

**VOGUE, PALIKIT, and PIONEER** VOGUE and PALIKIT (VOG, PAL for short) parts and sets are not really very exciting, but they turn up fairly regularly here in the UK, particularly VOG, which is also I understand well known in Canada. Both systems are in MCS and the object in writing this is to describe the parts, and the differences between them; to try to sketch in some of the history of the two systems; and to relate PIONEER (also in MCS) to them. Some notes on METALCRAFT, which is very similar to PIONEER, appeared in 15/421.

**HISTORY** VOG probably appeared in the late 1940s and at first there was only one set. No example of it is known but in early manuals it is referred to as the 'standard' set, and it was probably identical to the later No.2. The final range of parts is shown in these manuals except the Flanged & Flexible Plates, and the rubber-tyred Wheels, 26R. None of these parts were ever included in the No.2.

The first definite reference is an ad in the May 1950 G&T, from Vogue Playthings Ltd., Egerton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, which says that sets are 'Now available in 3 sizes'. There are illustrations of the sets and all the main parts, including the Wheel 26R, and all the Plates, can be seen. The sets' layouts are identical to known outfits. At this time Strips and A/Gs were a rich dark green and Plates a medium red.

In the manuals with these 3 sets they are usually referred to as Nos. 1, 2, & 3, with sometimes the names Junior, Intermediate & Senior added. However the 2 examples of the No.2 I've seen both have (Standard) after the number on the box lid.

The next, and last, ad in G&T was from the Vogue Manufacturing Co. Ltd., in January 1952. Sets were mentioned but without any details, and the distributors were Vogue Playthings Ltd. & Thermold Ltd., both of the Egerton Road address. All VOGUE manuals have 'Made in England by Vogue Playthings Ltd., Egerton Road, etc, on the back cover.

At some stage a larger No.5 (Major) set was introduced. The packaging of the one example known is similar to the other sets and the green paint used is the same shade, but the red is lighter, identical in fact to that of the red metal parts in PAL sets.

It is supposed that the VOG range was dropped and replaced by the PAL sets. PAL was made by Cascelloid of Abbey Lane, Leicester and according to *British Tin Toys*, Vogue Playthings was a subsidiary of Cascelloid (which was founded by A.E.Pallett). The main differences are: the change from chamfered corners on Strips, A/Gs & Brackets, to rounded ones; the change to a much lighter shade of (pea) green paint (together with the lighter red); the use of a light red plastic for some parts; and the packaging of later PAL sets, with the parts in moulded plastic trays instead of being strung to cards;

The 4 PAL sets bore the same numbers, 1,2,3,5, and the same names except that the No.5 was now the Super. There were some changes to the contents of Nos.1-3, fairly minor except that a Flanged Plate was added to the No.2, and to the No.1, but in that case it replaced 2 each of 11h A/Gs and 5\*5h Plates. New models were introduced for the No.1 but those for the other sets were just redrawn to show the minor differences in the PAL parts. One new No.5 model was added to the 4 VOG ones.

The date PAL was introduced isn't known but perhaps it was around the time that MECCANO's colours were lightened in the mid 1950s. *Tin Toys* says that VOG was being made in 1955. MCS has PAL continuing on into the 1960s, and the Meccanoman's Guide says production ceased in 1964. (It also gives Cascelloid's address as Owen Street, Coalville, Leicestershire.)

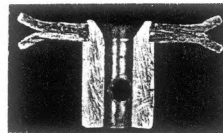
**The Actual PARTS** The main differences between VOG and PAL parts have already been mentioned - the chamfered corners on the Strips, Brackets, & A/Gs; and the paint

colours. Other differences are noted in the summary of the parts below. These are the parts that are commonly found and some of them can be seen in the METALCRAFT Illustrated Parts in 14/393.

**DATA** (in mm) **Strip** (11-hole): •Hole pitch/dia, 12.7/3.9 •width, 12.7; •thickness, .95; •ends - see above. **Boss**: (brass) •o/d, 9.6; •i/d, 3.92; •double tapped. **Thread**: 4BA. **Axle Dia**: 3.66. **DP (Mod)**: NA. **Nut**: hex or sq, 7.8 A/F; **Bolt**: roundhead 6.4 dia; both brass plated steel.

• 25,11,9,7, & 5-hole Strips. 1\*3\*1 and 1\*2\*1 DAS. 17,11,7, & 5-hole A/Gs with round holes in both flanges. The Angle Bracket has elongated holes, 6½mm o/a, in both arms. All these parts are green. In VOG all have corners chamfered at 45°; the PAL rounded corners are generally near fully radiused, but larger radii are found on 25h Strips, some Angle Brackets, and some A/Gs.

• Green 4-hole Bush Wheels, and for VOG, green 1" Pulleys - steel in both cases with brass Bosses. The ends of all bosses are spun over leaving that end of the bore tapered, as in the cross section



shown. Three lengths of boss are found. The protruding part on many dark green Pulleys is about 11mm long, but others and the PAL Bush Wheel, are shorter at about 8mm. VOG Bush Wheels are in between at 9-10mm. The PAL 1" Pulley is red plastic and is a push fit on the Axles. The boss tapers outwards (8½ to 7½mm) and is slit across near the face so that Axles are gripped only by its outer portion.

• 5\*10h Flanged Plates, flanged on the longer sides, and 8-hole long Flanged Sector Plates with 3 rows of holes and straight, parallel ends. Both these parts have elongated holes (6½mm) in their flanges. Other rigid Plates are a 5\*5h Perforated Plate, a 5\*3h Semi-circular Plate, and a triangular Flat Trunnion. The 3 sizes of Flexible Plate are, 5\*5h, 10\*5h, and 10\*3h. All their holes are round and the only 'centre' holes are 2 in the 10\*3h size. All these parts have near fully rounded corners and all are red.

The PAL Semi-circular Plate with the 45° radial slots (right), and the Flat Trunnion, are red moulded plastic.



• Red painted balloon tinplate 1¼" Ø Road Wheels are found in the smaller sets. VOG ones are often flat on one side with the tyre shape impressed only into the opposite face. Others have the same 'tyre' shape on both sides, but sometimes with a raised flat area of about ⅝" Ø around the centre hole on one side. The larger outfits contain rubber-tyred Wheels. The VOG type consists of two 1" Ø formed discs, similar to but not the same as those used for the Pulley, with a fat 1½" o.d. black rubber ring between. The discs are loose on a brass sleeve but the tyre holds them tight against a 3mm wide shoulder at one end and a spun end at the other, formed like the boss shown earlier. The PAL Wheel is the standard 1" red plastic Pulley with a black, treaded rubber Tyre on it: it has MADE IN ENGLAND moulded into one side and is about 40mm diameter.

• The Crank Handle, the Axles (2,3,4,5¼" with square sheared ends), the Span'driver, and the Hook are black, sometimes painted and sometimes with a metallic look. VOG Hooks are some 42mm o/a but PAL only 24mm. All the Pulleys and Wheels, except the push-on 1" Pulley are a very loose fit on the Axles.

• VOG Collars are ⅝" Ø by 9½mm long, double tapped about 4mm from one end. PAL are similar but only 8mm long. Two types of Spring Clips are found, black ones like Meccano's #35 and bright wire ones. The VOG pattern wire type is as shown for METALCRAFT; the PAL one is similar but with longer ends bent parallel to one another (opposite). Ordinary and wire Clips are usually found in the same set. PAL Nuts are square, VOG are sometimes square but more often hexagonal - both are the commercial pressed sort, ⅝" A/F and about 2¼mm thick.



**Other PARTS** A number of other variations have been

found that appear to be VOG or PAL:

- A medium red 5\*5h Plate with small ( $\frac{1}{8}$ " ) corner radii. Several Semi-circular Plates with an extra hole either side as described in 15/421. They correspond to the bottom of the slots in the PAL part.
- Several 2-round hole Angle Brackets, and 2 & 3h DAS, all with angled corners and a black metallic finish. A PAL looking Angle Bracket but with round holes.
- Several Axles and Crank Handles with a bright finish.
- Several nickel plated Bush Wheels. Several all brass 1" Pulleys, and other steel ones in nickel, red, or black metallic. All have the characteristic brass boss but with a slightly wider 'V' ( $4\frac{1}{2}$ -5mm) than the normal green ones ( $4\frac{1}{4}$ mm).

