Subject: Quadron 109
Posted by brtime on Fri, 07 Apr 2017 21:19:05 GMT
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Model name :109
Type :Quadron
Period/date :1930's
Gender :Gents

Case Maker :Wadsworth
Case Material :14K GF reinforced with extra gold
Case Serial :5456634
Case Style no :109

Caliber :123
Movement Maker :Gruen
Movement Serial:100162

Bracelet :

Other info :

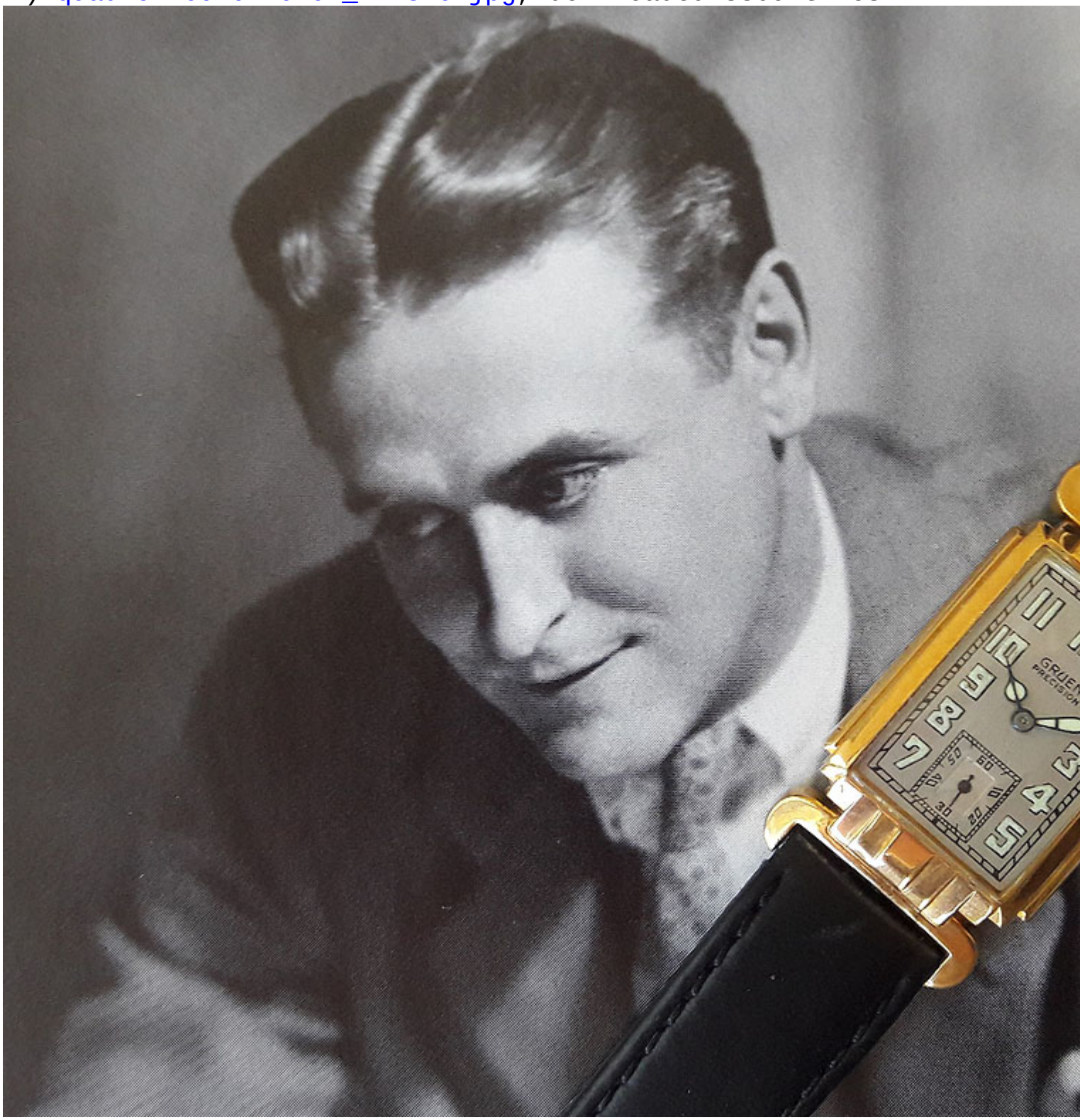
Made a very nice acquisition for the collection just recently ... Quadron Model 109, lower right corner page 21 for those of you who have my book. Beautiful stacked case with claw lugs. Screams Art Deco! It has the Caliber 123. Light wear on case. Dial is an obvious refinish. I won't use the "R" word, but I think it's safe to say this is an elusive model; at least I haven't seen it pictured before in the forum. Bought if off a private collector. After 30 years of doing this, there are still surprises to be found!

