

TECHNIT AND MECANIKIT. A rose by any other name..., well perhaps not quite a rose given the rather poor quality of some of the parts, but these two products from Luton Jigs & Tools Ltd do seem to be virtually identical. TECHNIT is a simple MECCANO-like system of about 30 parts; there is some information on it in MCS and what follows, based on a No.4 Set still strung in its box, will add to this, and correct some errors that have crept in. MECANIKIT only came to light recently, courtesy of Geoff Wright, in the shape of a No.0 Set (below), again still strung. With very minor exceptions the parts are the same, and, apart from the change of name, so are the labels on the box lids and the covers (and style) of the Manual. Also the MECANIKIT models for Set 0 are identical to those for TECHNIT, and the lists of Parts Required show the same Part Nos. Compare model 0.5 below with the TECHNIT version in MCS.

To start with TECHNIT, three features stand out. The parts are made from thin or in some cases, very thin, steel, for example the Strips are .018" thick and the A/G .015". Secondly the holes are larger than normal at .182" and the N&B are commercial size steel 3/16" BSW, roundheaded Bolts and pressed hex Nuts. Lastly the Strips are slightly wavy in appearance, no doubt due to distortion when the holes were punched. The parts are generally quite MECCANO-like with the following exceptions:

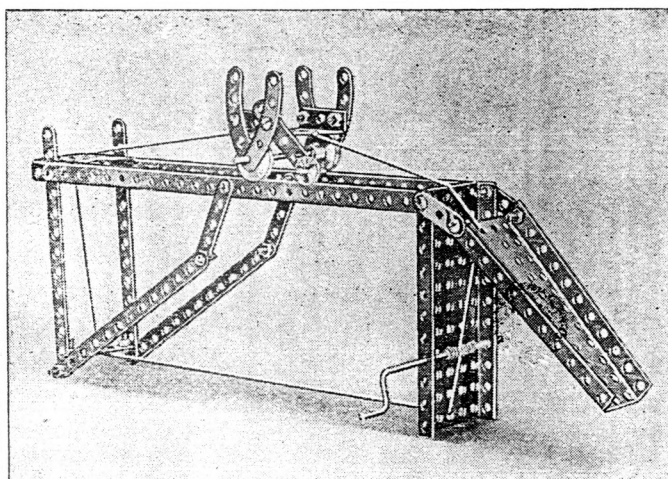
- There is a 13 hole Strip. All Strips have near fully radiused ends. A/G are 8 and 12 holes long with a small radius on each corner. None of the holes in them, or in any other parts, are elongated.
- The 11x5 hole Flanged Plate is flanged only on its long sides. Its corners have a small radius like the A/G, and so do all the other Plates. The Flanged Sector Plate is 5½" long, with the same pattern of holes as the PREMIER one.
- Flat Trunnions have no cutouts and have sharp corners.
- The Axles are 5/32" dia aluminium. Pulleys are die castings from what looks like aluminium but it could be zinc; they have a bore to suit the Axles, and the 1" has an integral boss double tapped 4BA, and TECHNIT cast into the face remote from the boss.
- Road Wheels are the balloon tinplate type, unpainted, with a dia of 1½".
- The bent wire Screwdriver is made of 1/8" dia wire painted green, and its handle has parallel sides.

The Manual is a single fold over sheet with loose pages inside. Models, a single photo for each, are shown for Sets 0,1,2 and 3, but none for No.4, perhaps at some stage they got mislaid. Inside the front cover is the List of Parts given in MCS and it contains all the parts in the No.4 except the Screwdriver and the Curved Strip; it also includes several parts not in the No.4 so maybe larger sets were also available.

Now for the MECANIKIT Set. Again the parts are of thin material, mostly steel but two of the four 1½" Strips and the four ½" Angle Brackets are aluminium, of a slightly heavier gauge. All the Strips look slightly better quality than the TECHNIT ones, with

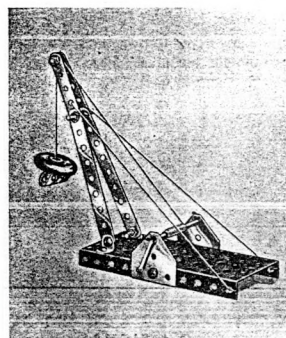


3.3 BARGE LOADING TIPPER



MECANIKIT

0.5 CRANE



PARTS REQUIRED

Qty.	Code	Description
1	FL11.5	Flanged Plate
2	T.1	Trunnion Plate
2	S.9	Strips
2	S.5	"
1	S.3	"
2	S.R1/1	Angles
1	W1½	Wheels
1	R.4	Rod
9	B	Bolts
10	N	Nuts
2	S.C	Spring Clips
1½ yd.		White Twine

When you have built all the models shown in this booklet, and others you will think of, you will be keen to build bigger and better models, and to do this your next step is to either purchase a number 1 set, or better still, purchase spares to build any particular model you may have in mind. The model building possibilities of Mecanikit are unlimited. Spares can be obtained from your local dealer or direct from

LUTON JIGS & TOOLS LTD.
FREDERICK STREET PASSAGE, LUTON, BEDS.