Not all the parts above are necessarily VOG or PAL, some may be from PIONEER or METALCRAFT. A possible red herring is BILT-E-ZE, another small UK system with parts, including Strips with angled corners, that looks distinctly similar on paper. But the holes at 4.1mm are larger, and the bosses are single tapped and have more normal peening. The parts are much less well made and finished, and the green paint is a medium shade, darker than PAL and lighter than VOG. It's also worth mentioning that VOG and PAL parts are quite often found with their holes opened out, no doubt to make them compatible with MECCANO.

As pure speculation, the nickel and all brass parts may date from the early days, and then the black steel parts may have appeared around 1951-52, at the time of the Korean war, due to material shortages in those years. Some of the known sets include finishes that don't entirely support that sequence of events, but in some cases there are doubts about whether all the parts in them are the originals. The only sets I'm absolutely sure of are a VOG No.5 and a PAL No.5. The VOG has green Pulleys (with long bosses), a green Bush Wheel, green double slotted Angle Brackets, square Nuts, and black painted Axles, Crank Handle, Hook & Span'drivers. The PAL has the parts in a formed plastic tray and they include a green Bush Wheel, green double slotted Angle Brackets, square Nuts, and metallic black Axles, Crank Handle, Hook & Span'drivers.

**PARTS in the Manuals** There are one or two points of interest in the parts illustrated in the manuals.

In the early VOG manuals the 5\*5h Perf. Plate is shown with chamfered corners, and the Angle Bracket with 2 round holes. No Plates with angled corners are known.

All manuals except early VOG ones show colour illustrations of the parts on their back covers, but in fact the shades of red and green shown are not true, and those for PAL are nearer VOG, and vice-versa.

VOG manuals depict the Bush Wheel and 1" Pulley as brass coloured (actually yellow, like the N&B), and the one hole in the Angle Bracket that can be seen is round. I have numerous Brass Pulleys but have never seen a brass Bush Wheel. (No Brackets with 1 round and 1 elongated holes are known.)

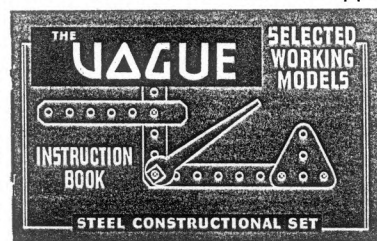
The parts in PAL manuals are as the actual ones already described except that all the Strips, A/Gs and Brackets are shown with the Vogue-style corners. MCS/FB indicates that light green Strips with angled ends are the norm but I haven't come across any. I once thought I had but I believe now that they are BILT-E-ZE.

**SETS** There are photos of the VOG Nos.1,2 & 3 outfits in the manuals and the No.5 is similar except that there are 3 layers of parts. All are packed in red boxes, with large full colour labels on the lids showing the scene that's on the manual cover in MCS. The No.5 box measures 19\*12\*2". The parts are strung on bright yellow cards with red cord. Sets 1-3 in the manual correspond closely to actual sets except that the No.2 has 2 boxes for N&B and small parts, and they are glued over the vacant square spaces on the upper card. A complete No.3 hasn't been seen but it's possible that the squares there may be cut out to show the

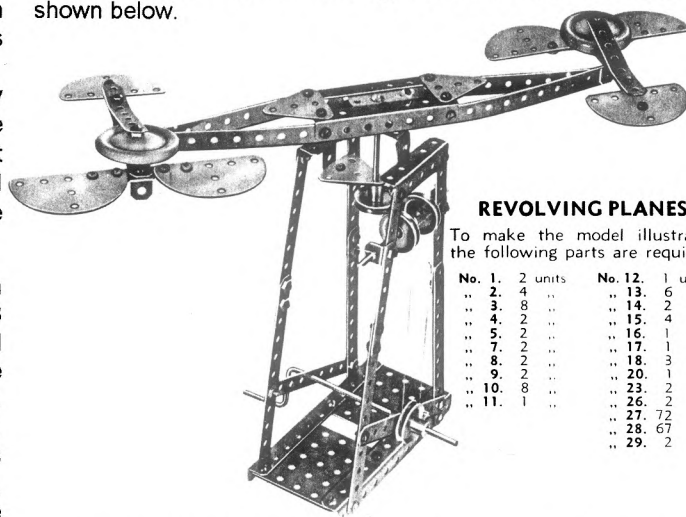
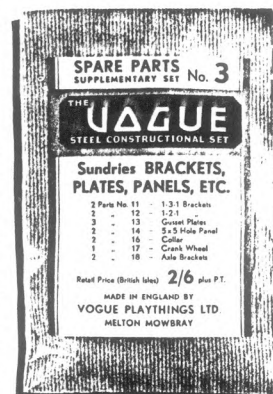
parts underneath. That is the case for the top card of the No.5, and it has a smaller centre cutout too.

PAL sets are in duller red boxes, again with a label similar to the manual cover. The parts in early PAL sets were strung to yellow cards, often with layouts similar or identical to VOG. Then moulded plastic trays were used with coloured-headed drawing pins to hold the parts in place. They were much more closely packed than the strung ones and the boxes were thinner with only one tray even in the No.5. The No.1 box measures about 13\*8" and the No.5, 19\*12" - the same size as the VOG No.5 but only 1" deep.

**MANUALS** Two early VOG manuals are known. One, I'll call it the 'blue' manual, has only 8 unnumbered pages plus covers, and is a little smaller than later ones. Its front cover (below) is blue and black, and the 7 'Selected Working Models' in it are all No.2 models later on - first is Tipper Truck and last, Wind Driven Water Pump. The parts are shown on the inside covers as white line drawings on a blue ground. All are there except the Flanged and Flexible Plates, and the Wheel 26R. The back cover has a panel with the maker's name and address on it.



The second, which I'll call the 'red' manual, has 20 standard size pages, plus covers, and unlike later manuals, the text at the top and bottom of each page is printed in red. There's the normal full colour front cover but instead of the parts in colour, the back has a panel similar to the one on the blue manual. The parts are on p20 and the IBC, with again the 'blue' presentation. As in the 'blue' one, no Set Contents are given, but the contents of the Supplementary Spare Parts Sets 1-5 are given on p19 (see p6b of MCS/FB) - these aren't in the 'blue' manual but are on a separate Leaflet that was with it. A photo of Supplementary pack No.3 (opposite) is on p18 of the 'red' manual, and doesn't appear in the 'blue' or later manuals. All 27 models shown are for the Standard Set but the first 12 are smaller ones and they are not the same as the No.1 models in the later manuals. The larger models include all the later No.2 models and 2 of the 4 extra are above average for VOG models. One is shown below.



#### REVOLVING PLANES

To make the model illustrated the following parts are required:

No.	1.	2 units	No.	12.	1 units
"	2.	4	"	13.	6
"	3.	8	"	14.	2
"	4.	2	"	15.	4
"	5.	2	"	16.	1
"	7.	2	"	17.	1
"	8.	2	"	18.	3
"	9.	2	"	20.	1
"	10.	8	"	23.	2
"	11.	1	"	26.	2
			"	27.	72
			"	28.	67
			"	29.	2

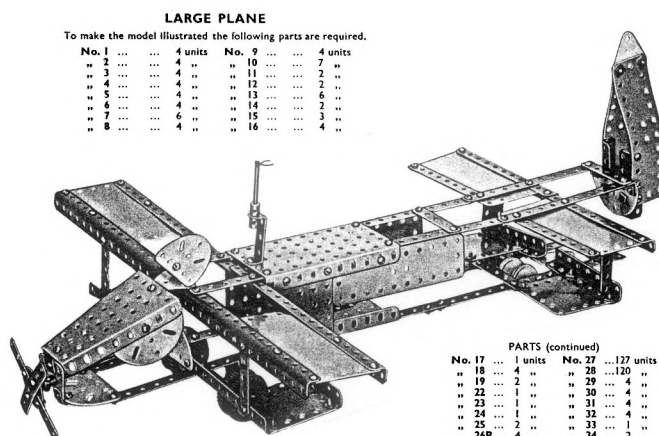
It isn't certain that the 'red' manual came after the 'blue', it's possible that the latter was a cut down, utility version



that had to be produced for some reason. But the 'blue' probably came first because, unlike the 'red', it has no Parts Required List for any of the models, although there is ample room beside each.