File Attachments

1) quadron10920170407_144825.jpg, downloaded 3791 times


GRUEN
PRECISION

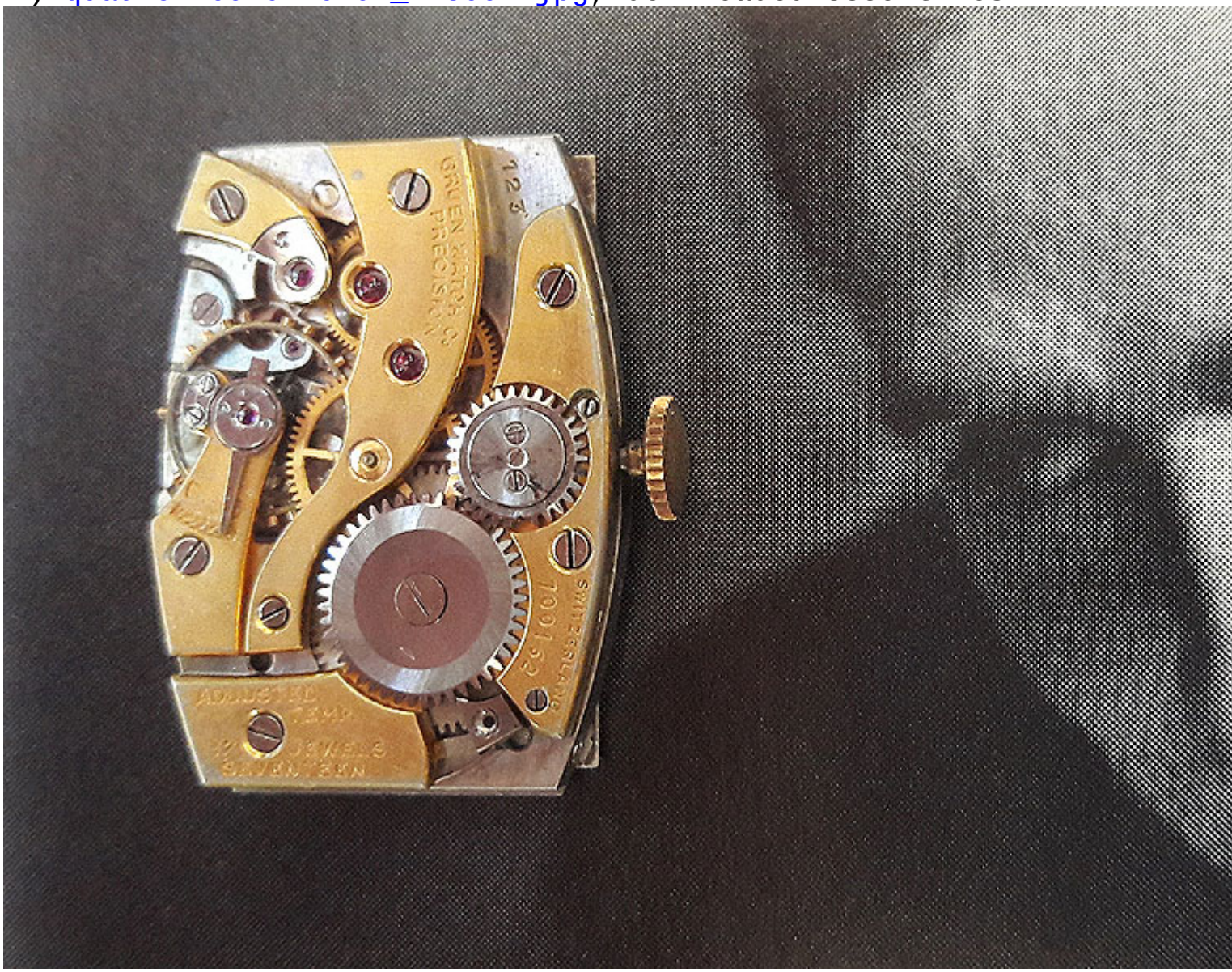
2) quadron10920170407_144840.jpg, downloaded 3809 times



3) quadron10920170407_144902.jpg, downloaded 3854 times



4) quadron10920170407_145004.jpg, downloaded 3859 times



5) quadron10920170407_145111.jpg, downloaded 3747 times



Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by JackW on Fri, 07 Apr 2017 23:01:24 GMT
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That is a very nice one! Wow!

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by MonKee on Fri, 07 Apr 2017 23:16:05 GMT
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I really like that watch !! Fortunately I just recently acquired the same model and would really like to know where you got that beautiful strap !!

Subject: Re: Quadron 109

Posted by timeliz on Fri, 07 Apr 2017 23:38:19 GMT
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Awesome looking model, Bruce. Thanks for sharing!

Did all the 123 calibers have gold washed plates or only a certain numerical block? I haven't seen very many.
I have a "Quadron 99" with the gold plates and serial #706335.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by brtime on Sun, 09 Apr 2017 15:22:22 GMT
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As far as I know, all the 123s had the gold-colored plates. I believe it was the last of the "original" Quadrons to be made before Gruen ceased production in favor of the Curvex and other Calibers. Interestingly, the Gruen's materials department continued to refer to many new calibers as "Quadrons" if the movements continued to fill the majority of the movement cavity in the case. For example, the materials department referred to the Caliber 500 as a Quadron, even though the name was dropped in Gruen's advertising.

Other folks may have some additional thoughts on the 123. I am merely speaking from experience and how Roy Ehrhardt's original "Master Book" was organized.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by afire on Sun, 09 Apr 2017 21:42:34 GMT
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I've definitely seen 123's without the gold bridges.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by Timeticker on Tue, 18 Apr 2017 23:35:55 GMT
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MonKee wrote on Fri, 07 April 2017 23:16I really like that watch !! Fortunately I just recently acquired the same model and would really like to know where you got that beautiful strap !!
Hi Monty,

I have an excellent source on original straps. PM me , and I'll give you their link.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by JackW on Tue, 26 Nov 2019 16:18:30 GMT

MonKee wrote on Fri, 07 April 2017 23:16I really like that watch !! Fortunately I just recently acquired the same model and would really like to know where you got that beautiful strap !!
Since Oct 2017, this watch has been sitting on my bench. It pretty much looked like this when it arrived:

The case was sent off to Peter Wuischpard - https://www.watchcaserepair.com/
Peter removed the poorly constructed lugs that had been soldered to the case. He also refinished the case. These bars are quite susceptible to being levered off. Pretty sure that is what happened to this watch. I've also seen this repair on other versions of this watch on eBay. FYI.... Bruce's is one of two I've ever seen with the original lugs on.

So using the images that Bruce posted and some others that he sent along, I though about how to make new bars. I thought that since the case is goldfilled that I could use flat GF sheet stock and fabricate a pair of them. I decided this was too hard. Lost wax casting was the other option and could do in sterling and then gold plate or in solid gold.

I chose the route with 14K lug bars.

