Subject: Re: Gruen Verithin Pocket Watch Identification
Posted by Thojil on Wed, 16 Aug 2017 10:10:23 GMT
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Nice! That is a very clean 1st generation Verithin you have there.

The Verithin movement was developed by Gruen in an effort to make watches thinner without compromising on quality and accuracy.

"A New Ideal. The production of the 16 size did not satisfy him. He saw that all watches were not only too large, but too thick. He determined that the Gruen watch should be the pioneer thin watch as it had been the pioneer 16 size watch the pioneer watch to reduce watch thickness as it had been to reduce watch size"(7)

In publications Gruen is mentioning that the initiative was already taken by Dietrich Gruen and that he succeeded in 1896(1) however it took another 6 years before the Verithin design was ready for production.
The new 17 Ligne movement, based on a clever layout of the wheel train in three planes instead of the traditional four was only 7mm thick, reducing the height by one-third compared to a traditional 12 size movement.

The 1st generation Verithin, referred to as LV1, LV2 and LDG(2) was introduced in 1902(1). Very little is known about this 1st generation other than that it came in three different basic designs.

Available were an Open Face and Hunter Case layout both featuring a single piece center bridge in 15 or 16 jewel grade. And a high grade marked Verithin "Superior" (17j?), featuring a separate escape bridge, a different balance cock with swan neck regulator and different barrel bridge design. Of material available to me it seems that the latter version also has a different pillar plate based on the deviating position of case and dial screws.

The examples that I have cataloged suggest that from serial number 339k the Superior grade was dropped and the regular single piece center bridge 16 jewel grade is replaced by a downgraded "Superior" design, losing the swan neck regulator and one jewel (tbc). Your movement is an example of this change.
Confirmation of the "Superior" features need to wait until I can do a physical comparison. The correlation between caliber reference and movement specification remains a mystery.

Serial numbers started with 120k (lowest no. known to me 120,573) and continued until possibly 130k (highest no. known 128,112) when suddenly serial numbers change and the first digit becomes a 3 (lowest no. known to me 327,646 / highest no. known 347,211). The background to this change I can only speculate on so far.

The design of the 1st generation Verithins was consistent until the introduction of the 2nd generation about 1910.

File Attachments

1) Gruen VeriThin early model 23.2.jpg, downloaded 1521 times


SUPERIOR
Waltham

2) Gruen VeriThin early model 5.3.jpg, downloaded 1542 times