
Subject: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Case](#) on Tue, 03 Dec 2019 23:47:08 GMT

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Maker: Marc Favre

Size: 10 ligne

Config: Open Face

Dial feet: 10.5 & 4.5 positions

Dial release mech: side screws

Example date: ca. 1912

Variants: sister Caliber 97 (possibly hunter config?)

The Caliber date table I've seen lists the introduction date for Caliber 96 as 1917. That is not the case. Here is an early version, made 1912-1913, marked "United W. Co" & "Guarantee Gruen" (transitional, pre-"Gruen Guarantee"). Back plate stamped "Fifteen 15 Jewels", not marked for adjustments. Front plate stamped with lot code "24". Ceramic dial, back marked only "Suisse".

I've noted later examples, with cases stamped "96", and here is the image from the 1939 parts catalog:

File Attachments

1) [39 Parts catalogue - cal 96-97.JPG](#), downloaded 745 times



10''' 15 J

No. 96-97

2) [cal 96 \(3\).jpg](#), downloaded 751 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Gary](#) on Wed, 04 Dec 2019 00:24:02 GMT

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That's a odd movement for Favre, how do you identify it as such?

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Case](#) on Wed, 04 Dec 2019 13:12:53 GMT

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Why Favre, Gary? Bc Favre is my Favret! :p

You're correct--it does not look like a Favre. I'm constantly mistaking the two. It actually appears to be first-generation Freco--works closely resemble those seen on the 794. Updated accordingly!

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [timeliz](#) on Thu, 05 Dec 2019 19:48:35 GMT

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I don't recall, was United a Gruen reg trademark?

I agree with you that the movement appears earlier.

I have a 9 3/4" cal 126 with the same bridge config., different setting bits, in a "1915" engraved case.

I believe was from the San Francisco Pan Pacific exposition.

Notice this is also stamped with #24.

File Attachments

1) [Gruen cal 126 mov & hallmarks 1915.jpg](#), downloaded 619 times



2) [cal 126 dial side \(2\).jpg](#), downloaded 630 times



3) [Gruen 1915 engraved back2.jpg](#), downloaded 619 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 05 Dec 2019 20:31:12 GMT

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Thanks, Liz! A close evolution on those bits, and in the next 2 years after mine--this, along with the factory marks & some older info I see on the OS thread, makes it clear I'll have to backtrack on my backtrack above. Appears Favre could indeed be the maker of this caliber 96. Mikey's Caliber 94 database post has the same sort of winding/setting layout; similar bridges; similar factory marks. His is also from 1913. Caliber 94 design was protected in 1909 by Marc Favre & Cie. Seeing the similar stamps & evolution of the mechanism, these were all likely finished by Favre vs. ebaunched to Frey.

United, yes, Gruen trademark. United Watch Co., well, it appears complicated. Seems Goering owned that one. How they interacted is an interesting question. Haven't yet located either trademark to view first usage/who's on it.

United was pre-Gruen Guarantee stand alone. That switch appears to have occurred in 1913-1914. Hoping to share more on that soon.

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Ephemerald](#) on Thu, 05 Dec 2019 22:00:57 GMT

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Interesting stuff. Hey do you have a reference for "Goering" and United Watch Co.?
The only Goering I've ever heard of in the watch world is Elaine Goering Watches....is that who you're referencing?
Thanks!

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Gary](#) on Thu, 05 Dec 2019 22:03:00 GMT

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Liz I have to admit you take the best pictures of any watch photographer out there.

Just phenomenal! 8o

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [timeliz](#) on Thu, 05 Dec 2019 22:17:34 GMT

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Wow! Gary, Thanks.

I really do love taking pics of these lovely things.

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Case](#) on Fri, 06 Dec 2019 03:51:54 GMT

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Sorry, Mat--didn't mean to imply more knowledge than I have (virtually none of the UWCo itself). What I meant is, mikrolisk lists United Watch Co. as a mark belonging to someone else (Arsea/Rubin-Casselhoff Co), and i don't know how the two could exist without interaction (working together or suing each other). That's why i'd love to see the trademark paperwork for each, to see if the timing overlaps. Or maybe that's why Gruen only says "United W." on these (no "watch").

The Goering name (of Elaine, etc.) applies only to the Arsea brand itself, which was what was in my memory. Again, no info on any deeper connection to Arsea Watch Co. Sorry to confuse an already obscure history.

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Ephemerald](#) on Fri, 06 Dec 2019 06:59:07 GMT

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Thank you for the reply and also how youre making the association. No apologies r u kidding? Thanks for being open to discussion! It's so complicated I love it. When you type "United" into Mikrolisk it comes back with two hits. "D. Gruen & Sons" and "Ollendorff Watch" As far as I know there is no overlap into the Gruen Guarantee time frame w the use of "United" by Ollendorff.

When you type "United Watch" it comes back with also two hits one; "Rubin Casselhoff/Arsea Watch Co." (NYC) & Dummonon and Goering. There may be overlap into the Gruen Guarantee time frame with the first company Arsea. This snip is right in the middle of GG. 1913. Gruen associate? It is possible. I think they are not related though. These ads run for years through GG timeframe and after. But selling Waltham. American movements. Based in NYC. But may be there is just the two hit on Mikro bc Gruen does not have "United Watch Co" TM...

Your comment " Or maybe that's why Gruen only says "United W." Now that's good! You're onto what I think.

Gruen has two main trademarks associated with Gruen Guarantee:
"United". And "United Watches" and lesser, "Unity"

I have never seen a TM for "United Watch Co" for Gruen. And I think that matters.