The movement restoration was pretty straight forward, although the original one to the movement was pretty trashed. Happily two spare appeared on the swamp at pretty good prices. One thing I have discerned, these cal 123 with the gold-colored train bridges are just that. They are nicely engraved BUT they are nickle bridges that have been gold flashed.
It has taken two years but I finished the watch yesterday. Trim has been visiting the last 10 days and we have been quite prolific in moving things forward. I've finished 5 watches, two though were ones that I COA'd some time ago but developed some issue that I was able to diagnose and address with his help. Monty's watch has languished.... I've been agonizing over whether this would work or not and the 1st set of bars I actually damaged while trying to complete a minor repair as I was finishing them. There is about $150 of gold in the pair. The 2nd casting was a bit better prepaired and was able to finish them without issue.

I dropped in the movement; fyi the dial was re-stored by International:

....and it looks pretty good on the wrist I think.

I do need to find a better crown for it. That is the only hang up at this point.

File Attachments

1) IMG_2137_sm.jpg, downloaded 3269 times



2) blue lugs.jpg, downloaded 3198 times



3) IMG_4302_sm.jpg, downloaded 3299 times


GRUEN
14K.
GOLDFILLED
REINFORCED
WITHEXTRA GOLD
Wadsworth
5455672
123 10

4) IMG_4304_sm.jpg, downloaded 3286 times


11 12 1
GRUEN
PRECISION
10 2
9 3
8 4
7 5

5) IMG_4303_sm.jpg, downloaded 3268 times


GRUEN
PRECISION

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by brtime on Tue, 26 Nov 2019 17:52:04 GMT
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Beautiful restoration, Jack!

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by thesnark17 on Tue, 26 Nov 2019 22:35:47 GMT
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This is a stunning watch! Congratulations, and I hope it gets worn.

Comments on some of the statements earlier in this (very old) thread:

I have seen one 123 that is not gold flashed - but every higher serial number example is gold. I think they switched over quite early.

Regarding "original" Quadron calibers:
The 325 Guild caliber is the next evolution of the 117/119/123 family. Though it's marked Guild and not Precision, it can have up to 21 jewels. A worthy continuation of a very nice caliber family (if perhaps not quite up to spec?). Occasionally a 5th Avenue example will appear too, so I don't think it was intended as a drop in quality. It's not very Gruen-like to put a lesser caliber in a top-of-the-line case.

Now, whether the 325 is an "original" Quadron caliber, I won't say. But it needs to be part of the conversation.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by afire on Tue, 26 Nov 2019 22:45:34 GMT
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Very impressive!

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by Case on Wed, 27 Nov 2019 04:17:02 GMT
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Well done, Jack. The lost wax casting undertaking is particularly impressive.

The earliest 123 I have recorded is from mid-1929, Gruen case # 1304645, right before the Gruen house case jump to 2mm, one of the first cases marked "movement adjusted in USA," although movement still marked "adjusted temps" (correction: it's not marked for adjustments at all--had to double check, after learning more below. It's sn 700430). Bridges already gold, as were all later

ones I've seen.

It seems the 123 had low production, as I've never seen one with a sn higher than 707027, and that one is from at least late 1935 (stamped GXC). From 3 examples I have seen, 1929 serial #s were 700k. By end of 1930, the 123 was at sn 702k, now stamped "Unadj" in a "movement adjusted in USA" case. In 1934 cases, mid-706k. Seemingly fewer than 10k made from 1929-1935.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by thesnark17 on Wed, 27 Nov 2019 15:03:46 GMT
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I agree. Highest SN I've seen is 707134. Unadjusted vs adjusted is all over the place though:
694k Unadjusted,
699k low Unadjusted,
699k hi - 700k low Adjusted Temp.,
700k mid Unadj. Unadjusted,
700k hi Adjusted Temp.,
702k-706k Unadj., then
706k-707k Unadjusted.

Go figure. This lends credence to the idea of runs produced or imported out of order.

