

## LITTLE GENIUS - A NEW INDIAN SYSTEM

Ashok Banerjee found this set on sale last year and very kindly send an example over. It's made by Creative Toys of Bombay and they've managed to create quite an original little system. Its parts haven't any names so I'll invent some. Basically there are 40mm long, 6mm dia, steel Spindles which screw into one another, and chunky steel Strips. These have a cross section of about 7.8 x 2.2mm and holes at 36.0mm pitch. There are two types of Spindle, one drilled and tapped at each end, and the second with one end like that and the other threaded externally. N&B are used to fasten the Strips to the Spindles, and of course to each other. Models are most often frames made from the Strips with the Spindles used as cross members.

Two types of steel fittings are provided. There's a double tapped 12.0mm o/d Collar bored to suit the Spindles and this when screwed to one of the Strips, can be used as a bearing. Then there are 2 hexagonal Unions, 12.7mm A/F and 7.5mm long, which are tapped radially inwards from each face and are bored halfway through for the Spindles and halfway at a reduced diameter to take the Bolts. These too can provide a bearing but are also used as a hub, and to angle two Strips by bolting them to the faces of the hexagon.

Square, rectangular and triangular flexible plastic Plates are included which are grey on one side and woodgrained on the reverse: they are used as table tops, chair seats and the like, and have holes only at their corners. Other plastic parts include 20mm black Wheels, Horses, Teddy Bears (with bow ties), and DAS 24mm long by 12mm wide with holes only in the lugs, 2.9mm dia. They are used as swing seats, attached by 70mm lengths of fine steel chain which have a ring at one end and a spring clip at the other.

That's about all except for a single ended Spanner and two lengths of ribbon, about 37mm wide, one in a delicate shade of light blue, stitched to act as a chair seat and back, (or a rather odd flag), and the second in a delicate pink, stitched to be part of a push-chair, or the sail of a ship.

More on the parts:

• DATA (in mm) Strip: •Hole pitch/dia, 36.0/4.3; •width, 7.8; •thickness, 2.2; •end radius, 4mm. [No bosses, Collar double tapped, bore 6.1.] Thread: M4. Axle dia: 5.96 (Spindles). DP (Mod): NA. Nut and Bolt: hex 6.9 A/F, steel, iridescent finish.

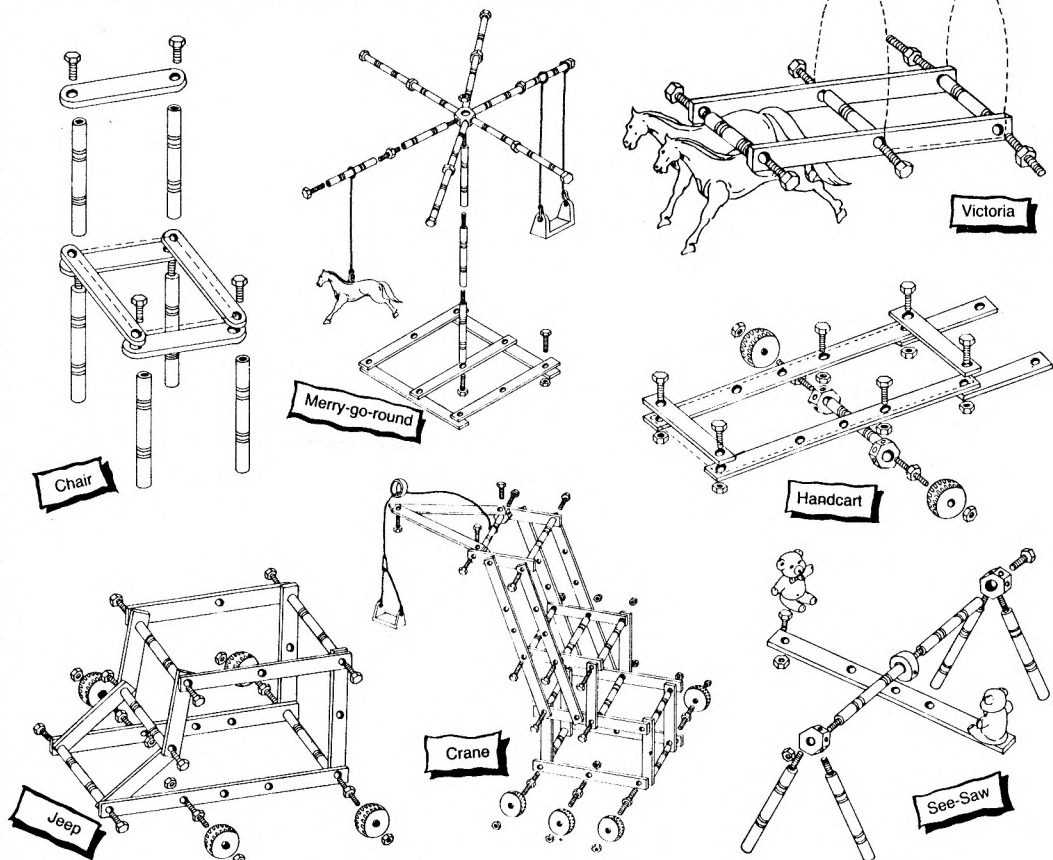
• The Strips are 2, 3 and 4 holes long, and the latter has a central (5th) hole. There are two types of the 3-hole, one with standard spacing and one with the holes 26mm apart.

