

Overview of makers of older H0 passenger cars from France by Fred van der Lubbe TCS 1297

In France 0-gauge toy and model railways have always and still are quite popular but H0/00 trains were also produced from the late thirties in France. Some H0 manufacturers made a complete range with rolling stock, rails and accessories, others made only a partial or even very small range. Here I try to give an overview of the various manufacturers from yesteryear which had at least some passenger cars in their product line. For each manufacturer I add a picture of one of the cars from my collection. The overview is split up in largely metal cars and largely plastic cars; some manufacturers made both.

Metal cars

ANTAL (Antoine ALAVERDHI)

The history of Antal is described by Bruce Coleman in Train Collector 50 and 52. Train Collector 52 mentions and shows the ANTAL passenger cars, so I just show an Antal CIWL restaurant car for completeness.



BLZ (Bordeaux, L'Heure, Zedda)

BLZ made 0-gauge trains from 1943 until 1951. In 1946 they also introduced some H0 trains, which seem to be made in even lower quantities since they are quite rare. They made a simple so called "Saucisson" car of which JEP made a better-looking model. Further they made a range of rather short (22 cm) cars like green SNCF cars and some blue and blue/crème CIWL cars. Here is the blue/crème CIWL Pullman car.



Fex-Miniatrain

This small and rather obscure company made H0 trains between 1948 and 1955. Their tinplate passenger cars are very similar to the products of Rateau and possibly made by this company. This Pullman car was sold to me as being Fex-Miniatrain, however it does not have any makers markings:



JEP

Most metal passenger cars in H0 marketed by JEP were tinplate cars made by Rateau; the so called "Saucisson" car in two versions (full passenger and combined baggage/passenger) however was a JEP product made in the fifties. Here shown is the baggage/passenger end-of-train car which was made between 1948 and 1964.



Jouef

In their first period (from 1952-1958) the then still small company Jouef made some small lithographed tinplate passengers cars including this Pullman car which is only 16 cm long.



Martin – M.G.

There is not much known about this company; they made a range of SNCF and CIWL passenger cars in the fifties which resemble the BLZ products, but are different. Martin made this second-class SNCF car with luggage compartment.



PMP (Pierre-Marie Pilon)

PMP started making H0 trains in 1945. They introduced a large range of nice tinplate scale-length passenger cars between 1951-1960 in SNCF, NORD, PLM and CIWL colors. The picture is of an SNCF second class passenger car with baggage compartment.



Rateau (Rateau R. ("Les Petits Wagons"))

Rateau made tinplate passenger cars in SNCF and CIWL colors in a shortened and in a full-length version. The full-length version was, with JEP couplers, sold by JEP. According to catalogues and price lists they made passenger cars between 1958 en 1963. Here is a Rateau for JEP postal car.



Scellé Bell

When the brand BLZ disappeared in 1951 some of the fellow workers started to make a small range of trains to be sold in department stores with the name Scellé Bell. Their passenger cars look like BLZ cars but the couplers and the way the roof was attached was changed. Here is an SNCF green baggage car made by Scellé Bell:



SMCF (Super Modelés de Chemin de Fer)

Cast bronze was the material for which SMCF passenger cars are famous. These cars are very heavy and were made between 1950 and 1960 in SNCF, CIWL and PLM versions. The picture shows a second-class PLM car:



Plastic cars

FOBBI

Fobbi was started in 1978 by a collaborator of Jouef and made simple plastic trains to be sold in department stores like this strange looking Pullman car.



France Trains

Between 1969 and 1981 France Trains made a very large range of different nicely detailed passenger cars. These plastic cars were in that period considered as the best to scale and prototype. Here is shown a nicely colored first and second-class PLM car.



GéGé (Germain Giroud)

GéGé was a toy manufacturer that made from 1962 - 1977 some plastic simple H0 trains and trainsets. This car has the wrong body for the livery, but GéGé customers do not mind.



Hornby AcHo

The French Hornby factory introduced their H0 train, called Hornby AcHo in 1960 and stopped making trains in 1973. They made a number of passenger cars based on French prototypes and curiously also a set of German Rheingold cars. This is an SNCF baggage car (fourgon).



Jouef

Jouef is the largest manufacturer of H0 trains in France and although the original factory does not exist anymore the brand is still used, the name being owned by Hornby. Jouef made a large range of passenger cars of which the oldest from the sixties and seventies are part of the subject of this overview. Here is a plastic PLM first class car:



MMM-RG

MMM-RG was founded in 1969 by Mr. Robert Guérin, former director of SMCF. He dropped the use of cast metal and used all the possibilities of plastics. MMM-RG existed only for some 4 or 5 years after which the same tooling was used for cars under the name Electrains. Here is the MMM-RG Night Ferry fourgon.



RMA (Réseau Miniature Amateur)

RMA started as a large layout (installed in a former dance hall of Montmartre named RUMBA, by removing two letters the name RMA was made), then a shop and distributor and finally a manufacturer; the history ran from 1951 - 1992. They made a large range of passenger cars, both in kit as well as ready to run, and there was a relation with MMM-RG as well as CPMR. This Fourgon Container is one of the most sought-after RMA models which I made from a kit:



SMCF (Super Modelés de Chemin de Fer)

In later years SMCF changed from cast bronze to plastic for their passenger cars. Here I show a plastic bodied postal car:



TRAM

Some of the France Trains cars were after the demise of France Trains marketed for a short period with the name TRAM. This sleeping car looks very similar to the France Trains model:



Troby

Troby made toy-like H0 trains besides other toys like slot-cars in the mid-sixties. Troby, Fobbi and GéGé must have been supplying the same market. Here is a Troby CIWL sleeping car.



VB (Vollon et Brun)

VB produced railway items from 1946 until 1960 and are known for their freight wagons; they made only a small number of passenger cars. Here is a VB CIWL type P sleeper:

