used, with the parts again tied to cards; Sets 6-8 were in metal boxes with hinged lids; and Set 9 was in a wooden box. Whether this applied to all phases isn't known.

The box lid on the cover of the early manual is shown below, while on the right is a later, but still early, CCPL No.4 lid with



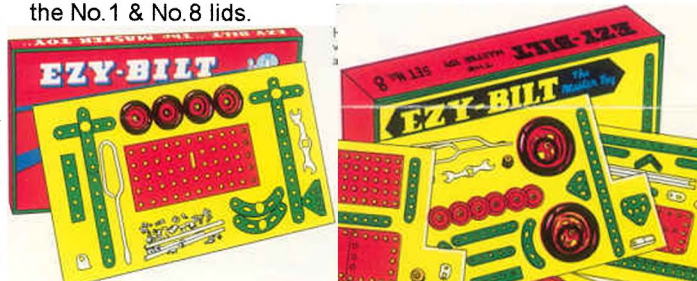
the maker's name & Adelaide on the map of Australia in the bottom right corner. The boy is wearing a tie.

Other designs from CCPL were in red, green, white and black. A No.1 Set has 2 boys and 4 small models, all green except for red Wheels, in the centre, with the map of Australia on the left. Boxes for Sets 6 & 8 are similar but with only one model, the Golden Hind, with all the parts properly coloured.

The small parts in many CCPL sets were in 2½" square tins, with green lids. The latter had the name & a boy with a model, both in red & white, and ASSEMBLY PARTS in black.

The EBL leaflet (Ref.G) shows Sets 1,3,6 & 8. The parts are on yellow cards, one each for the No.1 & No.3 Sets, 3 for the No.6, and 5 for the No.8 with one corner of each cut back to fit around the Motor. Small parts are in blue boxes with EZY-BILT on them. Only part of the tops of the box lids can be seen and for Sets 1 & 3 they are red with the ends of blue lines radiating from the top right corner; the Nos.6 & 8

are yellow with a green Strip on the right side. Below are the No.1 & No.8 lids.



Quality The reported shortcomings of early parts have already been mentioned, and there was a comment on quality in 7/145. One TAHC reader had 1950s parts that were as good as MECCANO, but another, without specifying a period, wrote of Strips varying in thickness from quite thin to very thick, with some bending like lead, but others very brittle. It was suggested that material shortages after the war gave rise to problems.

MODEL-IT

That's with a hyphen, not the American MODELIT. MCS contains good illustrations of the parts, and again although the MECCANO influence can be seen, there are some unusual variations. The parts include 7h Trunnions, a 5*11h Flanged Plate, and another with the centre pressed out, giving a 3*9h Perforated Plate, a 4-hole Bush Wheel and matching Wheel Disc, and a Super Road Wheel, described below.

Among the 42 parts listed in MCS are just 2 Strips, 2½ & 5½", but 3 A/Gs, 5½, 12½, & 18½" long. Some parts not listed can be seen in the models & sets shown, including a Pinion, a Gear, a Worm, & unusual Braced Girders in 5 & 25h lengths, as above.

The Super Road Wheel is described in TAHC as a 1¼" Pulley, with a Tyre marked Advanx-Spiral Model-It, and a Hub Cap that pushes onto the Pulley. The Wheel has an o.d. of 2¾" and 'made a most delightful motor car wheel, like those on 1939 Chevs and Buicks'.

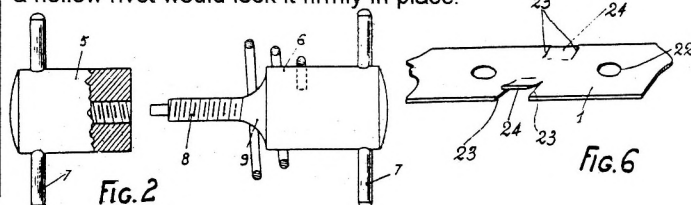
The MAC et NICK Patent (No.936145) This was mentioned in 18/523 and David Hobson has kindly obtained a copy of it for me. Although it wasn't granted until 1948 the application was made in Nov. 1946, by Roland Cosneau from Eure, part of Normandie.

The claim was for a constructional toy, using thin, flexible, perforated strips, with the following features:

- Parts to be joined by light alloy eyelet rivets using the tool (Fig.2 below). The rivets could have slits at their ends to make them both easier to deform, & to take out, using a screwdriver or similar to prise up the turned over ends.
- Other, steel, eyelets to be pushed onto axles to act as collars.
- A spring clip (like #149 in 17/472) to be used to hold a pulley fast on a grooved axle, as at 'B' in 17/473.

Also mentioned are 2 methods of locking strips at right angles to each other. The first is the part #120 (see 17/472) which had (I think) been used in earlier systems. In the second, shown in Fig.6 below, the tabs, 24, butt against the edge of a cross strip fastened through the hole 22. Rather a clumsy solution and not used in the actual system.

It was also suggested that a nut & bolt passing through a hollow rivet would lock it firmly in place.



More from AUSTRALIA

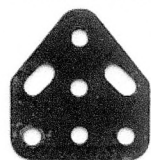
The notes below add to those in 19/540. Since then several readers have sent more material and information, including Frank Beadle, David Hobson, Jim Osborne, & Tony Press (who passed on items from Alf Croucher & Jack Little) - very many thanks to all. For ease of reference 2 lots of 'mystery parts' from Australia are also described here.

BETTAFIT

Some parts now to hand from Frank are described below. There is nothing to positively identify them but they look just like illustrations in MCS, and include the unusual parts. The name BETTAFIT was incorrectly spelt with a hyphen in OSN 19.

• **DATA** (in mm) **Strip** (15-hole): •Hole pitch/dia, 12.65/4.3 •width, 13.0; •thickness, .97; •ends fully radiused. **Boss**: •o/d, 9.5-9.6; •i/d, about 4.4mm; •brass; •single-tapped. **Thread**: $\frac{5}{32}$ " BSW, but see below. **Axle Dia**: 4.05. **DP (Mod)**: N/A. **Nut & Bolt**: see below.

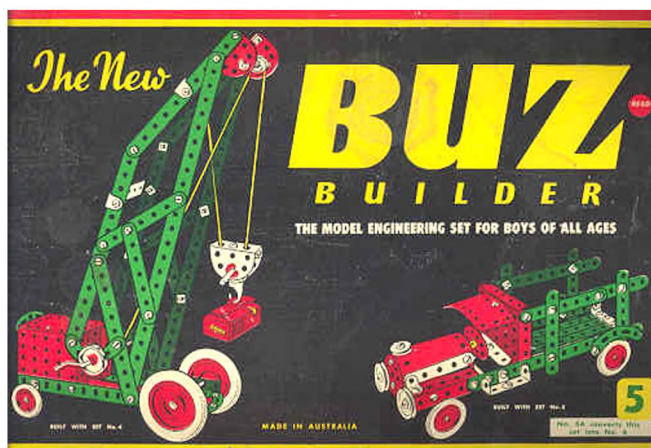
• The holes in the 15,7,5h **Strips** & the 3h **DAS** are at slightly less than $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 12.6mm in some cases. The **Curved Strip** is very similar to M90a but is not stepped; the holes in it are 4.2mm Ø. • The bends in the **Flanged Plate** are not as sharp as M52 and the flanges are deeper by, typically, 1mm. 2 examples have the $\frac{1}{2}$ " slot but a third hasn't and is of thicker, 1.15mm, steel. The **Flanged Sector Plate** is similar to M54 except again, the bends are rounder, and the holes in the flanges are not elongated. These holes can't be seen clearly in MCS. • The **Radiator Plates** are $2\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ " and are rigid, not at all flexible. Corners



are near fully rounded. • The slots in the **Flat Trunnion** (left, 50% scale) are at 45°, and are not quite parallel with the edge. • The **Flat & Double Brackets** are MECCANO pattern, dull plated. • **Pulleys**. The 2" is made from heavy gauge steel. The 1" is 27½mm o.d. and is only 3mm across the 'V'. The Loose 1" is the same diameter but is even narrower at 2-2½mm (it is badly made), and has an eyelet boss. The **Road Wheel** (see OSN 19) is 2½" Ø, and is made from 2 identical, sturdy pressings, held together by the boss. This gives a full tyre contour, 11½mm wide outside the flat centre area. The **peening** of all these bosses (except the Loose Pulley) is a narrow ring of 7mm o.d. The **bores** are very sloppy on the Axles - that of the Loose Pulley is 5.1mm. The **Set Screws** are rusty, RH, & $\frac{1}{4}$ " u/h. • **Axles**, 2 & 3½", have square ends. • In the MCS Parts List the **N&B** are both described as $\frac{5}{32} \times \frac{1}{4}$ ", but the (rusty) N&B with these parts are $\frac{1}{8}$ " BSW, with a RH Bolt, $\frac{1}{2}$ " u/h, and a thick hex Nut, $\frac{1}{4}$ " A/F. It seems unlikely that they are original unless nothing else was available at the time. • **Quality**. Except for the faults already noted, and a certain amount of burr along the edges of Strips and around some holes, the parts are reasonably well made. The paint on many parts is somewhat the worse for wear but was probably acceptable originally. • **Colour**. The Strips, DAS, Flat Trunnion, and Radiator Plates are mid-green; the Flanged Plates, and Pulleys, red. The Road Wheel's centre is red and the 'tyre' white. The red is rather lighter than a mid shade, and the Flanged sector Plate is light red.

BUZ BUILDER

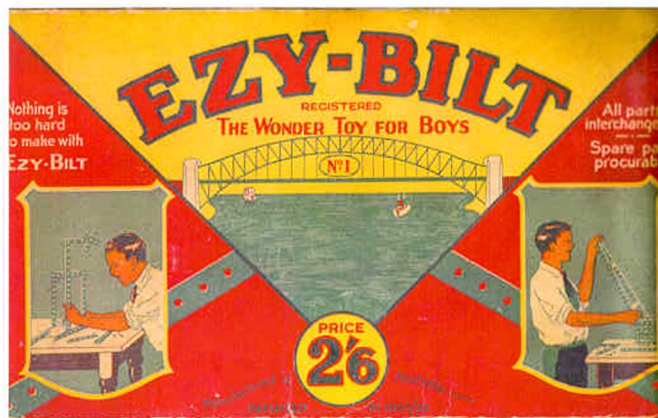
Jim wrote that there were in fact 2 **Kraus brothers** involved with BUZ. He also sent an empty **No.5 box**, white with a red lid, $14\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ ". The centre $11\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ " of the lid (at the top of the next column) is similar to the picture inset in the 1960s manual cover (see 19/542), but in colour, black with r/g models, & BUZ in yellow. The Crane is labelled as a Set 4 model & the Lorry as Set 3. On the side of the lid is '71 MODELS ILLUSTRATED', so if the Set were concurrent with the OSN 19 manual, it would mean only 13



models for Sets 3-5. On the parts, Don Redmond wrote that the holes in an A/G of his (stamped BUZ) are at a pitch of 12.714mm.

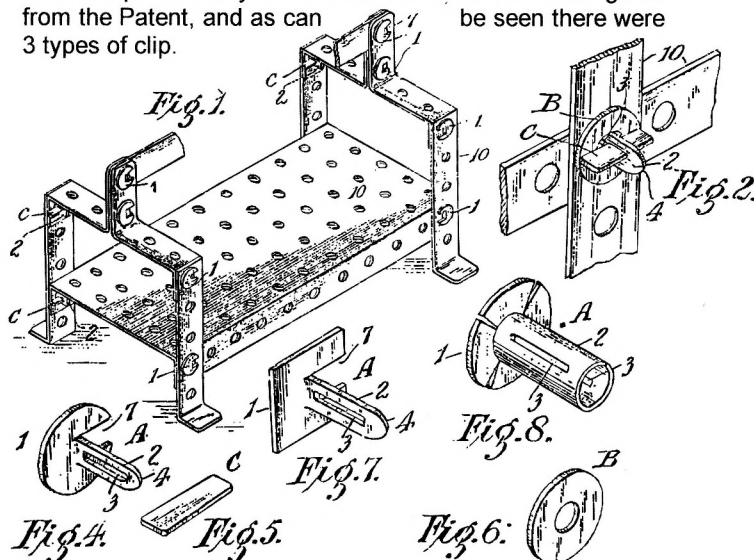
EZY-BILT

Tony wrote of the research carried out by Jack Little and Alf Croucher. The system was first made in Melbourne in about 1935, and a 1936 ad from *The Sun Hobby Book* lists 3 sets at 2/6, 5/- & 8/6. The brightly coloured, yellow, red & green label (below) is from a 2/6, No.1 Set, thought to be from



very early production, and it measures about 12*7". The small 'No.1' is on the side elevation of the Sidney Harbour Bridge, and either side of the price, at the bottom, is 'Manufactured in Australia', & 'Patented' & 'No.7007/22'. The boys in the frames right & left are making a Crane, & (what might be) a Windmill, respectively.