Details of later manuals are given at the end. All later VOG manuals have the same format and layout and the 2 different versions I've seen are for the No.2 set, with 1-2 set models, and for the No.3, with 1-3 models. With the No.5 Set was a No.3 manual with a 'No.5 Set' sticker on the cover, plus 4 separate 'Supplementary Pages' with the Set Contents and 4 models. [In passing, the lid of the No.5 box has the same No.5 Set sticker followed by '(MAJOR)' printed on the lid. So what does the sticker cover? Was the set originally to be called the No.4?]

All the PAL manuals have the same format and layout - the 'No.2 Set' one has Nos.1 & 2 models, and the 'No.3 & 5 Set' has 1-3 plus No.5 models. As in the VOG manuals there is just one good photo of each model. It has already been mentioned that only the No.1 models and one No.5 were new. With a few exceptions none of the models are anything more than adequate and many are rather ugly. The unusual No.5 Large Plane below is perhaps one of the worst, and hardly epitomised the jet age. There is no mention of the 5 Supplementary Sets of parts in any PAL manuals, or elsewhere.



**LARGE PLANE**

To make the model illustrated the following parts are required.

No. 1	4 units	No. 9	4 units
No. 2	4	No. 10	7
No. 3	4	No. 11	2
No. 4	4	No. 12	2
No. 5	4	No. 13	6
No. 6	4	No. 14	2
No. 7	4	No. 15	3
No. 8	4	No. 16	4

**PARTS (continued)**

No. 17	1 units	No. 27	127 units
No. 18	4	No. 28	120
No. 19	2	No. 29	4
No. 20	1	No. 30	4
No. 21	1	No. 31	4
No. 22	1	No. 32	4
No. 23	1	No. 33	1
No. 24	1	No. 34	2
No. 25	2		
No. 26R	4		

**VOGUE & PALIKIT Abroad** VOG in Canada has already been mentioned. Two Leaflets were found with the manuals in the No.5 VOG, one in Dutch and the other in French. They are both translations of the Intro that's on the inside front cover of VOG manuals, except that they say that replacement parts are available but with no mention of them being sold in sets. At the bottom of each is Vogue Playthings Ltd., Abbey Road, Leicester - the PAL address. Two Leaflets were also found in a PAL 'No.3 & 5 Set' manual. One in French is the same as the VOG one except the name of the firm is Cascelloid. Replacement parts are again said to be available, the only known mention of PAL separate parts. The other Leaflet in Dutch gives on one side a similar Intro (but with no mention of replacement parts), and the Contents of Sets 1-3 & 5; and on the reverse are the names of the models for those Sets.

**ENDWORD** VOG/PAL parts were quite well made and finished (except for the black paint on Axles etc.), but the range of parts available and their design left something to be desired. For example, the lack of slotted holes in the Flexible Plates and, more particularly, in the A/Gs, make them difficult to use in any but the simplest of models. Another oddity is the rubber-tyred Wheels in the larger sets which are smaller than the balloon type in the smaller outfits, and look out of proportion on the models to which they're fitted.

But quite a lot of VOG/PAL must have been sold, so what was the attraction? It may have been the attractive layout of the parts in the generously sized boxes. Despite having more of it than I know what to do with, I still find sets in

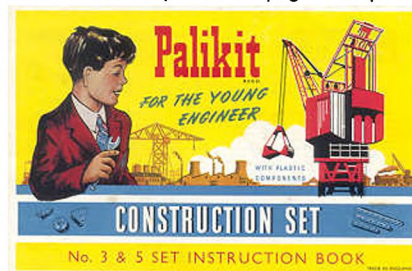
good order hard to resist. Or was it the price? There's 50/- (£2.50) pencilled onto the VOG No.5 box, and that seems about right against 12/6 & 27/6 for Sets 1 & 2 in a 1952 Eagle ad. The nearest MECCANO set would be a No.4 which had (a much better range of) 140 major parts against 110 in the VOG, but only 90 N&B against 168. The No.4 was 42/6 in 1956 and 48/- in 1960, and an extra 72 N&B would have cost 4/6. To sell at 50/- the VOG Set probably needed to be called a No.5 rather than a No.4.

**SUMMARY OF MANUAL.** •Name: VOGUE No.3 Set Instruction Book. •Details of maker: Vogue Playthings Ltd., Egerton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.

•No dates or Ref Nos. •Page size: 223\* 141mm deep. •No. of pages: 24 plus covers. •Language: English. •Printing: photos of the models; colour front cover inc r/g models, turquoise frame; parts in colour on back cover. •Page No. of Illustrated Parts & highest PN: back cover, 34. •Page No. of Set Contents & highest PN: 1, 34. •Sets covered: 1 (Junior), 2 (Intermediate), 3 (Senior). •No. of models for each set: 14,10,8. •Name, Page No. of first & last model of each set (no Model Nos.): 1: MONOPLANE,2; SWING BOAT,8. 2: SCOOTER,9; EXTENDING AND ADJUSTABLE FIRE ESCAPE, 16. 3: LONG WHEEL BASE LORRY WITH STEERING,17; WINDMILL,24. •Other notes: contents of Supplementary Spare Parts Sets 1-5 on IBC. The No.2 Set manual is identical except that pp16-24 are omitted. The No.3 manual was found in a No.5 Set with a No.5 Set sticker on the cover, together with a 4 page Leaflet headed SUPPLEMENTARY PAGES for VOGUE No.5 SET. It gave the No.5 Set Contents and 4 models from LARGE BREAKDOWN LORRY AND TRAILER to LARGE CRANE.



**SUMMARY OF MANUAL.** •Name: PALIKIT No.3 & 5 Set Instruction Book. •Details of maker: Cascelloid, Abbey Lane, Leicester. •No dates or Ref Nos. •Page size: 216\*140mm deep. •No. of pages: 28 plus covers. •Language: English. •Printing: photos of models; colour cover with red crane on yellow ground; parts in colour on back cover. •Page No. of Illustrated Parts & highest PN: back cover, 34. •Page No. of Set Contents & highest PN: 1,34. •Sets covered: 1 (Junior), 2 (Intermediate), 3 (Senior), 5 (Super). •No. of models for each set: 12,10,8,5. •Name, Page No. of first & last model of each set (no Model Nos.): 1: MAN ON SKIS,2; SACK BARROW,8. 2: SCOOTER,9; EXTENDING AND ADJUSTABLE FIRE ESCAPE,16. 3: LARGE CRANE,17; WINDMILL,24. 5: LARGE BREAKDOWN LORRY AND TRAILER, 25; OCEAN LINER,IBC. •Other notes: A No.2 Manual with similar front cover, has the same No.1 & 2 models on the same pages, with the No.5 OCEAN LINER on the IBC. Both Manuals have 'WITH PLASTIC COMPONENTS' on the front cover.



**PIONEER** Only one size of PIONEER set was made, and although there are obviously more, and different types of, parts in the one known set than there should be, all of them, with one exception, match known VOG parts exactly. This together with the strong similarities between the VOG and PIONEER manuals, and the style of their covers and box lid labels, make it 99.9% sure that PIONEER was made by Vogue/Cascelloid. It is said in *Tin Toys* that 'The [PIONEER] construction set is illustrated in a 1950s Lines Bros catalogue with the 'Frog' trademark of the International Model Aircraft company a subsidiary of Lines Bros.' So it seems likely that the set was specially produced for the one customer.

Most of the parts in the known Set are in the dark green, light red colours of the VOG No.5 already discussed and this points to it having appeared towards the end of the VOG era. Other evidence to support this comes from the Manual. The Illustrated Parts on the back of it are exactly



like those on VOG manuals but the Nut is the (square) PAL shape, and Angle Bracket has 2 slotted holes. None of the models are in VOG manuals but 4 appear as PAL No.1 models.