• The N&B are probably standard commercial items. The Bolts are 10 and 15mm u/h. 21mm long Studs are also

supplied, and they have a central hex spanner portion.

• The effective size of the Plates is 2x2, 2x4, 3x3, 3x4-hole; the sides of the Triangle are 3h long. All corners are sharp.

• All the steel parts except the N&B are nickel plated. The Horses, DAS, and Teddy Bears are variously coloured. All parts are accurately made, except that a few of the threads were rather tight; the finish is very good in the main with just one or two flaws in the plating.



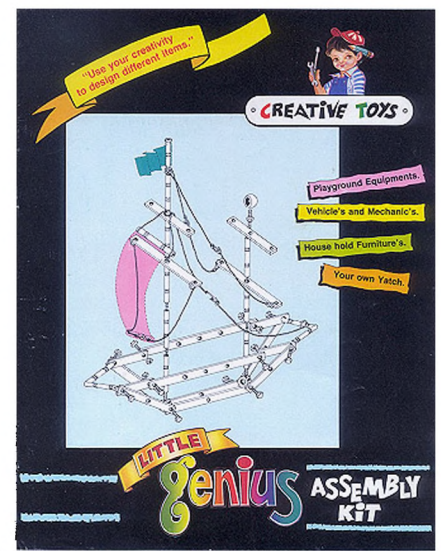
The box has a flap style lid and measures 330x230x40mm. It is black but with brightly coloured photos of a boy and many of the models that are shown in the manual. On one edge is 'Date of MFG' - MAR94, and 'Toy Code No: C.T.L.G. 2/302'. Inside the parts are housed in a light blue moulded tray with a transparent cover. The main elements are 28 Strips, 20 Spindles, 5 Plates and 26 Bolts/Studs. The manual consists of 8 pages, about A4 size with a multi-colour cover. The 30 models are shown as line drawings in exploded form. Flexible Plates are indicated by dotted lines. Most of the parts can be seen in the models reproduced here.

Judge for yourself their attractiveness, though the drawings hardly do them justice: they look much better on the box lid, and, to me, when made up, they have a certain delicate elegance. Most were easy to put together but there were a few difficulties, the main one being that although the Spindles could normally be gripped adequately using the grooves machined into them, there wasn't enough grip to hold them if there was any stiffness in the threads. The Wheels were unsatisfactory in that they were usually mounted on Studs and their central holes were too small to allow them to rotate freely. And in fact they are shown held fast by a single Nut in the Manual, and not held by lock nuts. (The exception is in the Handcart where the Wheels are locked to the Spindle axle, which rotates in the two Unions.) Apart from that the only problem was that the hole in the base of the Teddy Bear was not big enough to allow him to sit securely (or comfortably?) on the bolthead at the end of the See-Saw.