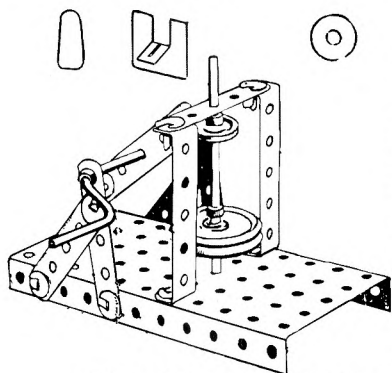
The **Patent** covered the use of clips, held by flat wedges, to hold the parts together 'in lieu of bolts and nuts, now generally or largely used, which latter are relatively expensive to produce and in addition are inconvenient to handle and adjust,...'. The application was made in May 1922 by James Perrott, 43 Madeline Street, Carlton, Victoria, and was accepted in May 1923. Below are some of the Figures from the Patent, and as can be seen there were 3 types of clip.



Judging from the manual models of the time, shown later, the simple circular type (Fig.4) were the ones used in E-B. All this explains of course the name EZY-BILT. The clips in the Patent might be considered an improvement on the PHANTASIE part (see 15/417), in that they had a flat surface on the outside of the model, and were perhaps a little cheaper to produce. However the double 'prong' of the German part would probably have made it easier to insert the wedge securely. PHANTASIE came onto the market in 1923 but it isn't known if its Clips were patented or were a registered design.

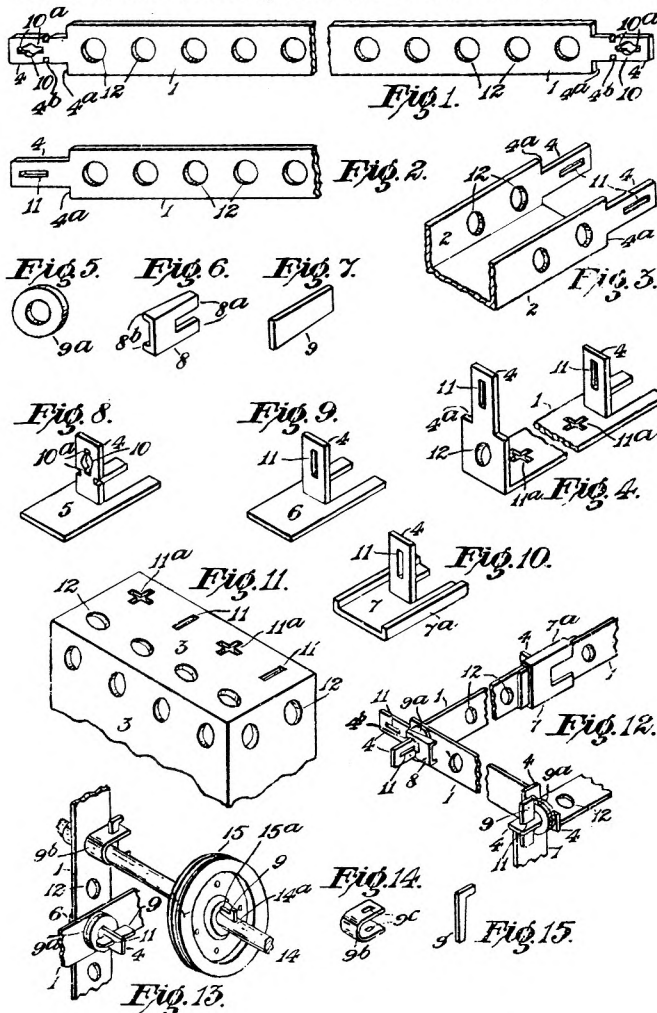
Before going on with the story it may be of interest to look at a couple of other connections between Melbourne and systems using wedges to hold the parts. MCS contains

No. 25. Cotter Pin, Ties, and Washers



ENGINEERIT, thought to be American from the 1920s, & under a model in what appears to be part of an ad, is 'Sole Agent For Australia & New Zealand, P.V. Morris, 7 Elizabeth St., Melbourne.' Shown top left are the 'square' Clip parts used at first, & under them one of a 'New Series' of models in which the Clip has a rounded shape. Both types look quite similar to the simpler Perrott parts.

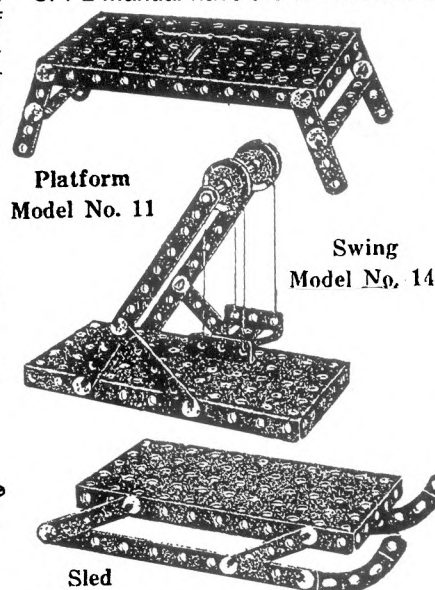
The other connection is a UK **Patent 196581** (from David Hobson), which is in the name of Alfred Carlyle Day of 8 Wright's lane, Melbourne, and has an Australian Convention date of April 24, 1922. Here wedges are used again but the details of the joints are somewhat complicated, with various alternatives mooted. Strips have reduced width ends which can pass through the holes, or through either of the 3 shapes of slot in some of the parts (slit, slit with centre hole, cross, see Figs.1,2,4), and are held by the cotter



pin (Fig.7), with packing washers as necessary. A different wedge (Fig.6) can engage in the nicks 4b in some of the tongues (Figs.1,8). Both types of wedging can be seen in Fig.12, and also the use of an angle 7 (see Fig.10) to join 2 strips. Notable among the other parts shown are a channel girder (Fig.3), & a flanged plate (Fig.11), with its 'interesting' pattern of holes & slots in the end flange. Fig.13 shows a wheel with keyway being held to a flattened axle by another wedge (Fig.15), and also an axle stop (Fig.14) using the same wedge. Incidentally the hole in the slit/hole type of slot was meant to be large enough to take an axle.

Back to E-B. It was not made by CPPL (Colton, Palmer & Preston Ltd.) originally, but by a **George Irving**, and it is presumably his firm, **Ezybilt Pty. Ltd.**, Melbourne, which is on a January 1941 Price List. The patented Clips were replaced by N&B 'soon after' the start, and the 1941 List includes N&B but not the Clip parts. The basic sets in this List are Nos.1-5 (3/11 to 26/6) and 2A-4A, but there is also 'the New Camouflage Set' at 15/- (a price between Nos.3 & 4), and the **Pocket Edition**, at 2/6. One of the latter is known and in Tony's words, 'it predates Pocket Meccano by some decades!', but so far only some parts from the Camouflage Set (probably) have turned up. In a 1941 toy catalogue, Sets 1-5 are listed at the above prices plus 2 Camouflage Sets at 15/- & 21/-. The parts in the 1941 List are all those needed for the CPPL Sets 1-5 (see 7/144, Refs.A-C). 2 '**Booklets**' are listed, for Nos.1,2 & 3, and Nos.4 & 5.

3 pages from a prewar **Clip era manual** show all the No.1 models from the later CPPL manual (1st col., 19/544) except that No.19 is a Field Gun against the CPPL Cutlery Box. New photos, though usually very similar, have been used by CPPL, with the Clips replaced by N&B. Two other changes. All the Flanged Plates that can be seen in the CPPL manual have the 1/2" slot and saw blade slit whereas



Sled Model No. 9

some of the 'Clip' models show these and some don't. Secondly the CPPL Model Nos. have '1.' In front of them. I wonder how the 'Clip' models for larger sets were numbered. 3 of the 'Clip' models are shown left - in many cases simple joints are used without overlap or triangulation to make them rigid. At the bottom of the last page is a note which includes: 'If three or more pieces [are used] together, use narrower wedge.' 2 depths of Wedge would allow a shallower taper & a more secure fixing.

E-B was bought by CPPL, possibly when George Irving enlisted, but it isn't certain just when. One suggestion is after 1941, but Jim wrote that the Set to be described next, with CPPL on the label, was probably from 1941.

The 1941 Set (from Jim) is a No.4, largely complete, and with the 1-5 Manual described in the 1st column of 19/544. The Set is in a steel box, 20*10*1", with a metal centre partition, and the parts were strung on the yellow cards still in the box. The box was painted grey by a previous owner and may originally have been unpainted galvanised steel. The lid has a 1/4" deep flange all round and just sits on top of the box. Most of the 13*9" label on it is still intact, and is similar to the early one on the opposite page but with: the yellow areas replaced by white; a 1" wide sur-

round of green with a band of 4 narrow yellow lines on it; 'No.4' in the circle at the bottom instead of the price; and the CPPL name followed by 'Adelaide, South Australia' at the bottom instead of the reference to the Patent.

Compared with the **Contents** in the Manual (as MCS/NZ p6) the main parts missing completely are the Hook, Rubber Axle Stops, & Cord. Also there are no Rubber Tyres for the 1" & 2" Pulleys, but instead 4 Road Wheels. And 4 DAS instead of 3 (as in the later MCS/FB p3/4,a). The absence of rubber parts and Cord was no doubt due to wartime shortages but the Manual doesn't bear the label mentioned in 19/544 (on a similar postwar manual) which explained the situation.

The Parts • DATA (in mm) **Strip** (11-hole): •Hole pitch/dia, 12.7/4.3 •width, 12.8; •thickness, 1.05; •ends fully radiused. **Boss**: •o/d, 9.6; •i/d, 4.17; •brass; •double tapped. **Thread**: 5/32" BSW. **Axle Dia**: 4.06. **DP (Mod)**: ? **Nut**: square 7.9 A/F; **Bolt**: cheesehead 5.8 dia; both plain steel.

The parts below are like MECCANO unless otherwise stated. • **Strips** with 5,11,15h. The 15h has 4.2mm holes and the ends are nearly fully rounded. A few of the various Strips are about 1.5mm thick, & one is 13.1mm wide. • The 5h **DAS** are like M48a, & the **Curved Strips** are similar to M90a except the slots are 8 1/2mm long. • The cutouts of the **Trunnions** are 1/2mm higher up than in M126,a, & the metal outside them is only 3mm wide. • The **Flanged Plate** has the 1/2" cross slot but no Saw slit, and the slots in the **Flanged Sector Plate** are only 6mm long. • **Brackets**. The Stepped Bent Strip, Double Brackets, and some Flat Brackets are plated a dull silver colour; other Flat, & all A/Bs, are tin plated. The Reversed A/Bs are nickel plated and are 13mm wide, with an extra 1 1/2mm of metal outside the round hole. • **Axles** (2,3 1/2,6 1/2") have square ends. • The **Bush Wheel** is nickel with 4.6mm holes and the boss peening is deeply recessed. • The **2" Pulley & Road Wheel** also have this peening, and the latter is tin plate, now grey, with the conical centre red. • The **1" Pulleys** are 27mm o.d. with a narrow, 3-3 1/2mm wide 'V'. Peening is a narrow ring with splitting in some cases. The Loose one has eyelet centres, 4.8mm bore. • Another set of **1" Pulleys** was in the box (4 Fast, 2 Loose), and most of them won't quite fit the Axles. They are 25 1/2mm Ø, 4mm wide across the 'V', and the bend outward to form it is much sharper. Bosses are similar but with no splitting. • The **Small Loose Pulley** is brass, 16mm o.d. & 4.6mm wide. • The **Nuts** are pressed & 2.4mm thick; **Bolts** are 1/4" u/h. Most bosses have ordinary Bolts in them, but 2 of the 4 Road Wheels have **Grub Screws**. • The **Screwdriver** in the box (below) is 98mm o/a, and is rather like the illustration in the later CPPL



1-5 manual (described in 7/145). • **Quality**. Quite good apart from the dimensional variations already noted, and the rather crude bosses of the 1" Pulleys. (If they are E-B - the 'alternatives' are much better and look more like a photo of some other E-B parts, even if they don't all go onto the Axles). • **Finish**. All the parts not already described are painted dark green, except the mid-red Flanged Plates & Pulleys. A few parts, the rectangular Flanged Plate for example, are well painted, but most have thickening of the paint on some edges or occasional rough patches.