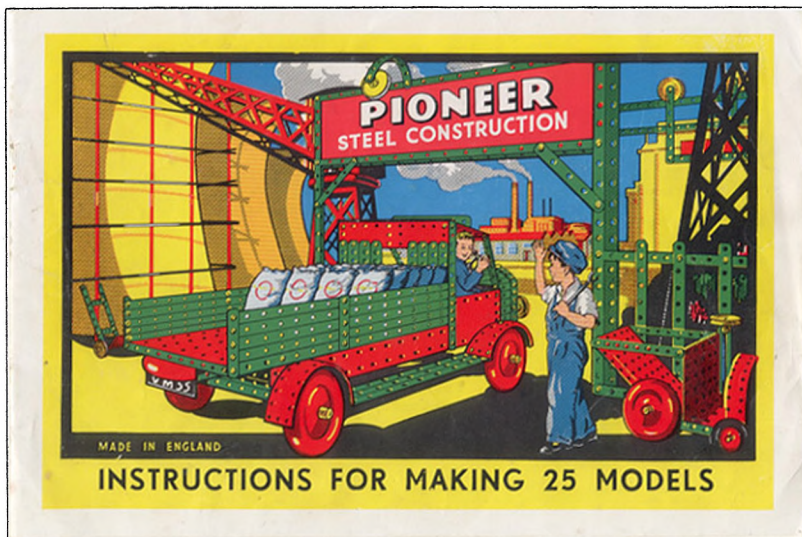
The contents of the Set isn't given in the Manual but judging by the parts needed for the models, the Set lies between PAL Sets Nos.1 and 2. (PAL rather than VOG because a Flanged Plate is included.) The box is red and is large (about 19\*12") in relation to the likely number of parts in the Set; it has a large label similar to the cover of the Manual. The parts were originally strung onto a single yellow card. The cardboard box for small parts is green and yellow and as for VOG/PAL is labelled Sundry Parts. The Axles, Crank Handle, Hook, and Span'driver in the Set are painted black (though there are more Axles than there should be), and the (green) Angle Brackets are double slotted.

The Manual contains 25 models and some of them are rather better looking than the small VOG/PAL ones. The more elaborate models on the cover (above, right) need several parts, including Flexible Plates, that are not listed as PIONEER parts.

The part in the Set that isn't VOG pattern is the Semi-circular Plate with 2 extra holes that was shown in 15/421. This one is a slightly darker shade than most of the other red parts, which included one ordinary Semi-circular Plate. So probably it wasn't a PIONEER part.

#### SUMMARY OF MANUAL

•Name: PIONEER // STEEL



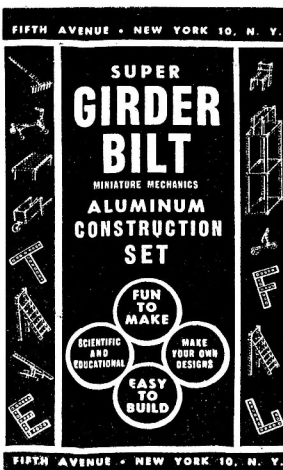
CONSTRUCTION // INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING 25 MODELS •No details of maker, dates or Ref Nos. •Page size: 221\*141mm deep. •No. of pages: 16 inc covers. •Language: English. •Printing: photos of models; colour cover with models in foreground as above; parts in colour on back cover. •Page No. of Illustrated Parts & highest PN: 16,21. •No Set Contents. •Sets covered: not stated. •No. of models: 25. •Name, Page No. of first & last model (no Model Nos): BOARD & EASEL,3; AEROPLANE,15.

**THANK YOU** Most of the material used in this article has come from Alan Cox, Richard Gilbert, Malcolm Hanson, David Hobson, and Richard Symonds.

**GIRDER BILT** This was a small American system with aluminium parts that probably had a brief life soon after WW2. It is in MCS but without much on the parts, and Kendrick Bisset has now kindly sent details of a set that he came across.

It is in a tubular container, about 3" Ø and 10" high, and each of the 2 identical panels of the red, white and blue label (opposite x¼) has on it: SUPER GIRDER BILT | MINIATURE MECHANICS | ALUMINUM CONSTRUCTION SET. In MCS the name GIRDER BILT is hyphenated, and the outfit there isn't described as SUPER. 14 small models are shown between the panels, and around the bottom is the name of the maker - Play Items, Inc., 200 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. - as in MCS. The top is tinfoil and fits over the tube.

Below are some notes on the parts and photocopies of typical ones. The quantities found in the (not quite complete) set are given in curly brackets.



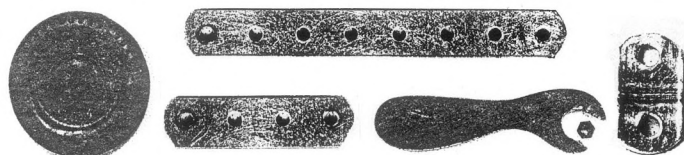
are given as ¼, ½ & 1".

• Finally the 4\*6h Plate (opposite) which looks as if it is 6 Strips that haven't been sheared apart. It isn't used in any of the models on the box.

There was no Model Leaflet with the Set and although they are identical in style and general appearance, none of the models on the Tube are any of those in MCS. However all of them, except the Letters E, F & L, are shown in another MCS system, ALUMINUM CONSTRUCTION SET (ACS), and 2 of the other ACS models are among the GIRDER BILT models in MCS. Clearly the 2 systems were related in some way -

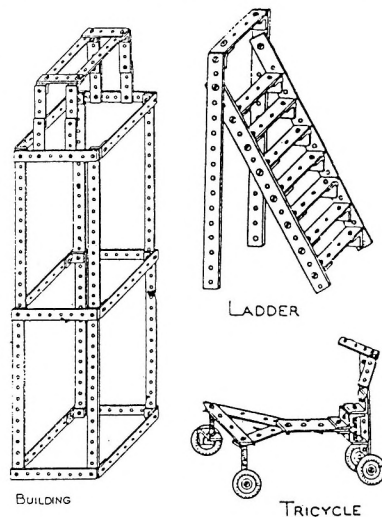
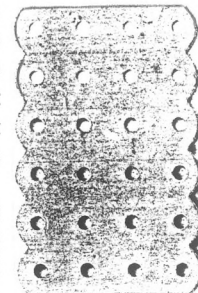
the same unusual name for Angle Bracket is used in each for example. ACS was made by Roberts Enterprises, 70-60 Broadway, Jackson Heights, N.Y. None of the models have any Plates in them and they all show Strips with square ends. Whether rounded ends (and the Plate if it wasn't a 'mistake') were features only of the 'Super' GIRDER BILT set is a matter of conjecture. Another odd thing is that the Letters mentioned above included Strips 3,5 & 7h long.

The models on the Tube won't copy clearly so those opposite are from the ACS entry in MCS, but they are identical to the Super GIRDER BILT ones.



• **DATA** (in mm) **STRIP**: •hole pitch/dia, 12.7/3.5-3.6; •width, 12.9; •ends, semi-radiused. **BOSS**: no bosses, hole in Wheel 3.15 Ø. **THREAD**: 3-48 ANC. **AXLE DIA**: no Axles, the Bolts (2.5mm Ø) are used. **DP (Mod)**: N/A. **NUT**: hex 4.7 A/F; **BOLT**: pan head, 4.8 Ø; both blackened steel.

• 4,8 & 16h Girders [Strips] {13,16,8}. The rounding of the ends is rather irregular, with even a sharp splinter left on some. • Angle Bends [Brackets] with a round hole in each lug - the illustration above is of one flattened out {13}. • 1½" Ø black hard rubber Wheels {3}. • Nuts and 3 lengths of Bolt: 7/16" pan headed, ½" roundheaded, and ¾" with fillister heads {21,23,1,3}. These seem rather small in diameter but from the marks on the Strips they may have been original. On the other hand the 2½" long Spanners {2} with jaws about 5/16" wide are far too big for the Nuts. 4-40 might have been more suitable size, but perhaps the smaller ones were all that were available at the time. In MCS the lengths of the Bolts





## ITEMS FROM LETTERS

1. From Richard Symonds. • An ad for a 6" dial calliper gauge that he bought recently for \$19. Made in China, but well made, he recommends such an instrument as being ideal for OS/handyman purposes.