Notice how "Co" is included every time it applies to the TM like in "W.S. Co." and in "Gruen Watch Co" where is "United Watch Co."? I've never seen it. Doubt I have seen all of Gruen TMs though! But here is a clip Gary shared a few months back again no "United Watch Co"

So Gruen has TMs "United" and "United Watches" but....where is "United Watch Co"?
Does it matter?
Does this explain all the "United Watch Co" ads during Gruen Guarantee timeframe that are not Gruen?

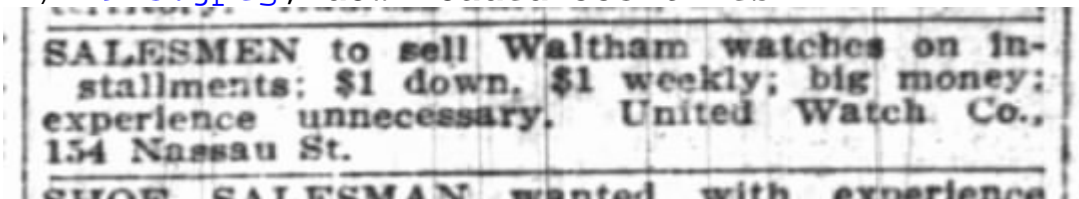
Maybe the "United. *W.* Co" on the cases and movements stands for *"Watches"* and not "Watch"? Is that how the two separate companies seemingly overlapped? Does that make sense? Of coarse...I do not understand enough about LLC and TM laws to know how the use of "Co." works exactly on product and paperwork.

But may be we should stop writing "United Watch Co." if its "United Watches Co."

Spelling *has* to matter. Plurality, too. It's not "Watches Specialty Co."
You know what I mean?
Of coarse the word "United" suggest a group or conglomerate which is likely....But with Waltham?! Or with Goering?
Lots of questions not a lot of answers. So Gruen.

File Attachments

1) [1913.jpeg](#), downloaded 553 times



2) [Screenshot_20191205-220103.jpg](#), downloaded 511 times

GRUEN NAT'L W. C. CO.
GRUEN PRECISION
GRUEN PRECISION WATCH
GRUEN SERVICE
GRUEN WATCH CO.
GRUEN WATCH MAKERS'
GUILD

ULTRA ULTRA
ULTRA VERIT
UNITED
UNITED WAT
VERY VERITH
W. S. CO.
WATCH SPEC

3) [Screenshot_20191205-231048.jpg](#), downloaded 554 times

UNITED
UNITY

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)
Posted by [Case](#) on Tue, 10 Dec 2019 03:37:05 GMT
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Here's a Marc Favre signed cal 96: item # 132492155801

Marked "Marc Favre W. Co., Swiss, 3adj, 15 jewels"

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)
Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Thu, 16 Jul 2020 12:14:40 GMT
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Recently had to look into this and found out that this article fell in my blackout period. May be it is interesting for some of you.

Barney

File Attachments

1) [United Watch Co english.pdf](#), downloaded 101 times

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [thesnark17](#) on Thu, 16 Jul 2020 15:29:29 GMT

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Very good, Barney! I appreciate it.

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Ephemerald](#) on Thu, 16 Jul 2020 17:15:57 GMT

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Way interesting. Tons of details I've never read before. Since being able to differentiate between the two United companies bc of your help, I have found out a lot more about the company stateside.

May I make a friendly suggestion? It is to simply to clarify in your article that "Gruen Guarantee....the internal low cost brand that existed as a precursor to Watch Specialties" did in fact, continue through to Watch Specialties Co until at least 1917...so not just a precursor but transitions from United W. Co to WSC.

Thanks for sharing.

File Attachments

1) [20200716_094240.jpg](#), downloaded 420 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)

Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Thu, 16 Jul 2020 18:41:29 GMT

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Hi Matt,

thanks a lot for your kind words. Regarding your suggestion, it has been intended not to mention a direct transition because the Watch Specialties Co has been founded June 1917. So there is a three year gap between the two. I have a theory for the time in between, but no proof yet. April, 28th 1914, Gruen registered the "Hallmark" brand in Switzerland. Same time in the US the "United Jewelers Inc." registered "Hallmark" in the US. The United Jewelers Inc. had been a cooperation off more than 800 Jewelers, many of them were Gruen dealers. Again coincidence? Or a second try to implement a low cost line with Gruen as "secret" supplier in Switzerland, this time not as a separate company there, but via the trademark? I am almost sure but cannot proof this. After

three years the "United Jewelers Inc." might have had trouble with the Gruens and again they started a new low cost channel with the "Watch Specialties Co." but this time they used their own channel directly.

It might be worth mentioning that in fact Gruen registered the company under the name "Watch Specialties Co. A.G." with the additional "i".

[edit] Ah, after a second reading I got what you wrote: "Gruen Guarantee" has been the bridging element. Yes, this may be true as well, so that there were three channels in parallel Gruen, Gruen Guarantee and Hallmark...

Barney

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)
Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 16 Jul 2020 18:53:02 GMT
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Bernd—this is a fascinating document! Echoing thanks for sharing this research with us. Would be worthy of a new research thread IMO!

Subject: Re: Caliber 96 (United Watch Co + Gruen Guarantee)
Posted by [Case](#) on Fri, 17 Jul 2020 02:30:32 GMT
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Hallmark seems to be an untapped mystery box of wonders, albeit most lower grade: I've seen A LeCoultre, Tissot and a host of others (General, Girod) there. Must've sold a bunch. But a black box to me. Has there been exploration on a past thread?

Going back to the transitions, I agree: Gruen seems to have a transition each time. The later United W Co ca1913 also have "Guar. Gruen". Then transitions to "Gruen Guarantee" alone. Matts shown the 16-17 transition from that to WSC, and I've even noted a WSC 740 with the single word "Premo" still on the bridge. Fast forward to ca1921, and you've got the "Gruen Watch Specialties" movements—the last of the WSC.