Production resumed in Adelaide under a special permit in October/November 1944, in time for the Xmas season. A Notice on the back of a 'Folded Box No.1 Set' explained that the packaging was to save cardboard, and E-B would be attractively boxed again when peace returns. Jim wrote that the postwar No.4 was in the same metal box as the '1941' one except that it had a sliding lid. As already noted, manuals from the time had a label explaining the absence of Cord & rubber parts, and the CPPL address on it is the one used in later literature - **Southwark**, South Australia. He also mentioned that he had heard that there were several changes of ownership subsequent to CPPL,

and that a firm called **Lanes** bought E-B in 1955. The first List to hand after that is for 1960, but there's no name on it, nor on those for 1961 & 1962. The next one, for 1966, is from Ezy-Bilt (Pty) Ltd. (EBPL).

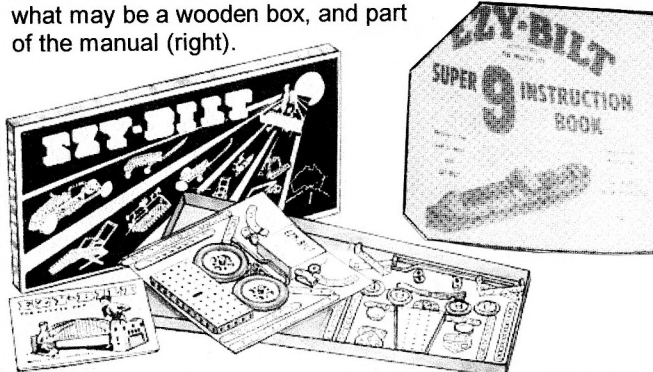
Another goody from Jim, a **Manual for Sets 6,7 & 8** from Ezy-Bilt Ltd.

SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: EZY-BILT •Details of maker: EZY-BILT LTD., 630 Port Road, Kilkenny, South Australia.. •Dates &/or Ref Nos: none. •Page size: 287*216mm deep. •No. of pages: 48+covers. •Language: English. •Printing: B&W photos of models on art paper; full colour cover (below) with yellow ground. •No Parts List. •Page Nos. of Set Contents & highest PN: IBC, 162. •Sets covered: 6,7,8. •No. of models for each set: 34,16,21. •Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 6: Air Force Lorry,6.13,2; Child's Swing,6.5,18. 7: Round-about,7.7,19; Giant Turret Tank,7.14,27. 8: Air Liner,8.1,28; Tripod Crane,8.11,47. •Other notes: the models on p13 are for Set 6, not 7 as stated.



The **models** are the same as those in the CPPL 6-8 Manual described in the 2nd column of 19/544, but there are a few less of them, and they are in a different order, with the Model Nos. still out of sequence. The photos of the models are as before but look very clear on the art paper used, and the larger page size allows the text, unchanged, to be in larger type. Altogether a better production. The cover is similar to the front panel of the colour Leaflet, Ref.G of 7/144. The **set contents** are given for Sets 6-8, and are as in the CPPL Manual except for an extra 2x 3" Strips in each, and 2 less Collars in the No.8. The highest PN in the Set Contents is #162 (the No.9 manual).

The Manual's **Intro** includes a line drawing of a smallish set with a box lid (below left) like the one on the left in the 2nd column of 19/545, and a manual like the CPPL/EBL 1-5 with the r/g 'Bridge' cover. A whole page is devoted to an ad for the No.9 set - called the '**Super 9**' - & the Spring Motor. The former is said to have 1045 parts (against 538 in the No.8), & 3 manuals with 266 models. 255 models were claimed for the No.8 in Ref.G, so that would indicate 11 No.9 models. A photo of the Set shows several trays in what may be a wooden box, and part of the manual (right).



Production of E-B is thought to have finished in about 1970. The details to hand of **the EZY-BILT story** are now spread over several Issues and it may be useful to try to summarise the main points.

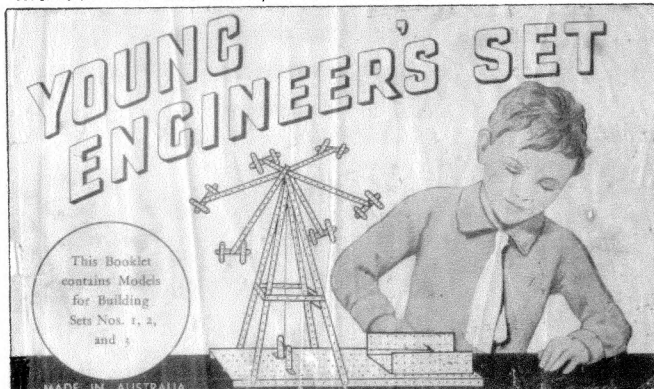
•First sets produced in Melbourne using Clip fixing. c1935

- 3 Sets advertised.
 - Clips replaced by N&B. Likely by say
 - An Ezy-Bilt List has Sets: Pocket, 1-5, Camouflage; & Manuals: 1-3, 4-5.
 - CPPL acquires E-B, perhaps as early as
 - A CPPL, Adelaide No.4 set has CPPL, Adelaide, 'brown Bridge 1-5' manual (see c1/19/544). Possibly
 - Production resumes at Adelaide with only Sets 1-5.
 - Label on 'brown Bridge 1-5' manual has Southwark address. Known from
 - Sets 6-8 introduced with (presumably) 'r/g Galleon 6-8' manual (see c2/19/544), from CPPL, Southwark.
 - New CPPL, Southwark 'r/g Bridge 1-5' manual (see bottom 7/145). Sets 6-8 mentioned. #84 Grub Screw is listed in a later edition.
 - E-B reportedly bought by Lanes.
 - List has no name but Sets 1-8; new parts up to 161, & new PN's.
 - List as 1960 but Sets 1-9, & C/W Motor.
 - List as 1961 but parts to 162 (No.9 manual).
 - EBL, 630 Port Road, Kilkenny / Rayon Surfaces Ltd., 'r/g Bridge 1-5 colour' manual. Virtually as CPPL 'r/g Bridge 1-5' but with red, purple models (see 7/145).
 - Colour Leaflet from EBL, 630-632 Port Road, Kilkenny (Ref.G, OSN 7). Motor featured; No.9 listed.
 - New EBL, 630 Port Road, Kilkenny 'large 6-8' manual (described above) with cover like Leaflet above. Parts to #162. Motor & No.9 (called 'Super 9') featured.
 - CPPL reported closed, but irrelevant if E-B to Lanes in 1955.
- 1936
1937-38
1941
1941
1941
1944
1945
?
?
1955
1960
1961
1962
?
?
?
Mid-1960s
1966
1967
1968
1970

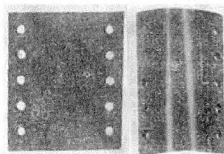
The order of the undated items is largely guesswork, and information to fill gaps, remove uncertainties, & give end points will of course be very welcome. Was there a 'large 1-5' manual? What happened to the NZ production? Was there a reason for the name Ezy-Bilt Ltd. to change to Ezy-Bilt Pty. Ltd.? And if so when did it occur?

YOUNG ENGINEER'S SET

This is the name (I'll call it YES) on the cover (below) of a manual that Jim sent, and it sounds as if it is the one



thought to be related to BETTAFIT (BET) in 19/540. The name appears only on the front & back covers and there is no mention of a maker anywhere. Possible connections

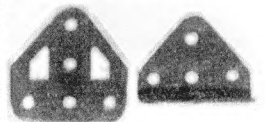


between it and the MCS BET entry are: • the range of parts is the same except that YES has none of the parts on the 2nd MCS page (#27-34) except the Flat & Curved Radiator Plates (left); • the names of the parts are the



same (though not the PN's) except that the word 'Radiator' isn't used in YES; • the Stepped Bent Strip (M44) (left) has the unusual name of "U"

Piece in both systems, and the illustrations used are identical. Points of difference are that the YES Plates have square corners, and the YES Trunnions are as below, with different piercing, and don't have the BET slotted holes. It isn't clear whether the Curved Strip is stepped, or flat, like BET. Apart from the parts already described the only distinguishing feature is the 1/2" cross slot in the Flanged Plate (as BET). However this slot isn't shown in many of the models. If the systems are connected, YES may have come before B-F, and possibly from the early 1940s. One clue to age may be the prices of the parts, which are typically 20% lower than those in the 1941 E-B List (the YES 5*11h Flanged Plate was 6d, the 11h Strip & Trunnions, 1d each, & the 1" Pulley with Boss, 5d).

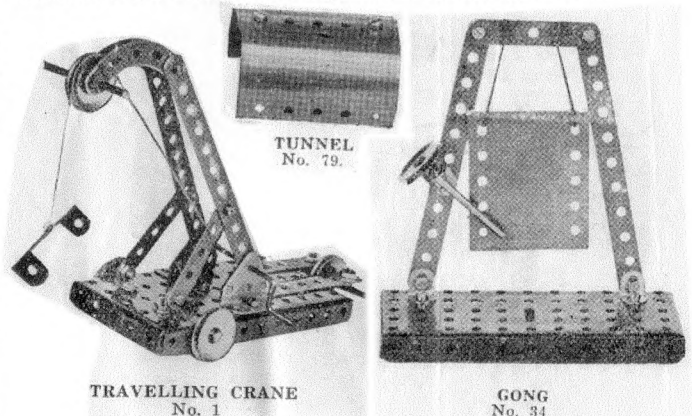


SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: YOUNG ENGINEER'S SET

•Details of maker: none. •Dates &/or Ref Nos: none. •Page size: 280*165mm deep. •No. of pages: 16 inc covers. •Language: English. •Printing: all B&W with photos of models. •Page No. of Illustrated Parts List & highest PN: 2,28. •Page No. of Set Contents & highest PN: 16, 28. •Sets covered: 1,2,3. •No. of models for each set: 21,30,33. •Name, Model No., Page No. of first & last model of each set: 1: TRAVELLING CRANE,1,3; GARDEN EDGE LAWN CUTTER,21,5. 2: GYM HORSE,22,6; SHOVEL,51,11. 3: PARALLEL BARS,52,12; WINDMILL,84,16. •Other notes: Model 44 (p9) is mislabelled 41.

The contents of the 3 sets are progressive except that the No.1 has 4x 1" Loose Pulleys, and the No.2 has 2 plus 2 'with Boss'. The No.3 includes 26 N&B ('5/32'), 22 Strips/DAS (including 2x 7 1/2"), a Flanged Plate, 2 each of the Flat/ Curved Plates, 2 each of the Trunnions, 2 extra 1" Pulleys, & 4x 1" Tyres.

Some of the numerous models are familiar but many are original, often making use of the Flat & Curved Plates. Few though do justice to the contents of the Sets. The small photo provided of each model would be enough to make most of them without difficulty. Three are shown below.



MYSTERY PARTS NO.43

Jim sent over this lot of parts which he was given some years ago, with the suggestion that they might be BETTAFIT or YOUNG ENGINEER'S SET. Generally, apart from the Flanged Plates, they are not as well made as the BET ones described already, with some rough edges, different size holes in individual parts, holes off centre, etc. The Flanged Plates are painted light red; some of the other parts are mid-green, but most are light green, and differ in several details from the mid-green ones.

The red parts. 2x 5*11h Flanged Plates with the 1/2" slot, which more or less match the BET ones. 2 Flanged Sector Plates which are like BET but have 6mm slotted holes in the flanges.

The mid-green parts are 6 each of 5h Strips with near fully radiused ends, & M90a Curved Strips, and 2 MECCANO-type Trunnions. Holes are 4.2mm, with 4.3mm in the Curved Strips.

The lighter green parts are: • 5,11,15h Strips {10,4, 2}, 12.9mm wide, with 7mm radiused ends & 4.4mm holes

Correction The transliterated name BOENNAYA in 25/717 & 718 should read VOENNAYA (my thanks to Don Redmond). This set in question is no doubt similar to the one mentioned in 24/714, though some details are not identical.

ITEMS FROM LETTERS

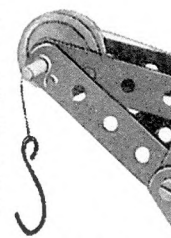
1. From Thomas Morzinck. • On the **ANKER Metal Parts** (25/730) The set with the 1897 parts offered by Richter in that year cost (a very expensive) 60 Marks. One year later it was deleted. Tobias Mey mentioned in his book *Zum Bauspiel*, that the Keller brothers - former employees in Richter's factory - sold their own Bridge Set from 1897 using preformed metal parts. In their advertising literature the Keller brothers called Richter's 1895 Bridge Set 'a screwed idea'. ('eine verschraubte Idee' in German). [The Keller Set may be even earlier. A UK patent No.5781 in the names of Georg & Paul Keller is dated 1890, and the parts in it (owned by David Hobson) correspond to those believed to be from a Set which was awarded a prize at a London exhibition in 1891, and also to those in a photo of a Bridge made from the 1897 Set above. The main elements are Straight & Curved T-section Girders, joined by Flat Strips which push into the double wall web of the Girders to represent uprights & bracing. A George Wetzel sales list sent by Don Redmond has an illustration of a Keller Bridge Set called **DIAMOND BRIDGE BUILDER**, with 4 children ('one Chinese, one American Indian, one white, & one Ethiopian') looking at a Church made from blocks, and a Bridge with block piers and a span of the metal parts.]