• A photo of a **LYNNCRAFT** Set that's similar but not identical to the one described in 12/309. The outside of the lid looks identical, though I can't quite read if the Model No. is '146'. It's probably an earlier Set because there are no Tyres in it; otherwise the contents look the same, with a generally similar layout, except that all 5 Pulleys are between the Trunnions, there are 2 extra Pulleys (with hidden, or no, bosses), each holding down 3 of the Triangular Plates, no Span'drivers are visible, and in dark areas of the photo on either side of the Large Flanged Plate, there looks to be an extra Bush Wheel on the left, and another part, perhaps a Pulley or a third Bush Wheel on the right. There's no centre hole in any of the Strips.

2. From Don Redmond. • On the **ERECTOR No.100 Set** (from 11/298 & 15/ 411), the bore of the Wheel is just over 3.25mm, & the Axle is 2.90mm Ø. See *Greenberg* 2, p139, for a photo of the Set; it's said there that it was marketed only in 1957, & that the parts were shrink wrapped onto a yellow backing board.

• **JE-IL/JEP** (see 13/344) were still going strong last summer. Their address is Jeil Science Material Enterprises, Kuroku, Kurodong 546-2, Seoul (Buyoung Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor), and the phone numbers are the 858 ones in OSN 13. The firm does not market its products outside South Korea. The sets 1-3 and 5 & 6 continue but there's doubt about the Army outfit (see 6/111). The current manuals are for Sets 1; 2 including 1; 3 including 1 & 2; 5; & 6). The #3 is the same as the one described in OSN 13 with very minor changes to the text, and the models in #5 & 6 are probably the same.

• On **TEMSI** hole spacing, see 9/225, Charles Shrubsole has found that the it is erratic rather than being uniformly a little over ½". Don checked four 25h Strips from one set for himself and found some pairs of holes at exactly ½" while others were up to 1.5mm out. But the erratic spacing was identical between all the Strips, and the end holes were all 3mm over 12" apart. [The 6 in a set from the 1950s or 1960s are all no more than 1½mm out over the 25 holes and the holes seem to be very nearly uniformly spaced; the 4 A/Gs in the set are very similar.]

• **STRUCTOMODE** A/Gs are black, like **MÄRKLIN** used to be, but are easy to recognise because they are copper plated under the chemical blackening.

• The **MASTER BUILDER** Motor shown in 18/495 looks just like the 1914 **ERECTOR** P-51 Motor on p52 of *Greenberg* 1. It was only listed for the one year, and was fitted with strip brushes. Are they identical? And who made them? In 1915 Gilbert changed to the P-58 which had carbon brushes, slightly different frames with 4 terminals, & bracket feet. Said feet had a round hole in each, later slotted right out to the edge of the foot.

• The word in the **KONSTRUKTOR [10]** 'flying goose' logo (18/498) is Moskva (Moscow) in script.

• **Buffing** dull dark grey (tin plated) **STRUCTO** parts using a cloth buffing wheel impregnated with tripoli (rottenstone) gave a bright, smooth shine. Tin oxide is tough.

• Some 5h Strips with very large end radii, of about 2", cut close to the end holes, have been identified, thanks to Kendrick Bisset, as **MASTER BUILDER**. [As far as I know most M B Strips have well rounded ends, see 16/450.]

• **MESO** in the **SONNEBERGER** logo (see 18/502), no doubt comes (in similar fashion to other German abbreviations) from **MEtallwarenfabrik SOnneberg**.

3. From David Hobson. • An unused **MECANIKIT No.0**, still strung in its box, is exactly the same as the one described in 10/250, and MCS, except that all the Strips bar 3x 3h are aluminium, and there are 12 N&B. 8 of the Nuts

are square and 4 hexagonal, both the same across flats. The Axle is aluminium, and the Balloon Wheels have a gold sheen, and appear to have been lacquered. No Screwdriver was found in the Set.

• From the Nov. 1930 *The Toy Trader*. **Sonneberg** (see 18/502) has been known for toys for the last 200 years and has 'the unique **German Toy Museum**'.

• Something on the history of **VOGUE** (ref. 17/464) appeared in the Sept. 1951 *The Toy Trader & Exporter*. The Vogue Manufacturing Co. of Egerton Road, Melton Mowbray was established some 40 years before and produced metal trimmings for shoes. It was bought by A.N.Pallett in 1947 and new machinery for making toys and fancy goods was gradually installed, including plastic moulding equipment. A subsidiary, Vogue Playthings Ltd. was formed in 1947 to market the toys, and in 1949 Thermold Ltd., who made toilet goods and advertising novelties, was acquired. During 1948/49 the original factory was enlarged and another factory at Oakham, 10 miles away, was taken to make the constructional sets. In 1950 A.E.Pallett, father of A.N., and managing director of Casceloid Ltd. from 1919 to 1943, joined the firm and became responsible for admin and sales. In that year additional premises were obtained in Melton for packing and dispatch, and the original factory was modernised. The **VOGUE** pressings were then made there and taken to Oakham for finishing and packing. A blurry photo in an earlier (Feb. 1951) issue showed 3 sets which look like those shown in the Manuals, and behind them is a largish model that might be a Big Wheel.

• An ad from the manufacturers' agent Val Green, in the Jan. 1952 *The Toy Trader & Exporter*, mentions 'The latest & greatest' **KONSTRUKTA** Steel Constructional Sets'. The parts in this system, and their similarity to **BEAVER**, were discussed in 6/129, & this is the first definite date for either. Incidentally **BEAVER** was made by a firm, Rutland Plastics Ltd., in Oakham, where **VOGUE** sets were produced.

• **DAN DARE** Sets 1 & 2 (see 14/366) were announced in an ad by Bartram, the manufacturer, in *The Toy Trader & Exporter* for July 1953, and a similar ad with illustrations of the Sets appeared in the August issue.

• An article on **CONSTRUMENTS** in the Dec. 1932 *Toy Trader* says that the sets have only been on the market for a week or two. So that confirms the date inferred in 5/79. The 20, Plus, & 100 Sets are mentioned and the 20 is said allow instruments worth £20 to be made, or at least £100 for the No.100 Outfit. It is also stated that the interchangeable metal parts were made by The British Thomson Houston Co. Ltd.

• The 1937 **JUNEERO** box lid illustrated in 9/216 was also shown in *The Toy Trader* for Feb 1936, in an ad for cartons, and in a later 1936 Waddy ad.

• **ARKIRECTO** (2/19) was patented in 1933. Mentioned was made of it in the Feb 1934 *Games & Toys*, and in March an ad from the manufacturers, Arkirecto Ltd., Carlton House, Regent Street, London, S.W.1, offered sets from 2/6 to £2-2-0. In October the price range was 2/6 to 52/6 and ads continued until Feb 1935. The next ad, with the same prices, was in June from Waddy Productions, Astor House, Aldwych, London, and they had another ad in September. Finally in June, July & August 1936, E.M.Napier Ltd., Exmouth House, 3 Pine Street, Farringdon Road, London announced 'We have procured the entire stock of **ARKIRECTO** and can offer complete outfits or parts at greatly reduced prices'. (From a Nov 1937 Napier ad: 'Turn that dead stock into £-s-d - London's Largest Job Stock Buyer - pays spot cash for surplus stock.')

• The **MEX** No.2 Set (see 16/452) was advertised by W.H.Cornelius in the Nov 1933 *The Toy Trader*, price 1/-. So unless it had a very short life it's strange that it wasn't mentioned in the later *Games & Toys* ads.

