

ENGLISH BOB PARTS. Richard Gilbert recently came across in Bristol, where BOB was made, 4 large trays of parts with dozens of Rods, Pulleys, Tyres, Plates, etc. There was nothing to say positively that they were BOB but the range of parts corresponded to MCS, and where known BOB parts were available, they matched them exactly. As far as I know this is the first time that English BOB Plates have been seen. The following comments add to the details already in MCS:

- The Rods R1-9, CR1-3 and CR11-17 are all steel, all plated, some a dull grey and some nickel. Their dia varies between .115" and .117". The approximate dimensions (in mm) of the formed Rods are: CR1 88X12; CR2 24X24X55; CR3 24X24X105; CR11 125 long, base 80; CR12 55X25X55; CR13 37X18X37; CR14 30X50; CR15 25X25; CR16 25X50; CR17 24X50X24.

- The roundhead Rivet M1 is aluminium, 3/4"x.116" dia. The Sleeve M2 is 20mm long and is used for joining Rods; some are brass and some aluminium. The Clip M3 is of blued steel 5mm wide, with arms 5mm long. • Joint J1 is diecast of zinc alloy and has PATENT cast into one side and G.Ni.K. into the other. (cf BOB B.SCDG on French BOB Clips). S1, the Joint Screw, is brass threaded M3, 4mm u/h with a cheesehead 4.9mm dia.

- The dia given for the Pulleys in MCS is the o/d; they are .2"x.010" thick with a bore of .122", and all other holes in them are the same size. They are turned from aluminium, some of the W1-3 have a shallow recess machined into both their side faces (see photocopies below). The one example found of a recessed version of W1 is 29mm dia o/d rather than 30. The holes in W2 are at a radius of .35", and are thus 1/2" apart; in W3 the equivalent dimensions are .21 and .30". W5 and W6 are 30mm dia and their bosses are 13.0mm dia, double tapped M3, with a cross bore at right angles. W6 has as well, 2 perpendicular cross bores through the pulley part, centred on the bottom of the 'V' groove; these are in line with, and parallel to, the threaded and plain holes in the boss. S2, the set screw is brass, with a 5.5mm round head, and is 8mm long u/h.

- The black rubber Tyre, T1 fits the 30mm Pulleys; it has shallow rings of circumferential tread and an o/d of about 44mm. There were also a few 35mm dia black rubber rings which could be stretched onto the 30mm Pulleys.

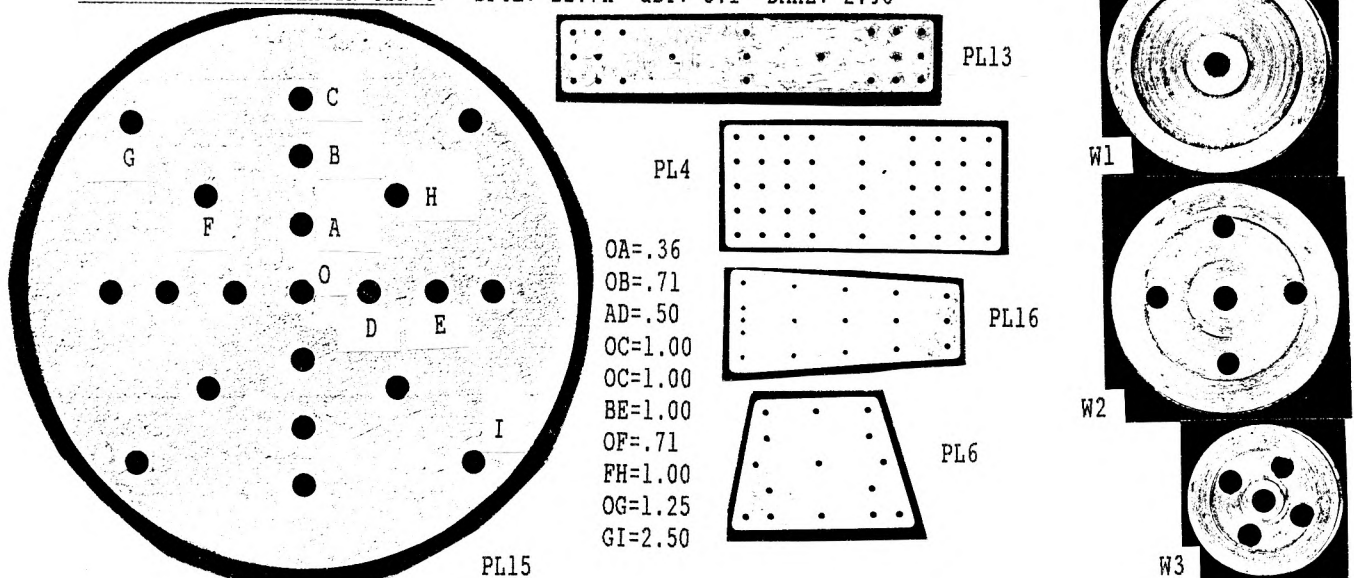
- The Plates are all made of aluminium, .028" thick. The pitch of the holes is basically 1/2" or multiples thereof, except for the Circular Plate PL15, and some of the holes in the tapered plates. The edge holes of PL6 and PL16 are slightly over 1" apart, but for PL2 the edge holes are spaced at exactly 1/2" and the centre row are slightly closer together. The layout of the holes is shown in MCS and with the exceptions noted below corresponds to the actual pattern found. Perhaps the size of the Plates isn't clear from the MCS illustrations, in fact the largest Plate, PL12, measures 7 1/2"x3 1/2", and the dia of the Circular Plate is 2.7/8". The holes are rather smaller than might be thought, at about .123" dia. The corners all have a radius of approximately 1/8".