TECHNIT

no waviness. The only difference in shape is that the corners of the only Plate (11x5 Flanged) are sharp. As already mentioned the front of the Manual is nearly the same, including the unusual border (not reproduced in MCS). There is no list of parts in the MECANIKIT Manual but a No.1 Set is mentioned as the recommended next purchase, and a fuller address for the manufacturer is given.

The labels on the box lids show red and blue parts but the actual colour scheme of the parts in both Sets is red Strips, DAS, and Flanged Sector Plate, and green Plates, A/G, Trunnions and Angle Brackets. The green is a mid to dark shade except for the Angle Brackets in the MECANIKIT Set which are darker. The general standard of finish on the green parts is reasonable but the red paint is rough or has an orange peel look to it.

Some time ago a shoe box of parts came my way which seem to be MECANIKIT/TECNIKIT. All those listed in MCS are there except the $5\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ " Flat Plate and the Reversed Angle Bracket, Z1. As well as Curved Strips, there are two other parts not in MCS, a Trunnion (only a Flat Trunnion is in the MCS list) and a 7x2 hole Pierced Plate, ie FP.14 in the TECNIKIT nomenclature. The other point of interest is that some of the corners of the Plates, even those of the same size, are sharp and some are slightly rounded. All the Trunnions though have sharp corners. Most of the Strips are steel, some are wavy and some, .030" thick are not; a few of each length are made of aluminium.

From their general appearance both TECNIKIT and MECANIKIT were probably made soon after WW2. But which came first and why the two names? Extra MCS Sheets are available for MECANIKIT, and also for TECNIKIT showing photocopies of the parts, the contents of the #4 Set, and two of the larger models. Another Set 3 model is shown at the bottom of the facing page.

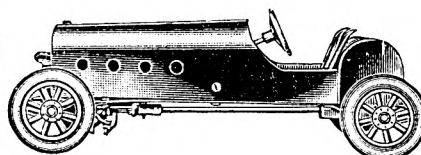
TECNIKIT: AMENDMENTS TO MCS (as necessary, depending on version). HOLE DIAMETER: 4.6mm. SETS: #0,1,2,3,4 known. Larger Sets are possible but no Linking Sets are likely. PARTS: At least 34. COLOUR: Red Strips and Sector Plate; mid green Plates, A/G, Angle Brackets. PERIOD: Probably soon after WW2. COMMENTS: Add: MECANIKIT is similar and from the same manufacturer. The unusual Flanged Sector Plate has the same pattern of holes as the PREMIER one.

MECANIKIT: AMENDMENTS TO INDEX IN OSN 6: Add MECANIKIT/TECNIKIT to list of Alternative Names with Explanation: Same system by same manufacturer.

STRUCTO AUTO-BUILDER OUTFITS. Three of the vehicles in this series were shown in 5/105 but there were several others: Don Redmond came across a STRUCTO ad in a Dec 1920 magazine which featured the following 8 sets: #8, Racing Auto; 10, Bear Cat (ie Stutz) Auto; 11 High Wheel (ie Farm) Tractor; 12, Deluxe Auto; 14, Dump Truck (ie Tipping Lorry); 40, Roadster; 44, Caterpillar Tractor; 48, Caterpillar Whippet Tank (a just after WW1 tank).

Some of these Sets at least were sold in the UK as witnessed by ads in MM. The first was in Dec 1924 from the agent, H.A.Moore & Co. Ltd., 150 Southampton Row, London W.C.1; a No.12 De Luxe Motor Car Set was offered at 57/6, with 6 different models available from 32/6. In addition to the features claimed in OSN 5, the #12 was said to have 'regular big "car" differential', and to be finished in orange enamel, nickel trim and black mudguards. The #12, at 52/6, was offered in 12/25 but no others; in 12/26 there was the #12, plus the #8 Racing Car (right) at 28/6, and the #14 Giant Tip Lorry, as in OSN 5, at 52/6. Neither of the latter were described as having a differential; Set #8 is green with red wheels, and #14 red; both trimmed with nickel and black. The wheelbase of the Racing Car was 10" against about 12" for the others so far. Nothing from Moores in 1928 but the Racing Auto (the name on the box) was shown in Hamleys' ad in December, price 27/6, and 2 other Sets were mentioned, a Motor Tractor Set at 35/- and a Sports Car Outfit at 47/6. The final ad, from Moores in Dec 1929 was for #12 at 47/6; #8, now called Racing Auto, at 27/6; #10 Bearcat Auto at 35/-; and #11 Tractor and Trailer, finished in green and red, at 35/-.