• In 18/523 Don Redmond asked about a yellow plastic Wheel with Tyre marked **BILDIT**. It probably came from the simple plastic **BILDIT** system which was based on a special

## A.C.Gilbert's First ERECTOR Patent

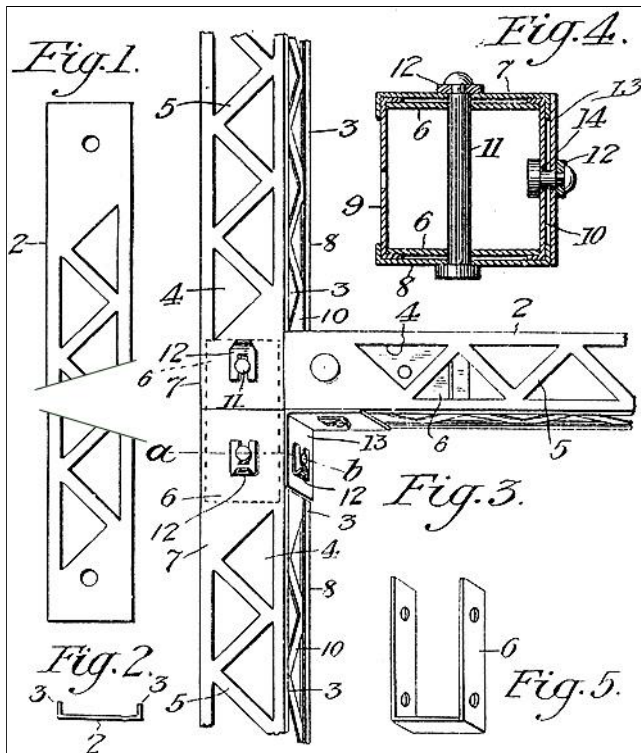
by David Hobson

Gilbert's first ERECTOR patent seems to have been US 1,066,809 of 8 July 1913, and is entitled 'Toy Construction Blocks'. Its specification is quite brief, and outlines how to make his famous box girder units from 4 strips having simple flanged edges, using U-shaped coupling pieces. (Strip is the term used in the patent for the ERECTOR 'braced' Girder.) This version was only marketed for the 1913-14 season, and Gilbert does not seem to have made application for an equivalent UK patent. For the next year the Girders were redesigned to have the familiar V-section channels along their edges, and four could then be made into a box girder without the use of a U-shaped coupling piece. This version was covered by US 1,231,728 issued in 1917, the application having been made on 26 Jan. 1914. The equivalent UK specification is No.1259 of 1915.

The figures from the patent (actually from a clearer, revised version described later) are shown right. The U-shaped coupling piece, 6, acts to hold the side strips 9 & 10 out against the lips of the other side strips 7 & 8, while the bolt, 11, presses 7 & 8 down onto the lips of 9 & 10. As shown the bolt 11 is a smooth pin with a groove near the end for a U-shaped retaining clip 12, but in the text is also '...or the bolt may be threaded and a nut applied thereto.'

In contemplating using the pin and clip method instead of bolts Gilbert may have thought it would be cheaper and offer an advantage over his competitors already established in the market – MECCANO, AMERICAN MODEL BUILDER, & STRUKTIRON. However the length of the pin had to be quite specific for the combination of strips & couplings to be joined and it could not be tightened to make a really firm joint. Packing washers might have helped in both cases but are not mentioned in the patent. Gilbert seems to have abandoned the idea of using this method of fastening and ordinary nuts & bolts were supplied in the 1913 sets. Bolts with nuts are shown holding the redesigned strips in US 1,231,728.

As already mentioned the first patent was quite brief, running to only 1 page of text. It seems to have been badly drafted, and included some obvious mistakes in the drawings. Although Gilbert soon abandoned the principles it covered, it was redrafted for some reason, with 3 pages of



text, and with the drawings amended to clarify the invention. This version was published as US Reissued Patent 14,250 of 16 Jan. 1917, the application for reissue having been filed on 29 Jan. 1914. Interestingly, although the U-shaped clip method of securing the pins is mentioned in the text as before, and is illustrated in the drawings, it is omitted from the Claims Section. By Jan. 1914 Gilbert must have abandoned the simple flanged strips covered by the patent, and had indeed just filed for patent protection of his redesigned version. Presumably therefore the reissue was for legal reasons, either at the instigation of the US Patent Office to correct mistakes, or because there might be a need to establish proper priority of the original patent in case it were to be used later, or in case of any disputes which might arise.

## ITEMS FROM LETTERS

1. From Thomas Morzinck. 'Tobias Mey has told me that he is going to start a **toy museum** in the town of Calw [between Baden-Baden & Stuttgart] in which all his priceless originals will be shown in special exhibitions in 2003 & the following years. There will be special interest exhibitions for metal sets like Märklin, wooden sets like Record, stone sets like Anker and much more.'

2. From Werner Sticht. 'Bad news from Switzerland, the production & storage areas of **STOKYS** Littau factory burnt down in last March.' Werner also mentioned that he now has a web site, [www.stabilbaukasten.de.vu](http://www.stabilbaukasten.de.vu), for STABIL and other Walther products. It's in German but much is easy to follow and the pictures often speak for themselves. As well as STABIL there are sections on MINIATUR, WALTHER'S INGENIEUR, and the wooden sets. Also notes on the pioneers including Lilienthal, Hornby & Korbuly.

3. From Don Redmond. • All the Semi-circular Plates found in two strung **VOGUE** No.1 sets are the type with 2 extra holes, illustrated in 15/421. The extra holes are not shown anywhere in the manuals for the Sets. [Since Don wrote a No.2 set has been sold on eBay, boxed but not strung, and of the 6 Semi-circular Plates that should have been in the Set, 5 could be seen, and all were the type with the 2 extra

holes. The Set was in no other way remarkable: the manual cover was identical to the one shown in 17/466, and the lid label similar, with SET No.2 (STANDARD) at bottom left, just as expected.]

• On the Chinese **MECHANIC** (17/471 & 22/640) I can confirm that the No.190 exists, and that the 190-192 series is not progressive. No maker's name is given on the 190, the only source information is on the (Canadian) bilingual box: 'Imported by/importé par DMD Group, Mississauga (Ontario) L5T 1R2'. There is no French on the model sheet but a copyright date of 1993. The English model names are a little strange, Sailer for a sailboat for instance. Nice try though.

• 3 white Flanged Plates not seen before are sketched 50% full-size in the next column, and all the holes in them are indicated. The large cutout in the one top left is 30\*35mm, and it has flanges on its short sides, with 5 holes in each. The top right one has 7h flanges on its long sides. The bottom Plate is 7\*14cm and its flanges are at 45°. The long ones are unperforated and only 7mm wide; at the ends they are 20mm wide with 2 slotted holes in each as shown. The large holes on top are 10 & 33mm diameter. The clues to their probable identity came from their unusual hole pitch of 14mm, and the various labels stuck to them - most are 'space' but one is 'Delta-X'. So no doubt the parts are from a **DELTA-X Space Set**, not listed in MCS. [DELTA-X was the name used for the Japanese DELTAX sets when they were sold in the United States, see 11/288.]

**EDITORIAL** First, my thanks to everyone who sent comments on the proposed changes to the N/L. I've tried to incorporate as many as possible of your suggestions but the result is inevitably something of a compromise, especially as it is often a question of trying to get a quart into a pint pot. Let me know your reactions.

On 'admin' matters - details of subscription rates, etc, and your credit balance, are now given overleaf. Please note that for simplicity all prices are now per Issue, and that in future the next N/L will not be sent unless the credit balance is sufficient to cover its cost. To make this clear the minimum you need to send to receive the next Issue is given, but as before you can send more to avoid having to make frequent payments.

With the experience gained from printing this Issue I can give an indication of the prices likely due to the use of colour, and printing single-sided. For the usual postal zones the price per Issue will probably be about £6.50/£7/£8. The final figures will be given in OSN 29. As explained in OSN 27 this Issue and the next (OSN 29) will be at the existing rates (given overleaf) for current subscribers, and the new rates will apply to OSN 30 and thereafter.

A note on the page numbering. As well as the normal page numbers each item has an 'S' number for those who want to file OSN material in MCS. For each system the first item about it will be 'S1', the second 'S2', and so on.

### FROM READERS

1. **FERMO** (see 27/784) came from the British Zone of Germany rather than from East Germany, as stated in the Extra MCS Sheet. Thank you to Jacques Pitrat for this correction.