- Now for the exceptions, and as it is hard to describe some of them please see the much reduced photocopies of the parts below. PL4 and PL13 have the number of holes stated in MCS but arranged slightly differently. PL6 and PL16 each have 4 extra holes so that they actually have the number given in the MCS List. Likewise PL15 has 21 holes and not the 25 in the MCS illustration; the key dimensions of the hole spacing are shown alongside (in inches) the approximately full size p/c below.

As a matter of interest the UK Patent shown in MCS, 500629, was granted to Charles Henry Baumgartner, the Swiss who invented BOB, on 10th May, 1939. See OSN 6/121.

AMENDMENTS TO MCS (as necessary, depending on version). HOLE DIAMETER: 3.1mm. HOLE SPACING: Usually multiples of 1/2". PARTS: 51. COLOUR: Plates and Pulleys are aluminium; Rods are plated, dull grey or nickel. MANUFACTURER: Ridinger & Co. Ltd., Feeder Road, Bristol 2. England. COMMENTS: The Rods and Joints are similar to those of Swiss and French BOB, but the Plates differ.

AMENDMENTS TO INDEX IN OSN 6: SPCE: 12.7x dST: 3.1 DAXL: 2.96

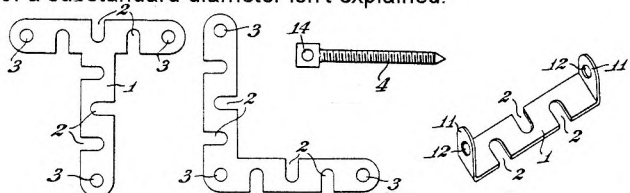


ITEMS FROM LETTERS

1. On TEMSI (see 11/292) René Mikkers wrote that: • The 15t Pinion isn't available because it would cost too much to produce. • The slight error in the hole spacing of the longer parts has certainly existed for at least the last 10 years. • The extra crosswise holes in the flexible plates is caused by the tooling used. • The Wheelbarrow Set was introduced some years ago and was a relatively expensive outfit.

2. On the KNIRPS aircraft (11/273), Peter Page said 'It's the first time I've seen a model of the revolving wing machine that impressed me in prewar boys' comics.' He also noted that Model & Prototype Systems Ltd. [who made, and perhaps still make, PROTO, one of the industrial 'Meccano' systems] is for sale.

3. David Hobson kindly sent copies of various patents. For the ULOX patent referred to in 10/254, he pointed out that since its application date was May 8, 1929, sets wouldn't have been on sale before then. The 4 parts below are shown in the Patent but as far as is known they were never marketed. The threaded rod with the square eye on the end, essentially similar to the Loop Spindle shown in 10/253, was intended to allow two screwed rods to be joined at right angles, but no specific applications are mentioned. I had hoped that the Patent might give uses for the four small holes in the Disc, but it only refers to them as housing a crank pin (Lever, see 10/252), and why the latter needed to be of a substandard diameter isn't explained.