• Tobias mentioned that the early **DUX** parts (c1938) look like the Julius Weiss parts from 1892.

2. From Don Redmond. • More on **NECOBO**. The parts mentioned in 24/714 were from a lot which are probably a large part of an early No.4 Set, plus some later parts, and some which may or may not be NECOBO. The manual with them covers Set 0-4 and its parts list goes up to only PN 99, so is earlier than either of the MCS lists, and fits between the 1st & 2nd manuals described in 4/57. The 11 & 25h Strips have large-radius ends but there are also 11h, and 3 & 5h, with half-round ends. There are 2 sets of 1" Pulleys: 3 have red painted steel discs and very fine (small, round) peening on the brass boss; the other 4 have aluminium discs and steel boss with very deep conical peening. The aluminium Pulleys had a set of fat white soft Rubber Rings of 5mm circular form, 35mm o.d. The red ones had black rubber Tyres with a tread of 5 circumferential raised lines & radial raised bars on one sidewall. There was also one Tyre about 7mm thick, 38mm o.d., with NECOBO in raised lettering on one side. The aluminium Pulleys are suspect since there were also red Loose Pulleys. All the Gears are Mod.1 and the 60t is the early unperforated type. The Flanged & Triangular Plates, and the Face Plate are red. The Flexible Plates are aluminium painted dark blue. Under a red & ivory daub of enamel the Windows (#126) seem to have been painted silver. Strips, A/Gs, & Railings are dark green, darker than the early MECCANO dark shade. The red is quite light, between Meccano's light & medium. The parts have a surprising range of thickness. 25h Strips are 1.38mm; 11h Strips 1.0mm; Railings .84mm; 5*4h Triangular Plates 1.18mm; Windows .81mm; but Trunnions are only .67mm. Two types of Collar were found, both tapped 5/32" BSW. One is 10mm Ø, 7mm thick, double-tapped, and the other 8.5mm Ø, 6.5mm thick, & single-tapped. Two later parts are the Cone Pulley, #176, machined from brass with a concave rear (boss) face, and the Eccentric, #180, which has a brass arm/loop held between two red steel discs by a brass boss and a matching brass stub, both peened with a very deep, conical bottomed recess. [A small lot of later Strips, Girders, & Trunnions (up to PN 195C but none more than 9h long) are also the very dark green - the Girders are about .8mm thick, the Strips 1.05mm, and the Trunnions

.85mm.]

In a later letter Don pointed out that the Hook #90 hasn't been seen, and isn't illustrated in any parts list, but in the manual models is shown as the wire type right. Also it seems likely that the Faceplate #83 with the 2 rings of 8 holes (see 24/714) is an early part because the 6cm Disc, #82 (a Faceplate without a boss), appears thus in several of the manual models. Later, as shown in 4/59, both had the pattern with radial slots.



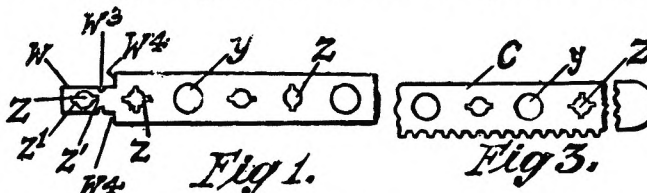
• On **STEEL ENGINEERING** (see 23/666), the wings of the formed Collar, X37, are near circular in shape, as opposed to the ERECTOR rectangle.

• In response to a question to Don about **WISDOM** (to include also CONSTRUCT-O-STEEL & CONSTRUCTION MODELS), he wrote that there are two patterns of slotted holes in Trunnions & 5*11h Flanged Plates. Most have rounded ends but some have large-radius 'BRAL' ends. The length o/a is 6.4mm for both. All the slots in known examples of the other sizes of Flanged Plates have rounded ends. Note that the Flat Trunnion is not made from the same blank as the Trunnion, and has no slotted holes. On colours, the 5*11h Flanged Plate is known in light, medium, & dark* blue, and medium, & dark* red; the Trunnion in medium, & dark* blue, and in two shades of dark red*. The asterisks denote a lacquered finish, with a metallic look.

3. From Tim Edwards. On Chinese **MECHANIX** (see 24/710), there is also a 001 Set with 68 parts, price £3.50. [A 002 Set with 108 parts has also now been seen.]

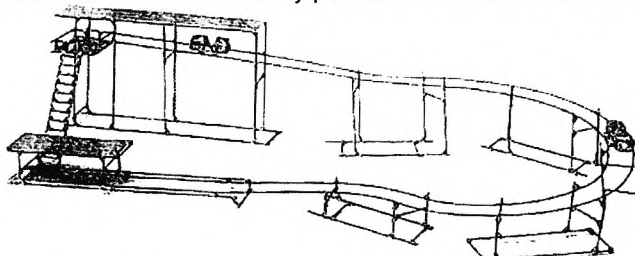
4. Josep Bernal wrote that **BRAL** is no longer being made. [The BRAL web site, www.bralsystem.com has just a home page with 'stiamo ritornando' on it - we will return? Let's hope so.]

5. From Jack Little. • On the **Day patent** (22/637), Jack sent a copy of the original Australian patent (No.6000/22, accepted 27th Nov. 1922), with added changes to the figures arising from an Application for Amendment on 5th August, 1924. The text is similar to the UK version but not identical and the original figures differ too in detail. Fig.1 below shows



a different pattern of holes for example, and the Strip in Fig.3 has a serrated edge & rounded end. The purpose of these features isn't explained. The changes made to the figures in 1924 took the form of overwriting some with a large cross and writing Cancelled & 18/11/24 alongside. 3 of the 4 cancellations are of the parts shown in Figs.8, 9, & the righthand end of Fig.4, in OSN 22. The parts in question are made in the same way as the EZY-BILT Clips (22/636) but whether that had a bearing on the matter isn't known. The fourth change was to delete the slitted end of the Fig.2 Strip, though similar ends with a slit with centre hole remain unaltered.

• Also from Jack, the cutting below from the Nov. 1947 *Sportsgoods, Toy & Canvas "Retailer"*, which confirms that CLIRO (described elsewhere in this Issue) was sold in Australia. It is: unfortunately p31 hasn't been found and so it



A Scenic Railway made from the Schofield Model Building Set. Further details of this set appear on Page 31.

isn't certain what the system was called in Australia.

6. On **THE CONSTRUCTIONER** (see 9/206), Orion DreamDancer wrote that the B-135 single-bend Bases in his oldest #8 set have no groove and are one hole longer than those with the groove that were in a newer #8. Also, it seems that all the Bases get thinner with time, through the 'old' & 'new' #8's to the thinnest in a #12. Of these three sets only the old #8 has the older style Eccentric with just the 6 holes. On N&B, the old #8 has Phillips Screws & hex Nuts, the newer #8 has slotted Screws with both square & hex Nuts, and the #12 has slotted Screws & hex Nuts. All the Screws have rounded heads and the quantities of N&B found seem to indicate that they were probably originally in the sets concerned. The larger Tire in the newer #8 set has grooves around the outer edge; all the rest of the Tires, large & small, are just rings. All the sets came with manuals: the old #8 is a © 1947; the other two are © 1948. The latter have the part count by the models, and show A/G's & the newer type of Motor/gearbox with the enclosed gears.

7. From Werner Sticht. Ansgar Henze has had the good fortune to find a **WALTHER'S INGENIEUR** set, and kindly passed some details for OSN. The Set is in 'unplayed with' condition, though without a manual, and has no set number anywhere on it. The box is wooden, about 30cm square, with a sliding lid, and quite deep to accommodate a small model, which was included, ready-made, from some of the parts in the Set. The box has 2 wooden partitions and most of the parts are strung to 3 pale green cards. The label, 26*17cm, on the top of the lid has the name with 5 models underneath. All these are in the manual that was with the No.12 set described in 19/550 (but possibly it was from a No.10 outfit). Another label on the underside of the lid has the set contents with illustrations of most of the parts.

The contents of the Set do not relate well to those of Sets 11 (see 7/164) & 12, in that though there are fewer different parts, there are more of some types, particularly the metal ones. For example the Set has 40 A/Gs against 22 in the No.11, and 11 Perf. Plates against 6. Among the parts are 2 Hanger Strips & a Wire Crank Handle, parts which are needed for models in the manual with the No.12 set (they can be seen in OSN 19), but which were not listed in the Set Contents of the No.12. They are included and illustrated in this set's Contents, and for this reason it may be later than the 11 & 12.

As well as there being fewer types of wooden parts,

The OSN Web Site: www.OSNL.freemove.co.uk
Colour pictures of some of the illustrations in OSN 2-11 & 17-26 are now included, and also lists of contents for Nos.1-26.

several have different dimensions. The main differences are that the Base is 75mm square instead of 120*80mm, and one Plate is 35*25mm instead of 35mm square. For the metal parts the most noticeable thing is that there are no Strips or A/Gs longer than 7 holes. Also 6 Screwed Rods with 25 Nuts are included against only one, with 5 Nuts, in Nos. 11 & 12.

A few of the wooden parts are unpainted; the others are variously red, dark blue, dark green, brown, or black. The metal parts are bright nickel plated on one side and black on the other.

Werner added that the metal parts in the No.12 of OSN 19 have the same nickel/black finish, and that the House Wall Panels in that set have a red brick finish, with a cutout in one as a doorway and a white oblong on another as a window, with the window frame outlined in black.

8. More from Don Redmond. • On the absence of the name **Hudson** from the 'Hudson' manuals (25/737), perhaps there is a misunderstanding about the word 'Hudson'. It is the designation of the 4-6-4 locomotive type, which is known in the UK as the Baltic. The 'Hudson' name was probably used by the New York Central Railroad because its main line from New York ran along the Hudson River to Albany (and thence westward).

• And in reply to a query about **KONSTRUKTOR VOENNAYA TEHNIKA** (25/718), the maker's name is actually ЧЗАЗ which transliterates to CHEAZ. [The address in Cheboksary is: I. Yakovleva Avenue, 5.]

Baukästen This excellent book (see 21/601) has been remaindered and at the time of writing (end of February) the hardback edition was available from www.zweiteausendeins.de at DM 24 + postage (DM 16 for UK, and the same if 2 copies are ordered at the same time). Thanks to Thomas Morzinck for this information. The site is German of course but has an English language option. Payment can be made by credit card. The copy I bought didn't have the errata slip in it that was in the original, but it only has 10 items on it and I can copy it for anyone who needs it.

EXTRA MCS SHEETS Each Sheet costs 15p + postage if the whole batch as listed in each Issue of OSN is ordered at the same time. That makes £1.80 for the 12 below, plus postage. For all other purchases each Sheet costs 20p + postage if copied double-sided like the originals, but 7½p per side + postage if copied single-sided. All back Sheets can be supplied.

MCS Amendments, List No.10 [1 Sheet]
BILD-A-KIT: X1.1,2/5 [1 Sheet]

DURALUMINUM CONSTRUCTION SET: X1.1,2,4,5 [2 Sheets]
ELECTRIC: X2.3a/5a/6a,5b,7d,7e [2 Sheets]
FRAMUS: X1.1/2,4/5 [1 Sheet]
HANDY SET: X1.1,2/5/6 [1 Sheet]
KITPOCK: X2.4/6,5 [1 Sheet]
TOY TOWN: X1.1,2,4/6,5 [2 Sheets]
WALTHER'S INGENIEUR: X3.5a,3b/4b/6b [1 Sheet]

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your remittance of _____ received with thanks.
Your credit balance after deduction for this Issue and _____
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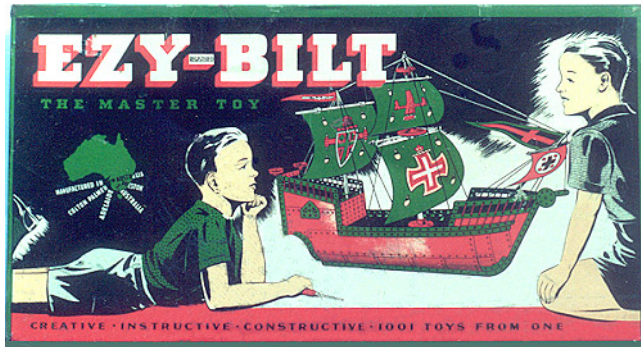
SUBSCRIPTION RATES For 2002 (OSN 26 and 27), including postage, at Printed Paper Rate where appropriate: UK £6; airmail to Europe and surface mail anywhere, £7; airmail outside Europe, £8. **BACK NUMBERS** For the zones above: OSN 1: £1/£1.30/£1.50; OSN 2,3: £2.30/£2.70/£2.90 each; OSN 4 onwards: £3.60/£4.10/£4.50 each.