#### FERMO: S1

[28/813]

2. The **MERKUR M8** was mentioned as possibly the largest general purpose set now available, but Alan Blake & other readers have drawn attention to the **METALLUS** Berlin outfit. According to the Metallus web site (now much improved & much faster) it costs €599 and has 2462 parts (the old **MÄRKLIN** No.1015, see below, has 990 + 558 N&B). By my count the M8 has 1384 parts (652 + 366 N&B), plus a Motor.

In passing, Metallus has a range of 12 outfits including 5 Gear sets. The 7 constructional outfits are said to be equivalent to the old **MÄRKLIN** Sets 1009-1015, & each is named after a German town, from Berchtesgaden to Berlin. Details of the **MÄRKLIN** sets are in MCS (the 1015 is the 1014+1034), and they all seem to have slightly fewer parts than the **METALLUS** ones. From the web photos the latter still include a few **TEMSEI** parts. A **TEMSEI** manual is included but it is suggested that the old **MÄRKLIN** manuals be used.

At the time of writing, October 2002, Dave Taylor has the Berlin listed at £329.95. The Dutch site mentioned in 27/790 has the M8 at €140.50.

#### METALLUS: S1

[28/813]

3. Thomas Morzinck wrote that Karl Debik has opened his

**building toy museum** in Germany. The address is Baukasten-Museum, Hartmannstraße 4, Löbau/Saxonia.

[28/813]

4. From Alan Blake. The Maplin catalogue includes 17 **CONSTRUCTION** sets, from a set with 116 parts at £3.99 to a 1482 part outfit at £49.99. No Set Nos. are given. Maplin shops have very few, if any, of them, but one shop had two sets that weren't in the catalogue.

#### CONSTRUCTION: S1

[28/813]

5. From Jacques Pitrat. 'On **BUILD** (27/798) I have an unused #400 set and the lid is the one with 'Standard' under Buildo. The contents are almost the same than those of the #45 set, but there only 6x 5h Strips, 6 DAS, no 5\*9h Plate, & 3x 98mm Shafts. The Flat Plates are not fully perforated. There is a plate Screwdriver with a centre cutout in the handle. The Eccentric Strap is anodised red, and the upper two Pulley Discs are anodised orange. The disposition of the parts is slightly different from the photo in the manual. On page 1 of the manual there is the address of the maker and the description and the price of the four sets: 400, 600, 900, 1500.' [Jacques also sent a photo of his open box, showing all the parts and their layout.]

#### BUILD (1): S1

[28/813]

6. Some notes from Don Redmond on **BUILD** following the article in 27/796. His No.45 includes Flat Brackets with one hole slotted, and A/Bs made from them. The Bolts in the set are steel, mostly mushroom head but with a few, 6 & 9mm, RH. The 6mm hex Nuts are chamfered on one side. The wire Screwdriver is distinctive with a narrow, 5mm, tip. The Strips are rather inaccurately stamped. The finish appears to be cadmium plate or similar, soft and susceptible to fingermarks, and easily polished with 0000 steel wool.

The glassine tube of N&B in a No.400 set contains chiefly truss head Bolts (very flat round heads tapering to a sharp edge), but with some fillister heads, chiefly on the longer ones. The Nuts are 7.5mm hex brass. The Screwdriver is the flat style, and likewise in a No.600 outfit.

The Gear Quadrants in the 600 are the 13-tooth type, and they mesh well with a 30cm bronze plated, steel Chain - pitch 4.65mm and 4mm wide.

#### BUILD (1): S2

[28/814]

7. From Jacques Pitrat. On **SPIROU** (27/783), the word is the name of a well known hero of a Belgian comic, who has the uniform of a page boy in a hotel. There is still a 'Journal de Spirou' published in Belgium and in France. Temsi chose this name for a metal construction system because many Belgian boys liked his adventures, the same reason that there is a Mickey Mouse set.

#### SPIROU: S1

[28/813]

8. Clive Weston has found a **VOGUE** catalogue dated January 1957. As would be expected, Sets 1, 2, 3, 5 are listed, with B&W photos, and named Junior, Standard, Major, & Super. This is the first positive date for the No.5



(see 17/464). The photos of sets 1-3 are essentially the same as those in MCS; the No.5 has 3 layers of parts, two of which look as if they may be like those in the No.3. Also listed are the previously unrecorded linking sets 1A & 2A, and the Catalogue Nos. for all these sets are 1, 1A, 2, 2A, 3, & 5.

The Catalogue No.4 is the **METALCRAFT** set (see 14/393), and No.6 is the **PIONEER** set (17/466). So these two sets were definitely from the VOGUE stable, and they were on general sale, and not, at least at that point, special sets created for a particular customer. Also though very similar to one another, they existed at the same time. From the Cat. Nos., METALCRAFT may have come first. As might be expected the wholesale prices of the two sets were very similar, 96/- per dozen for METALCRAFT, & 100/- for PIONEER. Thus they fell between the No.1 set at 64/6 & the No.2 at 136/-. Nos. 3 & 5 were 185/- & 257/-.

The Supplementary Spare Parts Sets 1-5 mentioned in OSN 17 are listed; their contents are given and are as in MCS.

The maker is given on the Catalogue as Cascelloid, Abbey Lane, Leicester, Division of The British Xylonite Company Limited. Their offices & showrooms were at 9 Conduit Street, Mayfair, London, W1, and 7 Pall Mall, Manchester 2.

**METALCRAFT [2]: S1; PIONEER: S1; VOGUE: S1** [28/814]

9. From Clive Weston, details of a **PRIMUS Set B**, apparently unused, the first ever reported sighting (see 24/712). It is in a blue box, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "x $\frac{3}{4}$ ", with the label below. The contents are: 6,4,2 of 5,6,11h Strips; 2 each of 6\*6h Plates, Architraves, 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ " Wire Stays, & Wood Slips; 5x 1" Loose Pulleys; a 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Axle with Tapped Ends (#167); 12 A/Bs; 17 N&B. No sign of a Tool of any sort.



Most of the parts are held in slits in a red backing card, but the A/Bs & N&B are within triangular partitions in two of the box's corners.

The model leaflet is the one described in OSN 24. Some of the 'B' models in it would need parts not in the Set: a Fast Pulley or Axle Stops to locate a Loose one; a Crank Handle; and longer Bolts for the Loose Pulleys, if they were to run freely.

With the Set was a leaflet listing the full range of PRIMUS sets. The 'C' outfit is illustrated and its packaging is in the same style as that of the 'B'. The extra 'C' parts appear to be in line with the details given in OSN 24 except that the Set has 4 Fast 1" Pulleys & one Loose one. A Screwdriver, a Crank Handle, & 2 Axles can also be seen.

The Leaflet is undated but from David Hobson's *PRIMUS* book (see 20/583) it seems likely to be from 1923 or 1924, and the 'A' set, price 1/6, may have been the unidentified outfit from 1923 mentioned on p25.

**PRIMUS ENGINEERING: S1** [28/814]

10. From Don Redmond. **STABIL** Flanged Pulleys have two different styles of boss (both on the inside of course). One is the usual stubby cylindrical type with very small peening; the other is thin, with a rounded edge to the free end, and held in position in the disc by a crimped-on wire ring.

**STABIL: S1** [28/814]

11. On **ERECTOR** Bolts, Don Redmond mentioned 3 types: 1) Gilbert MECCANO, with what he calls a 'button' head, 5.8 to 6.1mm Ø, the edge almost rounded in at the margin (like antique shoe buttons). 2) Duplex standard or large headed, 7.5 to 7.8mm Ø, 3mm deep. The large head, needed because of the 1/4" holes in the Duplex parts, is prominently round. 3) Medium headed, 6 to 6.9mm Ø, under 3mm deep, with a rather wide slot, apparently forged rather than sawcut as the sides of the slot may slope.

**ERECTOR: S1** [28/814]

**QUERIES** [28/814]

**Query 28** from 27/803. Some **STRUCTO** parts are now to hand and the groove in the Axles is vee shaped, with the apex angle rather greater than 90°. The depth is hard to measure accurately and varies a little from part to part but is probably between .5 & .7mm. The Crank Handle & Crankshaft are also grooved.