RACING
CAR
No. 8



As it is
when
built up
PRICE
28/6

According to Joseph E. Freed writing in Collecting Toys, Structo introduced an Automobile Chassis Set in 1917 and, though it's not entirely clear, it's possible that more than one model could be made from this Outfit. At any rate by 1919 most of the models in Don's ad were available, except the tracked vehicles, and in 1920 the name was changed to Auto-Builder. Production of the Sets ceased in 1925 though STRUCTO continued to make pressed steel vehicles for many years. If that date is correct it took at least 4 years in the UK for stock to be cleared.

More details on these Sets would be welcome and in particular how much commonality there was between the parts for the different vehicles, and whether the parts were sold separately.

Snippet: TECNIKIT Some notes on TECNIKIT/MECANIKIT were given in 10/250 & 19/554. Since then nothing new has appeared until 2 sets were offered on Ebay recently. One, a No.3, was in the OSN 10 type of box with the same blue & red label; its contents will be listed later. The other was the No.2 right with identical looking parts and a similar manual cover, but with an entirely new box lid.

Said lid, now in red & green to match the parts, looks to be printed in colour, and 'MADE IN ENGLAND' replaces the 'AN L.J.T PRODUCT LUTON'. The only part that looks in any way different is the green 1" Pulley (amid the 3h Strips) - previously it was plain aluminium like the small Loose Pulley (below the Flat Trunnions). Parts probably missing are a Screwdriver and an envelope of N&B. The front of the manual looks like the one in MCS except that 'BOOK' after 'INSTRUCTION' has been changed to 'BOOKLET No.2'. (Inset bottom right in the photo are the words in the heading of the cover, taken from another photo.) A similarly marked MECANIKIT manual called 'BOOKLET No.0' was with the No.0 set in OSN 10.

The main parts in No.3 follow, with those in the No.2 in curly brackets: • 4,2,4,4,2 {4,2,4,4,0}x 3,5,9,13,25h Strips.



• 4 {0} Curved Strip. • 2 {0}x 1*3*1h DAS. • 4 {4} A/B. • 2 {0} Dble Brkt. • 1 {1} 5*11h Flgd Plate. • 1 {1} Flgd Sector Plate. • 2 {2} 3*5h Flgd Plate. • 2 {0}x 3*3h Perf. Plate. • 2 {0}x 5*5h Flex Plate. • 4 {4} Flat Trunnion. • 4 {4}x 1½" Road Wheel. • 2 {1}x 1" Pulley. • 1 {1}x ⅝" Loose Pulley. • 1,2 {1,2} x 1",4" Axles. • 1 {1} Crank Handle. • 4 {4} Spring Clips.

The No.4 Contents are in MCS - compared to the No.3 it has 4 each of the Strips, 2 Reversed A/B, and 2 each of 8,12h A/Gs.

TECNIKIT: S1

OSN 35/1046

Snippets: MARKS & SPENCER

M&S have been selling specially packaged MECCANO sets during the last year or two and now three examples of non-MECCANO M&S sets have been seen on Ebay. All have 'CONSTRUCTION' on the lid and from the look of the parts they come from Eitech or Polylong. The set right has 167 parts to make the 3 models one at a time, and far right a 30 piece set for the little Digger. The third outfit, in blue packaging similar to the 3 model set, has 86 parts to make an F1 Racing Car with the same small Wheels. The usual style Eitech/Polylong model leaflets are shown in the Ebay photos for both the blue-boxed sets.



MARKS & SPENCER: S1

OSN 35/1046

Snippets: More Miniatures A short account of a 'MECCANO' doll's house set was given in 21/619 and since then a similar ½-scale 'TEMSEI' set has been seen on Ebay. Another Ebay offering, the ERECTO set on the right, was described as: '1½*1½". ½-scale. By Bufton.' Presumably it is meant to look like ERECTOR but with some 'new' parts as well, the angled Frames for example, and the silver Rod with a flattened end (the jib in the model I suppose). Not sure what the brass looking rod down the left side of the box is though.



ERECTO: S1

OSN 35/1046

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]