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An EZY-BILT No.7 Set David Hobson kindly lent me this set, near complete, made by Colton, Palmer & Preston (7/144, 19/543, & 22/637 has more on the different manufacturers). It is likely to date from the 2nd half of the 1940s or the 1st half of the 1950s.

The outfit is packed in a tinplate box 9*17*3", with a hinged lid. The sides are painted black with 'EZY-BILT', 'THE MASTER TOY', & '7', in red & white. The lid is shown below.



The PARTS At a glance they look just like 1950s MECCANO except that the red is lighter, nearly as light as the 1960s Liverpool shade. Closer inspection shows a few differences in the parts, and these are noted below if not already covered in the description of the 1940s parts in 22/638.

- **Holes** are 4.1 or 4.2mm Ø.
- The ends of **Strips** are fully rounded or very nearly so.
- The cutouts in the **Trunnions** are as in MECCANO.
- The **Brackets** are nickel except the green 2*2h A/B.
- **Axles** have slightly rounded square ends and are nicked.
- The holes in the **Bush Wheel** are even larger at 4.8mm,

and the peening is a narrow ring (as it was for the OSN 22 part, not recessed as stated there).

- The recessed **peening** is used on the Road Wheel, and the 2 & 3" Pulleys.
- The **1" Fast Pulley** is very similar to the extra, suspect, OSN 22 part, except that it fits the Axles. No 1" Loose Pulleys were in the Set.
- The black **2" Tyre** has 'EZY-BILT REGD' & '6.00 - 16' moulded into both walls. The tread pattern is the same as that on the OLYMPIC one mentioned in 7/144. The **1" Tyre** is a black rubber ring of 6mm Ø section.
- The **½" Pinion** is just like M26 but the **50t Contrate** is as described in 18/523. It has the recessed type boss.
- The **Spring Cord** is 2.8mm o.d. and a dull light grey colour.
- The **Spanner** is generally like M34 but has wider openings to suit the E-B Nut, the waists are wider (6mm), the bends are at 90°, and the metal is thinner (1.15mm).
- **Flexible Plates** have no slotted holes, and only the 3*11h has a centre hole.
- The **3*5h Flanged Plate** is similar to M51 except that it is about 3mm longer & 2mm wider (65*38½mm). The flanges are just a little wider. The top is fully perforated, not as shown in the Illustrated Parts.
- The **Cylinder** is painted red.
- The **Wheel Disc** is 1¼" Ø, like M217a, and is nicked.

Parts missing from the No.7 are: the ½ & 1" Loose Pulleys; the Stepped Bent Strip, Rod Connector, and Rod & Strip Connector; the 3" Screwed Rod, Threaded Pin, & Pivot Bolt; the Cord, Cord Anchoring Spring, Driving Bands, Hooks, Spring Clip, Washer & Screwdriver.

There was also no **manual** with the Set but the '6, 7 & 8' described in 19/544 would be the appropriate one.

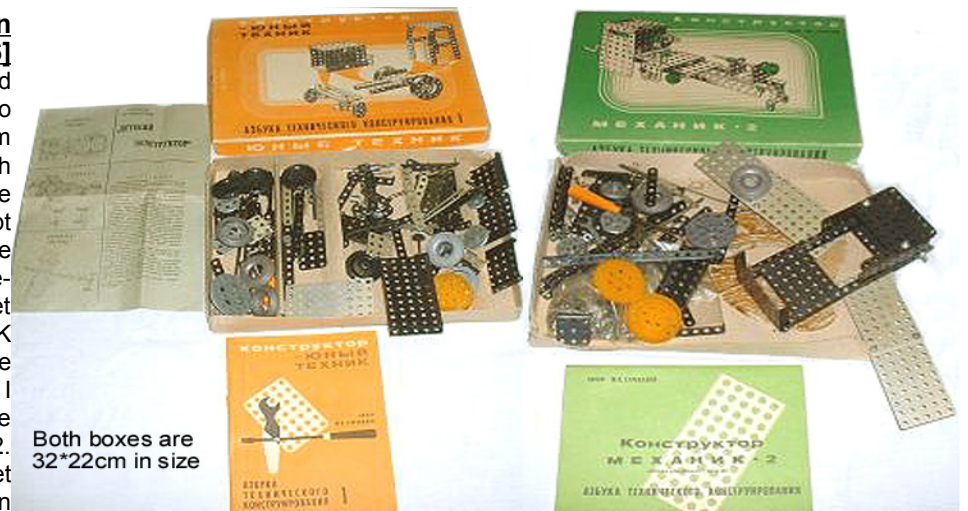
EZY-BILT: S1

OSN 28/837

SNIPPET: A 'New' Russian System - KONSTRUKTOR [16]

The two sets shown right were sold together on Ebay, and were said to be from the 1950s. Apart from KONSTRUKTOR in Cyrillic on each lid & manual cover, little can be said about them for certain, except that after KONSTRUKTOR on the green set is MEKHAHIK 2. That reminded me that the only known set from KONSTRUKTOR-MEKHAHIK [2] (KON-MEK2 henceforth) is the No.3 (see 18/499 & 20/566) & I wondered if these sets might be the No.1 & No.2 sets from KON-MEK2. However although the 'orange' set does have what might be a '1' on the lid & manual cover, there is no sign of MEKHAHIK, and indeed the second word on the lid's edge, and after KONSTRUKTOR on the cover, looks like TEKHIK. Another difference, no logo of any sort can be seen.

The parts can't be seen very clearly but the Plates & Strips do look generally like KON-MEK2 except that many of the Plates are not in known sizes. The other main difference is the mix of black & 'grey' parts, whereas those in the No.3



were all black, apart from the greyish Pulley. A similar Pulley can be seen in these sets, and perhaps a (fatter) Tyre, but nothing that looks like the Flanged Disc with 3 long slots.

So, all in all, it's not very likely that these sets are the 'missing' KONSTRUKTOR-MEKHAHIK [2] outfits, and it seems best to consider them as a separate system.

KONSTRUKTOR [16]: S1

OSN 28/837

EDITORIAL An Index for OSN 1-30 has been compiled with 20 pages in the same style as before. I'll have photocopies made at the beginning of December & if possible please let me know before that if you would like one. The cost will be £2.30/2.90/3.80 for the usual postal zones. I've also added a page to the OSN web site (www.osnl.co.uk) with the full Index on it, and it can be printed off for free - it's a large file though so may take a while to load with slower connections.

Work on updating the Database is underway and I hope to have it ready before the next Issue. There will be more space than before for additions to the main section, & it's likely to have 56 or 60 pages. At most the cost will be £9.50/10/11, & if you would like a copy it would help if you could let me know before Xmas. I hope to put the main, alphabetically sort on the web site but the total width is about that of a landscape A3 page & I've yet to find a way of persuading my A4 printer to print the right half of such a page from the web page, or a way to download the file in a form that would allow it to be printed.

Another addition to the Site is a page showing the parts of the French AUTO-CYCLE system. This is because I plan to include an article about it in the next Issue and there will not be room to show all the parts there. Of course enough about them will be included in the article to make it understandable but it seems a pity not to make all the details available. In this case they occupy 8 A4 sides and it should be possible to print each of the original sides onto a landscape A4 or US Letter page.

It may be that I will add other material of like nature in the future, and possibly articles for which there is no immediate space in the Newsletter. Another reason for using the web to supplement articles is that copies of MCS are no longer available (except Tim's MECCANO CD of course), and so an increasing number of readers cannot refer to it.

Which brings me to the MCS Extra Sheets that were available with Issues 7-27. A new reader recently asked me if I knew of any for sale and didn't realise that I could still supply them, although now only 2 complete sets are left. A set consists of 598 sheets, most double-sided, and the total price is £100/104/118. Like MCS it seems unlikely that the Extra Sheets will be reprinted in the foreseeable future.

Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. From Jacques Pitrat. Some more information on the **LITTLE JIM Train Construction Sets**, made by Metalcraft for the J.C.Penney store, see 23/677-8 & 24/691. There were three sets: 100, 200 & 300, and their contents were exactly the same as those of METALCRAFT Sets 980, 981 & 982. The lid of the 300 is as described in OSN 24 except that the 12 Cars that can be made are shown on it. 'Builds 4 at one time' it says on the lid but that does not mean any 4 Cars, for example one cannot build the Coal Car & the Armored Car simultaneously. It is also claimed that the Cars can fit any gauge track, but the two lengths of Axle in the Set allow only O gauge & a wider gauge - and for the latter the Wheels have to be outside the Trucks and look very awkward.

LITTLE JIM Train Construction Sets: S1 [31/908]

2. Josep Bernal wrote that he has some **C.I.G.E.A.** brass parts and they are threaded M4 (see 27/789).

C.I.G.E.A: S1 [31/908]

3. Jack Little sent a November 1947 Colton, Palmer & Preston trade ad for **EZY-BILT**. It shows Sets 1-8 in a pile so only the lid of the top box can be seen. It is just like the one in 28/837 with the 2 boys & galleon, except that the ad is in red & black only, so no green bits. This is the earliest sighting of the 1-8 range. The ad shows all the boxes the same size but Jack wrote that while they were all tin, the 1-3 were smaller than the 6-8 - the 4 & 5 have yet to be seen. Also in the ad, the sole agents: 'GEO. WILLS & CO. LTD., in all Capital Cities'.

EZY-BILT: S2 [31/908]

4. In 10/244 it was noted that the vee of the **N-G-NEERO** MECCANO-type 70mm Pulley is quite narrow and David Hobson pointed out to me that its illustration in MCS, identical to the **FORGEACIER** one (N-G-NEERO was virtually a copy of FORGACIER, presumably made under licence), makes it look much wider. Some FORGEACIER parts came to hand recently and sure enough the 70mm Pulley is wide like the illustration, and that's because it is like a MÄRKLIN Flanged Disc Pulley with a single flanged disc, and not 2 discs riveted together. The pattern of piercing in the faces of the 2 types is the same.

Although most parts in the 2 systems look very similar there are small differences of detail. The most obvious is in the name stamped on most circular parts, with FORGEACIER JEP FRANCE on the French parts instead of N-G-NEERO MADE IN ENGLAND. The punched holes are about 3.6mm and the N&B in the only NGN set examined are the metric M3; the FOR equivalents are referred to as 3mm in the French instructions and are no doubt the same. But the threads used in the other parts differ. FOR/NGN bosses are tapped M3.5/8" BSW, and the threads on other parts like the Threaded Pin & Handrail Support are M3.5/4BA. Axles are about the same size, 3.43mm Ø for the few NGN examples seen and 3.43-3.54 for some FOR parts. (In passing both lots of parts included 3 different lengths of Crank Handle, from 145 to 245mm o/a. I had thought, from the 'per bag, containing:- N123 7 cranks, various lengths' in the NGN Parts List, and a similar entry for FOR, that there were actually 7 different lengths. But 7 does seem a little excessive, especially in a system in which such parts can be cut to any length, and probably the 'various lengths' meant only the 3 seen. Some illustrations of the Accessory Set show what appears to be more than 3 lengths but a FOR example to hand, mostly still strung, has 2 each of the 3 lengths, but arranged so they look to be 6 different lengths - their ends hidden under a card for other parts.)

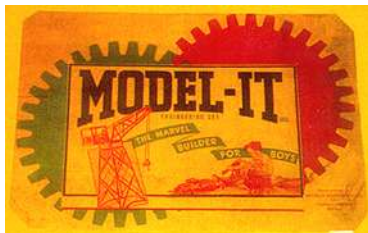
On dates, David has found the relevant UK patent, No.381348. It is in the name of the Société Industrielle de Ferblanterie, of Boulevard Beaumarchais, Paris, and its application Date was 21/10/31. It has a convention date of 21/10/30, a year earlier, and so there will be a corresponding French patent of that date. The patent describes the workshop-box of tools & materials, and the advantages of the system. There is also a patent of addition from the same company, UK 384215, application date 17/6/32, convention date 15/10/31. This describes the use of the lid of the workshop-box as a baseplate for the cutting & perforating machines, and it also describes the shearing & bending tools. David commented that the use of the lid in this way would seem an important feature to avoid damage to table tops and parent/child relations. In fact the lid was fitted with rubber feet

News from Australia Jack Little has kindly sent over a number of items of interest. The first came from the personal papers of the late E.G. Page, the Meccano agent in Australia for many years. His company, E.G. Page & Co., made an application to the Australian Tariff Board to have the import duty on Meccano sets reduced, and 3 companies who were making small sets at the time, gave evidence, at a Board enquiry on 16th May, 1933, in support of the duty being retained on No.000 & 00 Meccano sets. The representatives of the 3 companies at the enquiry were Theo. Levy Pty. Ltd.

