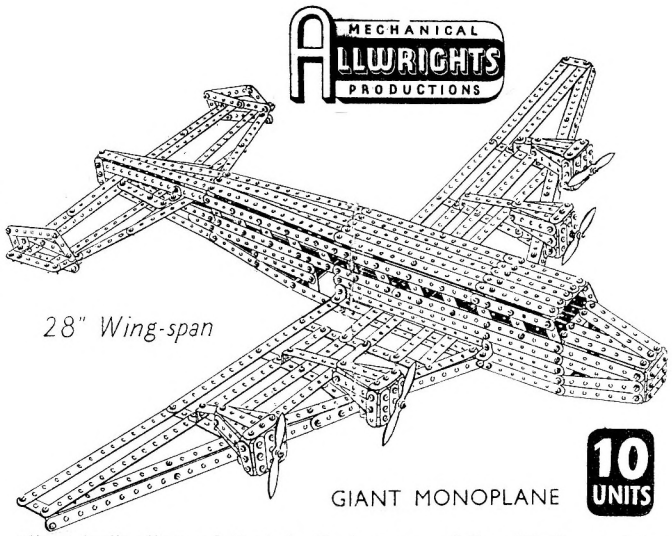
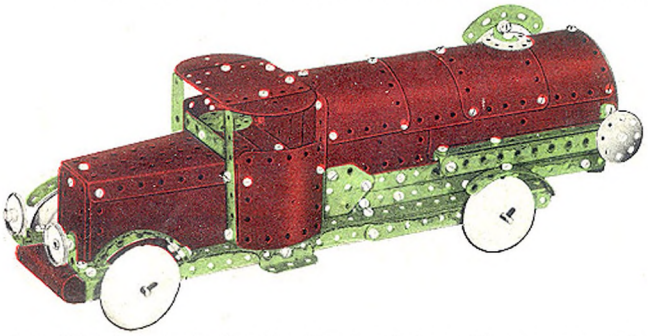
ALLWRIGHTS MECHANICAL PRODUCTIONS Recently John Evans showed me some aluminium parts which were identical to those in the CONSTRUCT Set described in 7/146. With them was a Card (7½*5¾") showing models under the name 'Allwrights Mechanical Constructions', the firm who made CONSTRUCT. Apart from not using that name, another difference was that the models needed a particular number of 'Units' to make them. The 8 simple models on one side of the Card, rather like the CONSTRUCT ones, though generally using more parts, required 1 Unit, while the three on the reverse needed up to 10 for the Giant Monoplane opposite. The Card has a blank space at the bottom with staple holes in it, and it's possible that the parts were contained in a bag attached there.

The Giant Monoplane reminds me of the prewar Dinky Junkers Ju 90, and another model called a Pick-A-Back Aircraft looks like a simplified version of another Dinky of that time, the Short 'Mayo' composite aircraft. Both aircraft were of some interest in 1939 but I don't remember either being in the news postwar. So possibly the ALLWRIGHT Units date from prewar and came before CONSTRUCT. Another indication of that is that none of the 'Unit' models show the DAS and 6-hole Wheel Disc contained in CONSTRUCT.



NEW SYSTEM: UMAKIT This was the name on the lid of a small set which I came across recently, and I suppose that the intended pronunciation is 'You make it'. There was no manual with the outfit but 4 models are shown on the box lid label, including the Tanker below. They seemed familiar and the one shown here, and a Travelling Crane, are identical to the two shown in MCS/FB for another small UK system, CONSTRUCTO (2). The other two, a Tower Truck and a Light Army Tank, are also in the CONSTRUCTO manual which Geoff Davison kindly copied to me. There's no indication of set number on the UMAKIT but it doesn't contain nearly enough parts to make any of the models on the lid. The CONSTRUCTO manual only contains models for Sets 3-5 so it isn't sure whether any of the CONSTRUCTO sets equate to the UMAKIT, but presumably there must have been larger UMAKIT sets with enough parts to make the models on the lid.

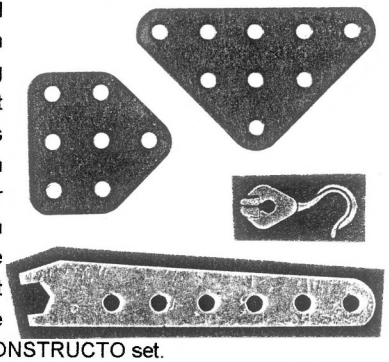


The set is packed in a red box measuring 11*9*1¼" and the parts are clipped to a beige card by (mostly) shallow 'U' shaped clips, 1" or ½" long by 1/8" wide. The parts in Geoff's CONSTRUCTO set are attached in the same way. The lid has a large label in colour on a white ground with the panel below in its centre. Neither DENTON CLAFF nor the slogan are mentioned in the CONSTRUCTO manual or in its MCS entry.

The parts are for the most part like MECCANO but major differences are the 7 hole style Trunnions and the unusual Spanner shown below. Spacing is 12.7mm and the holes are mostly 4.0mm dia though those in the 11h Strips are 4.3mm. Notes on the parts and differences from MECCANO pattern follow. In curly brackets are the number of parts found in the set. A few parts are obviously missing, probably two 11h or four 5h Strips, and possibly a Screwdriver or other parts to use 3 unoccupied holes in the backing card. There weren't any N&B etc though the tin for them was in place.

- Strips have 11, 5 and 2 holes (instead of Flat Brackets) and have near fully radiused ends. {2,2,4}. There are 1*5*1 DAS {2} and type 90a Curved Strips {2}.
- The 5*11h Flanged Plate has flanges only on its longer sides and its corners are slightly rounded.
- Angle Brackets {4} have 2 round holes and are made from the 2h Strips. There are 2 each of Trunnions and Flat Trunnions.
- The Road Wheels {2} are the tinplate balloon type, 40mm dia, with thin brass bushes. They run easily on the one 4" Axle Rod, 3.94mm dia, bright, with sheared ends.
- The 2h Strips and the A/Bs are nickel plated. Other Strips are painted green except the red Curved Strips. The Flanged Plate and Flat Trunnions are also red but the Trunnions are green. On the lid the Flat trunnions and the Curved Strips are green. The red paint is a dull medium red and the green a bright medium shade. Wheels are painted grey and the Spanner looks tin plated. All parts are quite well finished with slight burr on some edges.

There was an unusual Hook (below) loose in the box. It's a zinc casting, bright plated, with a hole in the top to take the cord. A Nine Hole Gusset is listed as a CONSTRUCTO part and the dealer who had the UMAKIT also had separately, a couple of them (opposite), with two matching 5h Strips. There doesn't seem room for the Gussets in the set and compared with the other set parts, their green doesn't quite match and their holes at 3.9mm are very slightly smaller. But Geoff tells me that they are identical to the ones in his CONSTRUCTO set.



There is nothing to date the set but the models remind one of those in MECCANO manuals from the 1937-53 period.