

Meccano Boy Designs New Type Bus

Featured in T.V. Programme

A FEW months ago the name J. A. Lowrie, Stapleford, Nottingham, appeared among the list of prize-winners in a Meccano model-building Competition. He had won his prize with a splendid model of a motor coach, 3 ft. long and 9½ in. wide, and built to a scale of 1⅛ in. to a foot. This was designed by Lowrie himself, and was remarkable for the great amount of detail incorporated in the chassis and fittings of the body. The model is shown in the lower illustration on this page, and we understand that it is designed to conform with Ministry of Transport requirements for this type of vehicle, a considerable achievement in a model!

It is impossible in the space available to mention all the attractive features of the model, but the interior of the body includes 15 moquette seats, fluorescent lighting, carpets, flush sliding doors on the near side, an emergency door with folding steps for use on the Continent, cocktail bar, pantry, toilet and kitchen.

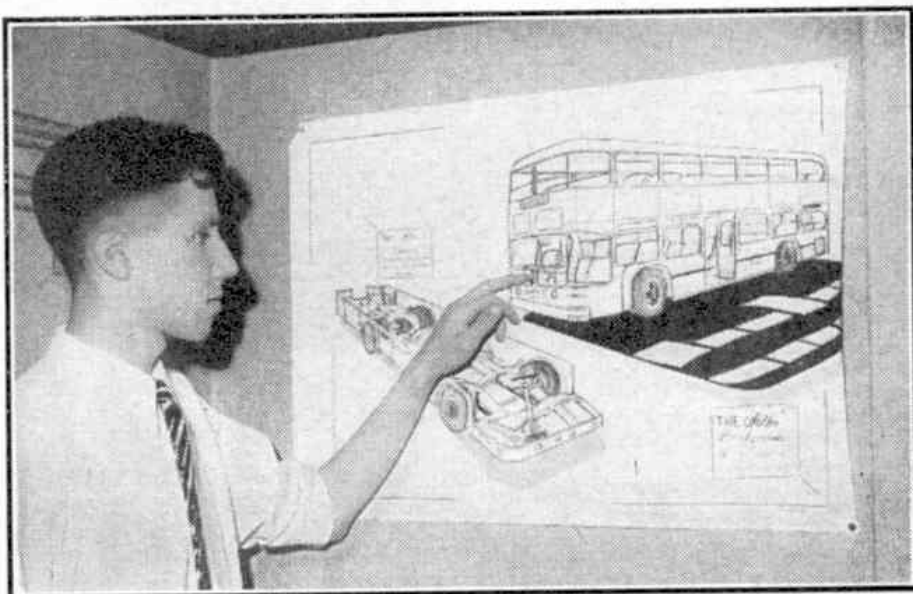
Among the chassis details are power-operated brakes, and twin horizontally-mounted driving units incorporating Meccano Motors, which are capable of driving the model at a speed of about 6 miles per hour.

Modelling buses, however, is by no means the extent of Lowrie's activities. His main interest is in the designing of new types of real vehicles and he has produced a new type of double-decker, which he calls "The Alba Bridgemaster." This he designed with a view to providing a double-decker with very low overall height, low unladen weight, high seating capacity and greater comfort and safety for the passengers. After considerable experimental work and study, Lowrie finally designed the Alba Bridgemaster, which fully complies with all Ministry

of Transport regulations for vehicles of this kind.

Lowrie's design was recently accepted for inclusion in the well-known Television programme *Inventors' Club*, and in the upper illustration on this page Lowrie is seen with one of his drawings of the double-decker. The drawings show also an earlier chassis designed by Lowrie.

Eventually the Alba Bridgemaster, which has been examined by British Transport Commission experts and several private coach operators, will be available



J. A. Lowrie, Stapleford, Nottingham, points out features of his Alba Bridgemaster motor coach.

in both double-decker and single-decker types. The bus is of the low-bridge type, and is 27 ft. long, 8 ft. wide, and 12 ft. 1 in. high (laden). It has a wheelbase of 14 ft. 9 in., with front overhang of 5 ft. 6 in. and rear overhang of 6 ft. 9 in. on the double-decker type. The single-deck type is 15 ft. 6 in. with a front overhang of 4 ft. 9 in. and rear overhang of 6 ft. 9 in.

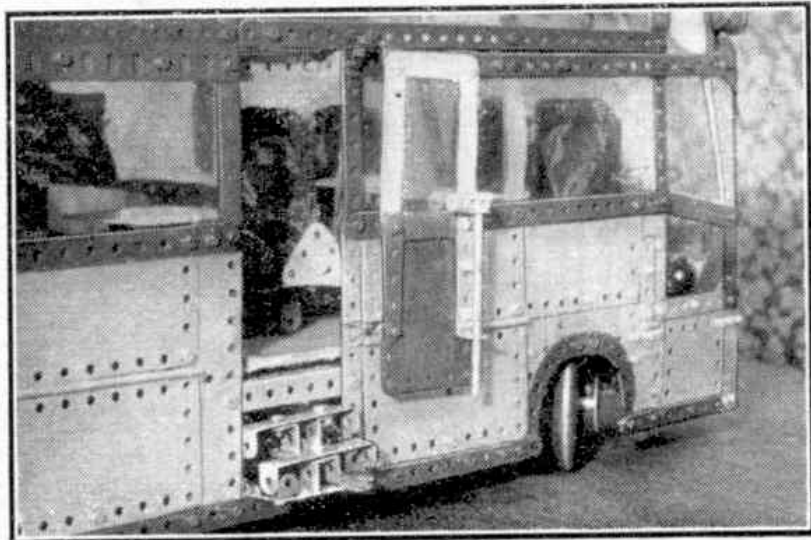
The unladen weight of the double-decker is 6 tons 15 cwt., and both models have a seating capacity of 66.

The bus is of steel and aluminium construction, with pillars, sole bars, waist, cant and crib rails of extruded Duraluminium. Diagonal bracing on the upper deck, and stout truss panels on the lower deck, together with an extruded Duraluminium deep section cant rail encircling the body, form a rigid shell.

The independent front suspension uses torsion bars and a sliding pillar arrangement and ensures perfect steering geometry.

Lockheed power-assisted steering and hand brake units are fitted. The engine is a modified A.E.C. 9.6 litre horizontal type and it drives through a pre-selector gearbox mounted as an integral unit at the rear. A flexible coupling transmits the drive to the axle.

A sunken gangway on the lower deck provides a flat floor, and the staircase to the upper deck is placed behind the driver, over the off-side wheel arch.



A view of the forward end of the motor coach with which Lowrie won a prize in a recent "M.M." model-building competition.