OSN 31/911

BIG-JOY: S1; CONSTRUCTO [3]: S1; EZY-BILT: S3

More on MODEL-IT The range of sets in this post-WW2 Australian, c50 part system was Prep-Set, Junior, Senior, Master, & Master de Luxe. Also a Giant Super Wheel Set with just 4 of the Super Road Wheels in it, see 19/545. The layout



of the parts in all these sets is shown in MCS and now Jack has sent photos of the Senior & Master de Luxe. Both are very similar to the MCS illustrations. Left, the label from the centre of the yellow Senior set lid, it scales at 10*7". The words under the name are ENGINEERING SET | THE MARVEL BUILDER FOR BOYS. Bottom right on the lid is another smaller label with MODEL-IT | SENIOR on it. Apart from some Brackets replacing the Screwdriver, the parts layout is symmetrical left to right, and below the righthand side of the box. The Master de Luxe has 2 layers of parts and one of them is shown bottom right. Points of interest are the 5 & 25h Braced Girders; the green 5*11h Flanged Plates (called Box Girders) with their red, 3*9h cutout Plates beside them; and 2 parts which are not in the MCS Parts List. They are the U-formed 5*5h Flexible Plate above the DAS bottom right, and on the opposite side of the box, what looks like a 3*5h Flanged Plate made from a 5*5h Flexible Plate. The only different parts in the 2nd layer are red



7h Trunnions, bright 1*3*1h DAS, and the parts shown left. They are a Double & a Single Arm Crank (with no slotted holes), a Pinion & a Gear with (like the Bush Wheel) 4 face holes, a Worm, & 2 Fork Pieces. Of these only the Fork Pieces are in the MCS List (#42 Big End). Other parts in the 2nd layer are 2 more Road Wheels and 2 of #32, the Pulley used as their centre. In passing there are two points of interest in the MCS List: the '2h' Pulley is 1 1/8" Ø, and #22 is Rubber Tubing, to be cut to

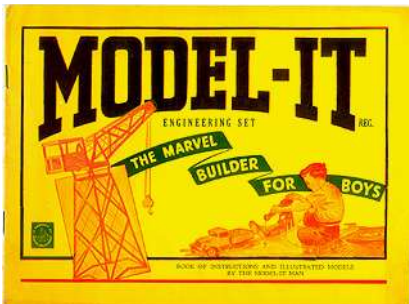


OSN 31/911

for CONSTRUCTO (see 26/753); Mr Cooper of Irving & Cooper, manufacturer's agent for EZY-BILT (see 22/636); and probably Addie M. Keating of A.M.K Mfg. Co., for BIG-JOY (see 24/697). In his evidence Mr Cooper said that 2 more EZY-BILT sets selling at 5/- & 8/6 were in the process of being launched, and this is in line with the Nos.1-3 sets available in 1936 mentioned in OSN 22, with the No.1 at 2/6. This item gives the first sure dates for BIG-JOY & CONSTRUCTO, and an earlier date for EZY-BILT.

make axle stops.

There was no manual with either of the above sets but one to hand could well have been with either. The appropriate pages in it correspond to those in MCS. Right, its cover, and the wording at bottom right are BOOK



OF INSTRUCTIONS AND ILLUSTRATED MODELS BY THE MODEL-IT MAN. The Lawdex logo in the bottom left corner is shown left. The manual contains no indication of date but an example seen on Ebay, with the same cover and number of pages, was

said to be from 1957.

SUMMARY OF MANUAL •Name: MODEL-IT •Details of maker: MANUFACTURED BY MODEL-IT MANUFACTURING CO., SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA – A CARVEL PRODUCT on the bottom of many pages, but Lawdex Manufacturing Company INCORPORATING MODEL-IT MANUFACTURING CO., SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA on C4. •No dates/Ref Nos. •Page size: 244*180mm. •No. of pages: 16+covers, unnumbered. •Language: English. •Printing: photos of models. •Page Nos. of Illustrated Parts List & highest PN: C3,42. •No Set Contents. •Sets covered: smallest (unnamed), Junior, Senior, Master, Master de Luxe. •No. of models for each set: 24,22 (inc those on p9 – not designated),8,2,4. •Name, Model No. (only for the smallest set models, which are lettered from A on each page), Page No. of first & last model of each set: smallest: FARM CART,A,1; PICNIC TABLE AND SEATS,F,4. Junior: HAMMER HEAD CRANE,5; OVERHEAD TRAMWAY TROLLEY,9. Senior: LOW WING MONOPLANE,10; FLAT TOP TABLE TRUCK,13. Master: ELECTRIC DRILL,14; MINE SHAFT ELEVATOR,14. Master de Luxe: AMERICAN EXTENSION FIRE LADDER TRUCK,15; OIL DRILL DERRICK,16. •Other notes: intro on C2; printer on C4: Elgood & Son Pty. Ltd. – Sydney.

There is one photo, usually quite clear, of each model,



MODEL-IT: S1

Snippet – STAHL-KLEMM

Bau-kästen and the lower one, with a rather faint large 'K' in the middle, can be seen on the lid & manual of the set below. According to Baukästen the first name of this Austrian system was STAHL-KLEMM and the 'O' was added in 1969 when the original firm of A. Theobald became Blanke & Theobald. In Baukästen that last name is preceded by 'BeEsA Mfg. & Supply Co. GmbH', and perhaps both should be. Only STAHL-KLEMM is in MCS and the entry consists of a list of the system's 28 parts in English & German, plus 2 models, a Pair of Scales & a Helicopter. (Despite the logos the hyphenated forms of the names are used in Baukästen, and the entry name in MCS is hyphenated too, but it's not clear if these forms were ever used in any of the firms' material.)

The logos right are from

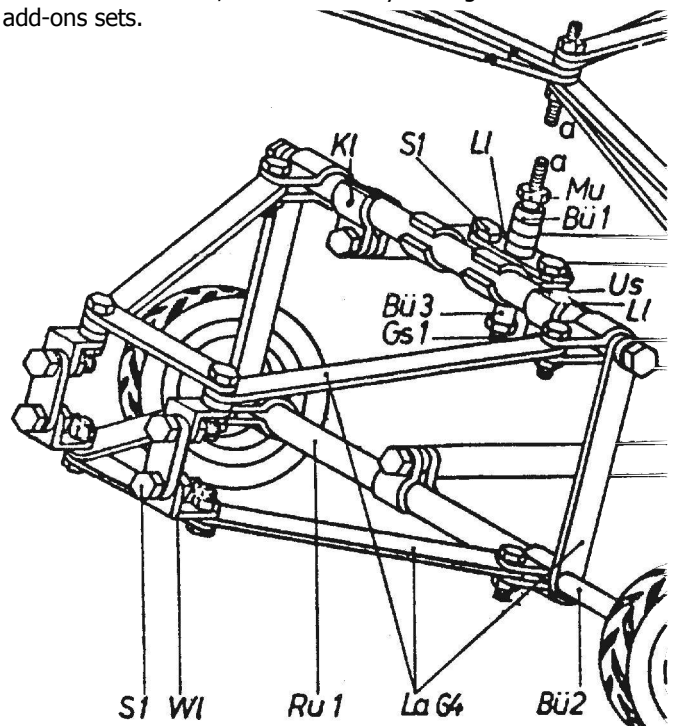


Stahl means steel of course and Klemm is nearly Klemm which can mean clamp. This and the 'K' in the logos gives a clue to the nature of the system. The main parts, per MCS, are 5 Narrow Strips with just a hole at each end (16 to 120mm centres), and 2 Rods, 98 & 196mm long, with internally threaded ends. These together with an A/B and Clamps used in pairs around the Rods, allow frameworks to be constructed, as shown right (part of the Helicopter in MCS). The Strips can be bolted to each other, or onto the end of a Rod, or attached to a Rod between a pair of Clamps. Rods can be joined to each other at right-angles using the Clamps with a Washer (or a Strip) between the bolted ends, or in-line using a 20mm

Screwed Rod (though this method isn't shown in the models). Other parts in the MCS models include 60 & 120mm Screwed Rods; 6 & 8mm Ø Bushes, Bü1-3, which seem to be used as spacers; a Bearing, L1, which looks like a short Strip with no doubt some form of bush in the centre - said bush can't be seen but the part could be like a Double Arm Crank; and a Wheel Hub, perhaps a pulley, with a Tyre to fit it. Parts which are not used in the models include a Wheel, a Drehscheibe (Turntable?), a Sitzkissen (Seat Cushion?), a Wrench, and a Socket Wrench.

That then is STAHL-KLEMM. Looking carefully at the parts in the original Ebay photo of the STAHL-KLEMM set, the lighter long thin parts have square ends and are probably Rods, while the darker ones have rounded ends and are probably Strips. If so there are many more Rods than Strips, whereas in the MCS models many more Strips than Rods are used. The models on the lid would need a great many parts and most likely the bracing would be made of Strips. If the Rods are the length given in MCS their diameter scales at, very roughly, 8mm. The grey shiny part in the top left corner looks circular and so possibly it is the Turntable. What may be the Socket Wrench is in the bottom square compartment, second in from the right.

Baukästen mentions 4 basic and some add-on outfits, including one with a Motor & Gears. The Ebay ad described the item as a 'K.5 Set', so conceivably it might be one of the add-ons sets.



STAHL(O)-KLEMM: S1

OSN 34/1030

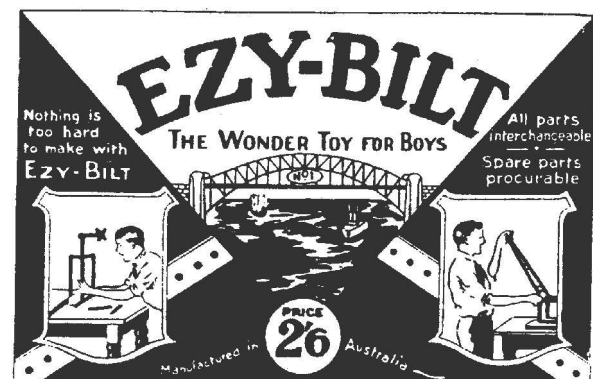
Australian Systems Jack Little has kindly sent notes on his new discoveries about EZY-BILT, BILD-A-KIT, & MODEL-IT.

EZY-BILT Early Days That E-B dates from 1933 or earlier was mentioned in 31/911 and now the acceptance of a trade mark application dated 1st May 1931 has been found. It is in the name of Arthur Harry Cooper, trading as A.H.Cooper, of 326 Flinders-lane, Melbourne. This is an indication that Arthur Cooper started the company and ran it until George Irving joined him in about 1936. Apart from being in B&W, the illustration accompanying the application, right, is very similar to the lid in 22/636.

A mail order catalogue, date unknown but possibly before 1931, contains an advert for a set price 3/3 including postage, so quite likely the 2/6 basic outfit. It isn't illustrated but the logo used, left, is a form of the name that I don't think I've seen before.

EZY-BILT

Jack sent photos of a cardboard boxed No.4



set from the Melbourne period. It is very similar to the 1941 metal boxed No.4 described in 22/637 but the

EZY-BILT: S4

OSN 34/1030

box is darkish green and the yellow banding outside each side of the label extends out to the edges of the box. The parts match in the two cases; the N&B in the cardboard set are in a brass looking tin, about 2½" square.



Also from the Melbourne period, two plain cardboard boxes, 11*5½*4" deep & 2½*2½*1" deep, with the label left on them. The small lettering reads Part No. & Quantity. It is probable that these boxes were used to send spare parts to shops & wholesalers.

The Colton, Palmer & Preston Time More has been found out about the 8 sets mentioned in 31/908. The company advertising claimed that all the sets would be packed in metal boxes but no actual No.5 or 6 sets so boxed have been found so far. Metal boxes for Sets 1-3 are very rare and are smaller than those used for the larger sets. Also they had holes punched in them to allow their use in models, and these can be seen in the sides of the lid and base parts below (with the top of the lid above



them). Atop the next column is a label found stuck to an Illustrated Parts List of the period and there is an additional hole in the end wall. The metal packaging for the small sets was most probably a marketing failure, and Jack has been given some tops and sides from the lids which, it is said, were used in shop and exhibition display material. The metal boxes for Sets 6-8 were a success and were used into the 1960s.

A No.6 box made from heavy waxed cardboard is also known and is the same size as the corresponding metal version. Its lid design is the same as the metal No.7 shown in 28/837.