The only comparable system that come to mind is the Austrian STAHL-KLEMM in MCS, and that has a wider variety of parts and also uses clamps to attach strips to rods. Clearly any such system is not so flexible in use as conventional ones using strips, etc, but the models do have a different look to them. It must be considerably more expensive though to produce the Spindles than to stamp out the normal run of strips and brackets. One other similarity between LITTLE GENIUS and STEEL-KLEMM, a coincidence I'm sure, is that both use bolts with hex heads.

**MANUAL SUMMARY** #Name: Little Genius. #Details of maker: Creative Toys, G-5, Laxmi Estate, Chimat Pada Road, Marol Naka, Andheri (East), Bombay-400 059. Tel: 835 1035. [Also blacked out is 'C/o Selvans Metal Industries'. #Dates &/or Ref Nos: none. #Page size: 220x 277mm deep. #No. of pages: 8 unnumbered, inc covers. #Language: English. #Printing: multicoloured cover on black ground. Models are shown as black line drawings on light blue ground. #No Parts List, Part Nos. or Set Contents. #Sets covered: the only one known. #No of models: 30. #Name, Page No of first & last model: Sailing Ship (unnamed), 1. Ladder, 8. [No Model Nos.] #Other notes: none.



**LYNNCRAFT** This is another of the small sets that appeared in America soon after WW2. It is well covered in MCS but a few more details can now be added thanks to Richard Symonds, who sent over a handful of parts and photos of his Set. Page 2 of MCS actually shows the lid of the box, which measures about 16x10", and p5 the blueprint style Model Leaflet (there's no manual) which is stuck inside the lid. Two of the models and a photo of the set are shown below. The semi-circular 'cutouts' that appear in some of the parts are of course the wings which are pressed out of the red backing card to hold the parts in place. Also the centre holes that can be seen in four of the Strips were probably put there by a previous owner.

None of the parts are identified in any way so MECCANO-style names are used in the notes on the parts below:

- **DATA** (in mm) **Strip:** •Hole pitch/dia, 3½"/3.8; •width, approx ½"; •ends square. **Boss:** •o/d, 9.6 (¾") •i/d, 4.22; •aluminium; •single tapped. **Thread:** 8-32, 6-32 in bosses. **Axle Dia:** 3.95. **Nut:** hex 8.6 A/F, treated steel with pale green tinge. **Bolt:** roundhead 7.5 dia, material as Nut. **Notes:** •The pitch of holes in the parts is mostly in multiples of ¼" but there are several exceptions, noted later. •Square Nuts are shown in the models on the Model Sheet.
- All parts are of aluminium except the N&B (see above), the Axles and Crank Handle (steel, brass plated including the square ends), and the Spandrivers (treated steel with

pale green appearance). All the corners of the parts are square.

- The sketches of the parts in MCS correspond to those in the Set except that the smaller Axle is 2" long, and the straight part of the Crank Handle is 3½". There is a stiffening groove in the centre of the Strips.
- The Plate have flanges on their longer sides, and each contains 4 holes. Those in the large Plate (4x2x½") are at 1" pitch, in line with those on top, and in the small Plate (2x1x½") they are spaced ½", ⅜", and ½" apart. The two outer holes in the top of the small Plate are ¼" dia and at 1¹⁄₁₆" centres: their purpose isn't known.
- The Bush Wheel is 1¼" dia and the holes in it are spaced 7⁄₁₆" from the centre. Collars (one is at the bottom edge of the box below) are similar to the bosses. Angle Brackets are ⅜" wide and both ½" long arms have round holes. Only 4 can be seen in the photo but 8 seem to be needed for the Water Wheel below. The 3 holes in the flange of the Trunnion match those at the base of the face.

The name and address of the manufacturer is given on the end of the box lid: Lynn Engineering and Manufacturing Co., Glendale 1, California. Also on the lid: Model No. 146 - no other sets are known. There is a copyright date of 1946 on the bottom of the Model Sheet. Although the Set contains black rubber Tires (with LYNNCRAFT moulded into their sides), none are used in any of the models.