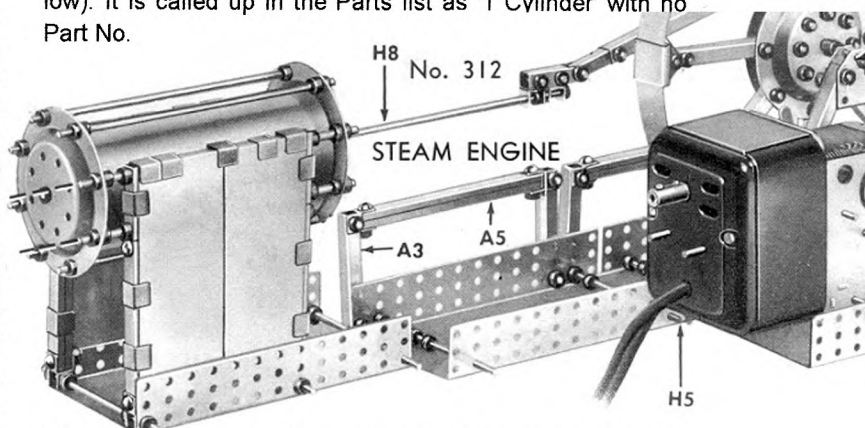


On the UK Patents relating to BOB, it turns out that the Joint (clamp) shown in 500629 (1939), mentioned in 9/233, is not exactly the type that is found in BOB sets. These are hexagonal in shape (as shown in 4/75) and are described in a later UK Patent, 622212 of February 1946, which is in the name of a Patent Agent, A.A. Thornton, who seems to have been the assignee of Charles Baumgartner. It was probably he who licensed the Patent to Ridinger & Co. David added that according to 'British Tin Toys' the Feeder Road address for 'Ridinger Metal Toys Ltd.' dates from 1948; before that they were at Bath Buildings, Bristol. It is said that Chad Valley took over the Company in 1949, and that no doubt was the end of BOB, even if it had lasted that long. The square shaped Joint from the earlier Patent is shown above. According to 6/121 Swiss BOB was marketed at the beginning of WW2, so it is possible that the earlier version was used at first. There is no Convention Date on 622211 and it isn't known if there was a Swiss patent for the hexagonal Joint.

Finally David noted that the two patent numbers quoted for BOYCOY (11/276) were in fact application numbers, and patents for them were never granted. This may have been because complete specifications were never submitted but,

perhaps more likely, the invention was found not to be new, MOBILO for example had been patented in 1918.

4. In reply to my request for information on the LIONEL Cylinder part (11/271), Richard Symonds sent some details. It's red and rolled from .015" sheet with a butt joint, and is 4½" long and about 2.1" in diameter. There aren't any holes in it. He also sent a copy of a page from a #343 manual showing the Cylinder used in a Steam Engine (below). It is called up in the Parts list as '1 Cylinder' with no Part No.



Richard also sent a photo of a monoplane made from a DUX 104 Outfit, that he took at a Toy Show. All details agree with those in 11/287 except that the rear upper fuselage (and the logo on the nose) are blue. The painted control surfaces are red.

And on the NORELCO ME1200 Mechanical Engineer Set, he sent details and photos, and with them, and the MCS entry, I was able to make a good comparison with my own PHILIPS ME1200 Outfit. Apart from the change of name (everywhere except on one piece of cardboard packing which has PHILIPS on it in both cases), they appear to be identical (parts, manual, packaging), apart from the left end panel of the lid, which shows different models, and there's also some chat about the scope of the set on the NORELCO one.

5. Werner Sticht sent outline details of a universal coding system for parts which he uses to keep track of his parts from half a dozen different systems, and which could be extended as far as is necessary for any particular purpose. One or two examples from the many he provides are: A50 for a 50mm Axle, AT50 for a 50mm Threaded Rod, W36X for a Disc without Boss.

He also sent initial proposals for a Relational Database for MCS which could include full details of the systems entered, including outfits and parts, and would allow searches to be made in terms of any chosen single or combination of parameters.

Each of these topics is on a single A4 side and I can send copies to those interested.

6. In 11/272 Walther & Co. were said to have closed in 1968, but Don Blakeborough has pointed out that they were still in business in 1970, and sent a 1969 leaflet and a 1970 price list as evidence. On checking I found a note in MJ 28/821 that a letter sent to Walther's Berlin address in April of 1972 had been returned marked 'Firm closed down'.

7. Don Redmond wonders how to tell nickel MECCANO A/Gs from AMERICAN MODEL BUILDER ones, and adds that although AMB Sector and Flanged Plates have slotted holes longer than those in the MECCANO parts, this is not true for the A/Gs. Equally difficult is identifying the differences between the many parts that AMB, CASTLE BUILDER, MODELIT and STERLING TOY BUILDER have in common.