OSN 34/1031

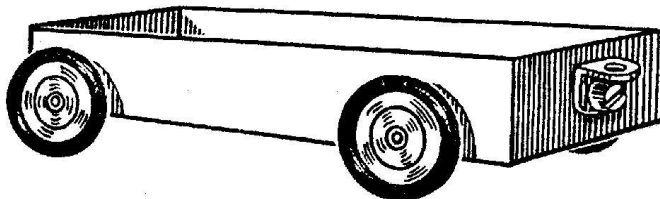
BILD-A-KIT Further to the notes in 31/912 the system's name was listed as an Accepted Application in the 23 January 1947 issue of the Official Journal of Patents, Trade Marks & Designs - the logo left appeared above '85,717. Toys. William Kerr, Henry Lawson White, & Violet Amy White (trading as Rec Radio & Electrical Hardware Company), of 25 Queen-street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, manufacturers. - 9th January 1946. Address for service in Australia - C/o Herman & Coltman, 456 Little Collins-street, Melbourne, Victoria.'

OSN 34/1031

EZY-BILT

This is your new EZY-BILT in an up to date streamlined handy size package, so that you can keep your parts safely in a strong metal box. The new package contains just as many parts as in the big cardboard box of the same set number.

You can use the parts of the box to make extra toys.



Photos of an unused No.8 show its metal box to be as expected with the parts strung to 5 cards with yellow cord. The 'halves' of two of these above give a general impression, and the only difference in any of them that can be seen, compared to the notes in OSN 22 & 28, is the shape of the Screwdriver. The Set contains 2 of the Assembly Parts boxes and two hanks of red Cord.

EZY-BILT: S5

Another reference to the company is its advert in the September 1949 *The Retailer* for solid drawn containers used to send small portions of wedding cake to distant friends. The address given is 419 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Phone: FJ 5553.

The back cover of the Manual described in OSN 31 has been found. C3 is blank; C4 matches C1 in colour and has a short plug for the System, plus 'Printed by Sampsons Enterprises Pty. Ltd. 481 Kent St., Sydney for the Bild-A-Kit Co.' So if the company was called Bild-A-Kit at that point, was the Rec company still involved?

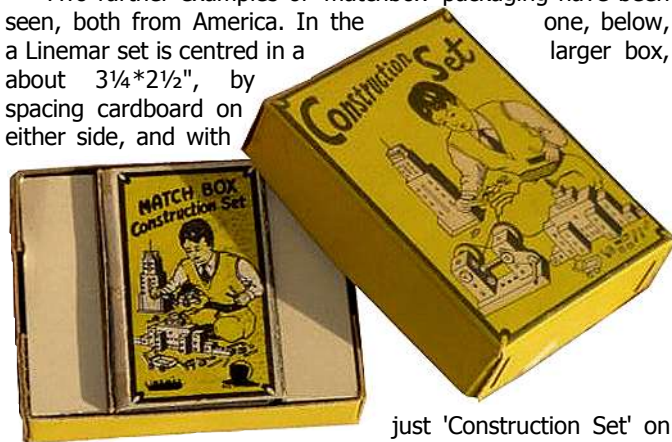
BILD-A-KIT: S3

Its front is like the Linemar outfit shown in Fig.3 in OSN 6 except that the words at the bottom are 'MADE BY LOUIS MARX & CO 200 5th AVE. N.Y.C.'. It is the set shown on the card below, and the back has the MBCS name, followed by 'The Vest Pocket Builder'; 4 'medals' (different



to those on the CLOU set); and the Louis Marx address. The card, 150*123mm, has push through tabs which hold the bottom of the set's sleeve in place, and it can be seen, less the set, in the MCS '100 TOYS IN ONE' entry (which was no doubt made before it was realised that the card was just packaging for the Set).

Two further examples of 'matchbox' packaging have been seen, both from America. In the one, below, a Linemar set is centred in a larger box, about 3¼*2½", by spacing cardboard on either side, and with



just 'Construction Set' on the lid. Notice that the Linemar name on the Set has been blacked out.

The other example is another 'Linemar' box with the blacking out at the bottom. It is packed in a clear plastic bag about 1½ times the size of the box. The bag also contains a model sheet, folded to fit into it. The top is closed with a piece of folded cardboard stapled over it, one side of which is shown above.



Also mentioned in OSN 6, a Spanish set called MACÓN with scaled up 'matchbox' parts, and another called TEXAS with parts that could be used with MACÓN. An example of TEXAS has yet to be found and no further MACÓN sets are known.

MATCHBOX SETS: S1 [37/1102]

9. **Snippet. A SUPERSONIC Outfit** Most of the parts in this 1950s UK Aero system were described in 14/367 and a couple of other points about it are mentioned in the AJET article elsewhere in the Issue. No set was known until one was sold on Ebay recently and the box & manual are shown in the next column. The top half of the lid was included in the original photo and was a blue or purple but badly faded, with a label covering most of it, identical to the corresponding part of the manual cover. The main parts are strung or clipped singly to the backing card. Notice that the red Bush Wheel has 3 face holes, not the 4 mentioned (incorrectly) in OSN 14. The quantities of the smaller parts used in the manual models are: 16 Flat Brackets; 12 A/Bs; 52 Nuts; 44,8,2,4,2,2 of ¼,⅜,½,



⅝,¾,1" Bolts; 2 Axles; & 4 Spring Clips. By scaling, the Nut is ⅝" square, the standard A/F size of 4BA commercial nuts at the time. Most of the N&B have a brass look and reflected light could account for the few with a silver appearance.

SUPERSONIC: S1 [37/1102]

10. **Snippet. An ARWILL Lid** Details of a manual and some parts from this small UK system were given in 29/856, and the similar BELMONT was described in 36/1076. Both are a little unusual in having 2h wide Flat Trunnions, 4, 8, & 12h long Strips, and a 4*8h Flanged Plate. Now, below, the lid of a set



sold on Ebay. The 8 models on it are all in the OSN 29 manual, though some are seen from a slightly different viewpoint. The Set's contents weren't shown, nor were the dimensions of the box given.

ARWILL: S2 [37/1102]

11. **Snippet. An EZY-BILT Set with Yellow Parts** The existence of yellow Strips was mentioned in 19/545 but it wasn't clear if they were ever included in sets. Now a No.5 outfit seen on Ebay, seeming complete, has all the Strips, DAS, & Trunnions in yellow; the only other 'strip' parts are green Curved Strips, and the other parts are in the normal red & nickel colour scheme. The Lid is yellow with the 2 boys & a Shovel design, as on the manual cover in 22/638. It has SET NO.5 above the righthand boy and LEAD FREE under him. The words EZY-BILT LTD., ADELAIDE can be seen in a line under the design. There are 2 layers of parts in light blue moulded plastic trays and the manual cover is the Sidney Harbour Bridge type shown in 7/145. A Price List with the set is dated FEBRUARY 1967; the address on it can't be read but it is not the Kilkenny one on the February 1966 example in MCS, and its last line could be Adelaide S.A.

EZY-BILT: S6 [37/1102]

12. **MERKUR in 2007** Based on the English language section of the company's web site (www.merkurtoys.cz) in mid-2007, there have been no changes to the ranges of parts & sets noted for 2005 in 33/991. The Czech section though shows

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 EZY-BILT No.9 Outfit This was the largest set in the range, introduced in late 1960 or 1961, and it continued unchanged until Ezy-Bilt's demise in about 1970. The details which follow are from 2 sets seen on Ebay, and a manual kindly sent by Jim Osborne.

The Set was packed in the wooden box, right, and inside, sitting on one another, were 6 moulded plastic trays containing the parts, yellow in one of the Ebay sets, and white in the other. The box's lid included the front panel to allow easy access to the trays.

The Set Contents follow, as given in the manual, with a Meccano PN in square brackets where the Ezy-Bilt name is unusual. **Strips:** 4,2,16,6,6,2,18,6,2,14 of #1-10, 1½,2,2½,3,3½,4½,5½,7½,9½,12½". **Flat Girders:** 2 each of #14-22, 1½,2,2½,3,3½,4½,5½,7½,9½". **A/Gs:** 2,2,2,4,4,2,2,8,2 of #28,30,32-8, 1½,2½,3½,4½,5½,7½,9½,12½,18½". **DAS:** 2,10,6 of #41-3, ½*1½,2½,3½". **Clutch Spring:** 2 of #49 [M120b]. **Curved Crank:** 8 of #50 [M90a]. **Curved Strip:** 4 of #51 [M90]. **Formed Slotted Strip, 3":** 8 of #53. **Trunnions,** Angle & Flat: 4,6 of #53,55. **Brackets:** 24,30,8,4,4,8 of #58-62,65, Flat, Angle, Double, Reversed Angle, 1*1" Angle, Obtuse. **Double Bent Strip:** 3 of #63. **Crank Bent Strip:** 1 of #64. **Plates:** Base, 2 of #67 [M52]; Sector, 2 of #68 [M54]; Flanged, 3,2 of #69,70, 2½*1½,3½"; Flat, 4 of #71, 5½*3½"; Flexible, 10,10,10,6,12 of #75-9, 1½*2½, 5½", 2½*2½,4½,5½"; Strip, 6 of #81, 12½*2½"; Curved 'U', 2,6 of #83-4, ¾,11¼"; Hinged Flat, 1 of #85; Semi-Circular, 4 of #86. **Cylinder:** 2 of #87. **Pulleys:** ½" brass w/o, w boss, 3,1 of #88-9; 1" w/o, w boss, 4,6 of #90-1; 2", 3" w boss, 6,2 of #92-3. **Road Wheel:** 4 of #94. **Rubber Tyres:** 4,6 of #95-6, 1" & 2". **Axle Rods:** 2,4,6,6,2,2,4,3,2 of #99-106,108, 1,1½,2,3½,4,4½,5,6½,11½". **Crank Handles:** 1,1 of #110-1, 3½, 5". **Bush Wheel:** 2 of #113. **Wheel Disc,** 1¼", 2 of #114. **Gears:** 2,2,4 of #115-7, 1½" Contrate, Worm, Pinion. **Collar:** 8 of #120. **Short Coupling:** 2 of #121. **Hooks:** 1,1 of #123-4, Plain & Loaded. **Hank of Cord:** 1 of #125. **Anchor Spring** for Cord, 2 of #126. **Connectors,** Rod & Strip, Rod: 2,2 of #127-8. **Spring Cord:** 2 of #131. **Screwdriver:** 1 of #132. **Spanner:** 2 of #133. **Washers:** 24,4 of #134-5, ⅜, ¾". **Driving Bands:** 2,1,1 of #137-9, 3,6,10". **Grub Screw:** 30 of #140. **Spring Clip:** 30 of #141. **Nut:** 300 of #142. **Bolts:** 180,10,4,4 of #143-6, ¼, ⅜, ½, ¾". **Threaded Pin & Nuts:** 1 of #147. **Pivot Bolt & Nuts:** 1 of #148. **Screwed Rods:** 1,1,2,1,1,1,1,1 of #150-8, 1,2,3, 3½,4½,5,6,8,11½". **Instruction Books:** 1 each of #160-2, for Sets 1-5, 6-8, 9. A C/W Motor (Fig.2) was also included in the Outfit.

Compared with MECCANO in the 1960s the EZY-BILT No.9 generally lay between Nos.8 & 9 in the parts common to both systems. But the EZY-BILT range lacked a number of the Liverpool parts, the Triangular & Plastic Plates for instance, and the large circular parts, Flanged Wheels, & Braced Girders. Other areas of weakness were in brassware & Gears, especially the absence of Sprockets and a Gear Wheel to mesh with the Pinion – both of these were not added to the EZY-BILT range until the mid-1960s, well after the No.9 appeared, and as far as is known they were never included in any of the sets. On the plus side there were more Flexible Plates, which compensated for the lack of the plastic variety, 18 Flat Girders were included (there were none in the MECCANO No.9), and there were 2 Cylinders instead of Sleeve Pieces.

The Manual has 20 unnumbered pages, 280*213mm, plus covers, and the front is shown right. C2 & p1 have an Introduction, and p2 shows the use of belts and the Gears in drives for the C/W Motor. The Set Contents are on p18, p19-C4 are blank except for the printer (McCallum Ltd., Printers, Norwood) on C4, and a heading on p19: Design Page – use to plan/sketch improved/new models.