**Query 29** What colour (or colours) is **STABIL** Cord?

**MYSTERY PARTS** [28/814]

**No.51** from Don Redmond. A 19h A/G, with a 15mm slotted arm, the other 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ mm, & the hole pitch is 12.7mm. The metal is only .55mm thick and it has a very marked curve, perhaps 2mm radius, at the bend., It is painted, rather badly, bright green.

**No.52** More from Don. Parts similar to **JUNIOR MECHANIC** (see 12/327) but both sides of the Wheels are nicely enamelled red, and both sides of the Flanged Plates are also painted. The ends of the Strips & A/Bs are rounded.

**SMALL ADS** [28/814]

**For Sale.** Large collections of **TRIX & FISCHER TECHNIC**. Details from Ivor Ellard, 44 Well Lane, Galleywood, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8QZ; phone 01245 269830; email ellard@nildram.co.uk.

**Wanted.** Any metal nut & bolted together **constructional car or other vehicle kits**, or any parts identified or not, ie wheels, axles, chassis, steering gear, mudguards, wings, clockwork motors, etc. Anything & everything in any condition considered. Also boxes, instruction manuals (copies if you don't want to part with originals), or any information at all.

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

**OSN Subscription Rates** The price per Issue, including postage, at Printed Paper Rate where available, is £3 for UK; £3.50 air to Europe, & surface anywhere; £4 air outside Europe. **NB** These prices are for existing subscribers & will increase after OSN 29.

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**Payments** Please make cheques payable to P.A.Knowles. Remittances must be in Pounds Sterling (GBP) or, as cash, in Euros or US Dollars (at £1=€1.50=\$1.50). Payments from overseas may also be made (in US Dollars) using PayPal.

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Please send at least £ \_\_\_\_\_ if  
you wish to receive the next Issue.



**EDITORIAL** The Index for OSN 1-30 & the revised Database are both now available. The Database has 56 pages, too many to staple together easily, so it is in two parts, with the basic alphabetical sort in one and every thing else in the other. For prices please see the Small Ads overleaf (the Database is cheaper than forecast because of an arithmetic misfortune on my part). The basic alphabetical sort of the Database is also now on the web site but I've yet to find a way of printing off the righthand side of the landscape A3 pages on an A4 printer. Expert advice welcome. Still on the Database, if you ordered a copy and haven't received it, please let me know (this time it was a spilt tea misfortune which made part of my list illegible).

My stock of some OSN back numbers has run out, and their replacements will be in the form of loose, double-sided A4 sheets made by scanning the original masters. As explained in 31/939 it is easy to make such sheets into the stapled, folded A3 style, and the quality of the scanned photos is nearly always better than the original photocopies.

I am now using the OpenOffice word processor for OSN, with .sxw ending files. There is no problem about opening WORD files in OpenOffice but OpenOffice users sending me files need no longer save them in WORD format. In passing, for anyone not familiar with OpenOffice, it is a free download suite including a spreadsheet, a drawing tool, etc. My experience of the word processor in producing this Issue is that although not perfect it is overall rather better & easier to use than WORD, especially with regard to graphics.

## Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. Don Redmond noted a Crank Handle, apparently **VOGUE**, with a diameter of 3.48mm, against the normal  $3.66 \pm 0.01$ . 1 of the 6 to hand here was anomalous at 3.57, and 1 of 6 Axles at 3.76, but I can't guarantee that they are actually genuine VOGUE parts.

### VOGUE: S2

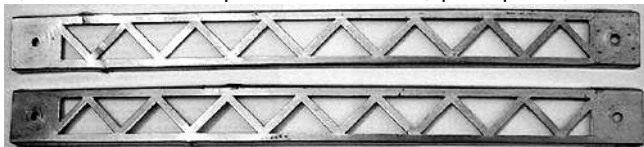
[32/940]

2. Don also wrote of some **MASTER BUILDER** parts, see 16/450. The 25h Angle Girder has 4.3mm holes in each, 15mm wide, arm, and square corners. The 5 & 25h Strips have large-radius ends. The 4h Disc, #19, is  $\frac{3}{4}$ " Ø. All these parts, and a 5\*11h Flanged Plate are tinplate, grey with age, but the Road Wheel, #30 ( $2\frac{3}{4}$ " Ø, not the 3" in the Parts List), is black enamelled, and its 8 face holes are at  $\frac{3}{4}$ " radius.

### MASTER BUILDER: S3

[32/940]

3. Jacques Pitrat sent notes on early 12" **ERECTOR** Girders. The first ones in 1913 (they had edges with narrow flanges rather than the V-formed type introduced in 1914) were handed, as shown in the photo below. Most, perhaps all, handed



ERECTOR parts had separate PNs, but not in this case, and it may be that the handing was not deliberate but depended on how the part was handled in the production process. This could explain why the number of each hand found in lots/sets is never equal. Handed Girders with the new type of edge also

exist, witness those in the 1914 No.1 set on p51 in *Greenberg*, but this is the only example known and those in the 1914 No.7 on p52 are all of the hand seen in all later sets. No doubt a change in the production method eliminated the possibility of handed parts. However this meant that it was not possible to get 'double-bracing' by laying one Girder on top of another of opposite hand (see 15/400). It also meant that 2 sides of a model could not be made to match, in a Bridge for instance, although in most cases this would not matter. Going back to the 1913 parts, double-bracing could be obtained by placing 2 Girders of the same hand with their flat faces together.

### ERECTOR [1 & 2]: S1

[32/940]

4. From John Wapshott. In addition to the parts mentioned in 31/909, John has a Canadian 'Eagle' **LIL'N'GINEER** set (see 27/782). The box measures  $12\frac{1}{4} \times 14\frac{5}{8} \times 2$ " and its lid & model leaflet are as described in OSN 27.

### LIL'N'GINEER: S2

[32/940]

5. Orion DreamDancer wrote that there are two types of 1" x  $\frac{1}{4}$ -20 Bolt in both of his Farmingdale Aircraftmen Mfg. Co. **TECHNICAL TRAINER** sets (see 19/528 & 23/658). They are similar but one has 'STRONGHOLD' across the top of the head in slightly raised letters, and is threaded all the way to the head, while the other head is unmarked and has about  $\frac{3}{16}$ " of the plain shank under it.

Orion also kindly sent an example of the Hook mentioned in 23/658. It is a flat 'S' type, made of 2.7mm Ø dull plated wire, and is 30mm long o/a.

### TECHNICAL TRAINER: S1

[32/940]

6. Werner Sticht has added to his web site about **STABIL**, [www.stabilbaukasten.de.vu](http://www.stabilbaukasten.de.vu), with more on the parts, the Motors, the period 1921-28, the Inventor sets, prices of sets etc in many years to allow precise dating, etc, etc. Werner hopes to add an English version one day.

### STABIL: S2

[32/940]

7. From Don Redmond, about two manuals for the Canadian **YOUNG ENGINEER** system. This system hasn't been mentioned in OSN before but like CONSTRUCTO (see 30/876A, 22/651 & earlier) which succeeded it in 1980, it consisted of 6 sets made up in Canada by Paramount Industries from 1978 to 1980, using MERKUR parts. (Another similar system not previously mentioned is BUILD-O which succeeded or ran alongside CONSTRUCTO in 1981-82.)

The Y E manual covers seen are all like the No.3 shown in MCS (with a Lathe on the front, YOUNG ENGINEERS CONSTRUCTION SET MANUAL above it and MANUEL DE CONSTRUCTION DU JEUNE INGÉNIEUR below— all in B&W but with the outfit number in red). All the models are shown as line drawings with names & numbers. Although the covers are bilingual the model names & notes inside are in English only.

The No.1 has a single sheet inside the covers, 9\*13" in vertical format, folded once to give 4 landscape pages and stapled on the top long side to the matching covers. 37 models are shown but the model numbers are not in sequence, with Nos.1-7 & 12 on the last page.

The No.6 has 11 similarly folded sheets inside the covers with the No.1 sheet the outermost one. Model numbers on the