The 11 models are on the remaining pp3-17 and unlike



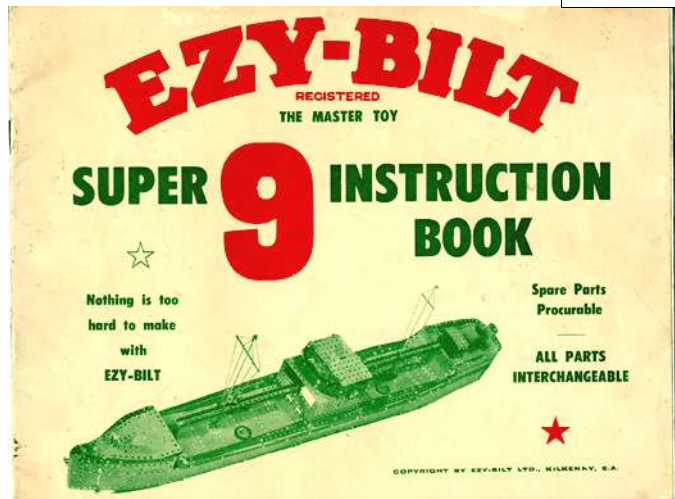
FIG.1



FIG.2

those for the smaller sets, they owe virtually nothing to MECCANO. The first, 9-1, though not actually named, is a Car Chassis and the last, 9-12, a Dragline (though the name may be misleading, see Fig.4). There is no model 9-9 – a page is headed 9-9 but it has the Parts List and another photo of the 9-8 model on the previous page. The other models are a Railway Wreck Crane, 3 Earth Movers of one sort or another, a Semi-Trailer, an Oil Tanker ship (as on the cover), a Helicopter, a (twin-engined) Hercules Transport Plane, and a Caravan (with interior fittings). All are quite large models, the trailer of the Artic is 24½*9½" in plan with side walls 2½" deep, and range from fair to very good in appearance. They are all fairly simple mechanically with no brakes on winding shafts, but the vehicles have parallelogram steering linkages, and the Helicopter has a cord drive to the tail rotor. None of the models include the Motor, and the Gears are only used in the Grader's scraper (see Fig.4) and the rear axle drive of the Chassis. There are 2 or 3 good photos of each model with brief constructional notes – I'd say an experienced modeller would enjoy working out the finer points of the models (the Intro on C2 does suggest making 1-5 & 6-8 models before tackling the No.9's). Fig.4 has full details of one model and one photo of 5 others, The Dragline & Hercules at ⅓ the original size, the others at ½.

FIG.3



PARTS REQUIRED

PATROL GRADER	1	"	"	41	3	"	"	76	2	"	"	77
4 of No. 1	2	"	"	43								
5 " " 5	7	"	"	53								
4 " " 7	1	"	"	55								
1 " " 9	4	"	"	56								
2 " " 17	6	"	"	59								
2 " " 28	2	"	"	60								
1 " " 30	2	"	"	62								
4 " " 32	1	"	"	65								
2 " " 35	2	"	"	70								
2 " " 36	3	"	"	75								

1	"	"	79
2	"	"	87
1	"	"	91
6	"	"	92
1	"	"	95
6	"	"	96
2	"	"	100
1	"	"	101
3	"	"	104
1	"	"	106
1	"	"	110
2	"	"	113
1	"	"	115

PATROL GRADER AND ROAD PLOUGH, 9-6

The two-section chassis is built from 7½" x 9½" angle girders, with angle brackets joining the front section to the driving cabin end of the rear section. Steering is effected by extending a 5½" crank handle with a coupling and a 5" axle, and the grader blade is rotated by a shaft turning a pinion engaged to a contrate wheel which pivots the axle bush wheel on which the blade is mounted.

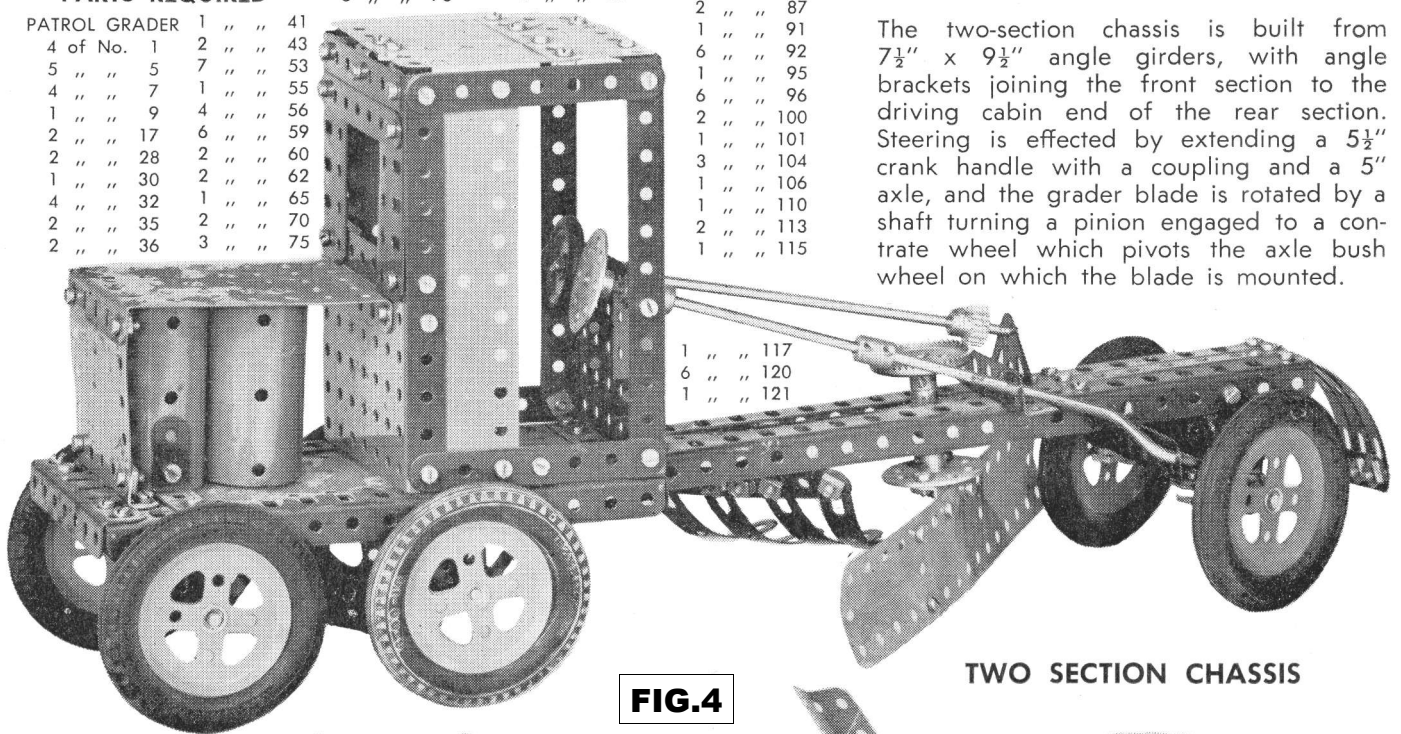
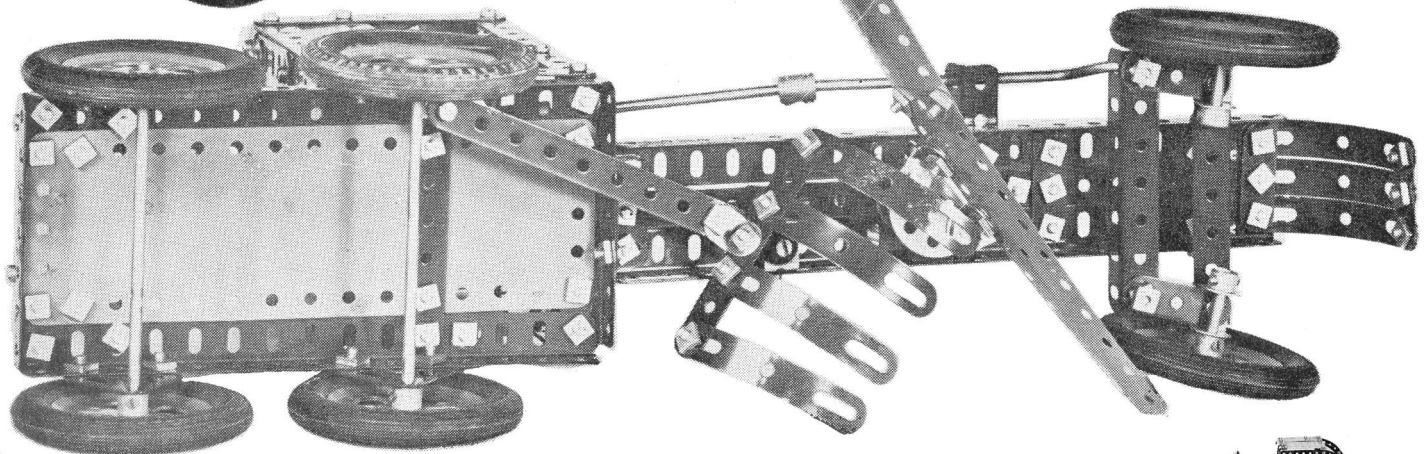
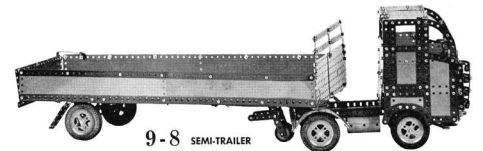
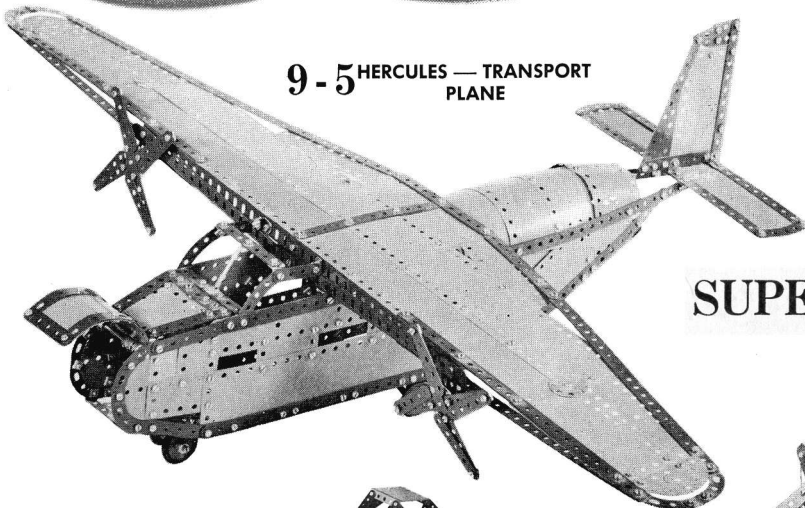


FIG. 4

TWO SECTION CHASSIS



9-5 HERCULES — TRANSPORT PLANE

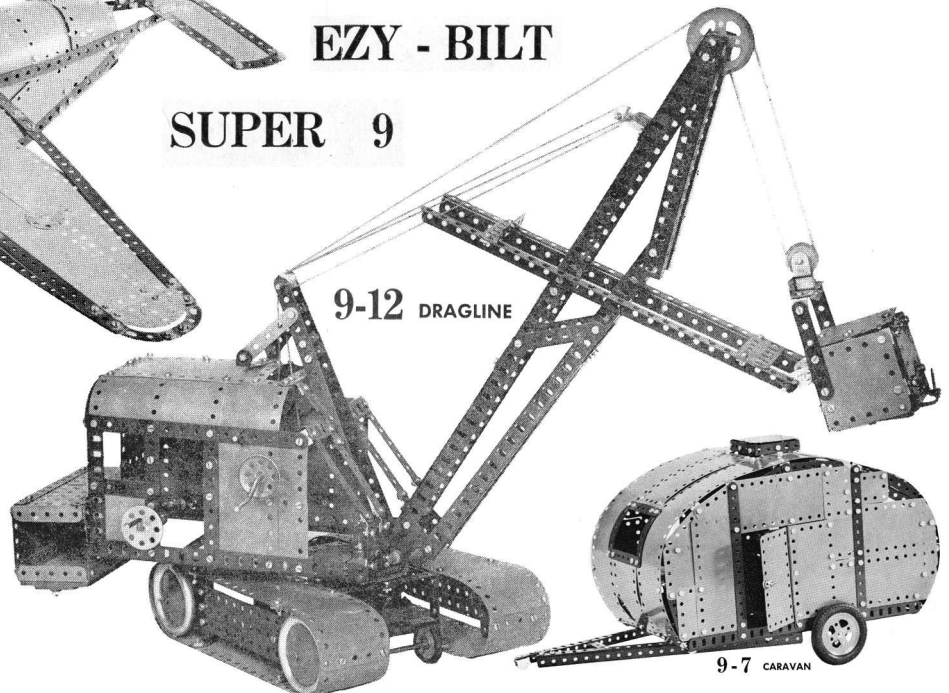


9-8 SEMI-TRAILER

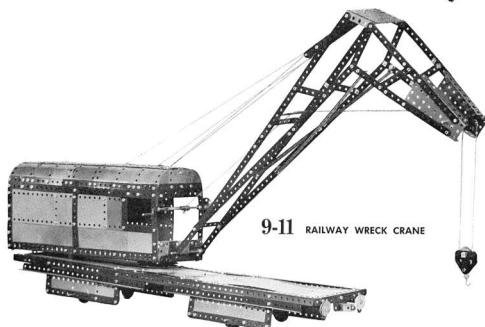
EZY - BILT

SUPER 9

9-12 DRAGLINE



9-11 RAILWAY WRECK CRANE



9-7 CARAVAN