Now you know what's really fun: Gruen was still producing 117 (and 119?) calibers during the run of 123s (or even later!!). In particular, the caliber 117N was certainly made after 1930, and there are examples with Conoruma balance (post 1935).

119 - 641935 Un Adjusted, Wadsworth 5456463; 123/108.

117N - serials scattered in the 576-586k range; Un Adjusted, Wadsworth 545xxxx serials and cases 123/108 for the few that still have cases.

I think this would indicate that some plates were held back (QC?), and later, Gruen remanufactured dead stock. I'm not suggesting that the plates were still being produced.

I would love to get my hands on a Conoruma Quadron... !!

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by Case on Wed, 27 Nov 2019 16:37:08 GMT
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Yep, I've noted a couple of 117 conoruma used in 123-108 cases at/near 545k wadsworth. Never had a chance to score one!

545k wads seems actually end of 1934/early 1935, conoruma coming into play ca1933. No GXC

codes yet for a while. Style #200 just starting.

I'm thinking the combo of depression + higher import costs must've hit these models in a big way. Old unfinished stock left over from the heady high demand days of 28-29, as you say finished & trickling in with the new import marks at later dates.

Very interesting to note the variances in adjustments, even in 1929. I'd just assumed it was a clean switch. Clearly not! So the gold filled models had cases marked for unadjusted movements; I suppose the intent would be put the adjusted ones into gold cases? Seems like a process/inventory headache (doesn't look like it always happened 100% that way, if that was intent), but the margins would've justified it.

Thanks for this info--Gruen never makes it simple :)

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by thesnark17 on Wed, 27 Nov 2019 17:19:03 GMT
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Yeah, my post-1935 date is only because I don't want to restart the Conoruma Wars. 1933-4 makes more sense to me from a timeline perspective.

I don't see any evidence that the case material comes into it. I've seen the Adjusted ones in GF cases, and Unadjusted in solid gold cases (note - most of these are the "Specically Engraved in the old Guild Manner" mvts - and I think that does make a difference). I think the runs are just messed up - but whether that is import date, manufacturing date, or some other consideration I'm not sure.

Of note, now that I check my records - the mid-700k Unadjusted movements actually have the Adjustments text milled off and replaced. The other Unadjusted movements (earlier and later) never had that text.

Except that there are some "Specially Engraved" movements in that SN range as well. But they never had that text. Makes me wonder if they really are a special class of movement, as Gruen's advertising would lead the general public to believe.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by thesnark17 on Wed, 27 Nov 2019 17:57:17 GMT
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SPECULATION ALERT

I think you're right about market considerations playing into this somehow. But in that case, why build a 325 caliber at all? Where does it fit? Did they quit production of the 123 for market reasons, only to find that there was still a market - and then they used up dead stock while

scrambling to get the Guild 325 tooled up?

It seems to me that the 325 continues the numbering pattern, but in that case, why not number it 125? Does the "3" numbering relate to the Guild somehow? I don't know of any caliber 125.

END ALERT

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by JackW on Thu, 28 Nov 2019 00:55:46 GMT
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Here is the movement from the finished watch... train side for now.

It looks like it is not marked at all as to whether it is adjust or not. Serial is 698553

File Attachments

1) IMG_4306_sm.jpg, downloaded 3251 times

GRUEN WATCH Co
PRECISION
123
17 JEWELS
SEVENTEEN
SWITZERLAND

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by Case on Thu, 28 Nov 2019 03:23:54 GMT
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Jack--you're right, and I was mistaken about my 700430 sn one in the 1929 case. It, too, had no adjustment markings at all. Had to correct my post above.

So now it fits with the case markings: "unadjusted" not a required mark under 1922 tariff (required 1930+), movement was adjusted in USA.

Alex--were your early ones also unmarked? Or were they stamped unadjusted?

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by thesnark17 on Thu, 28 Nov 2019 23:15:07 GMT
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They are unmarked in 694k, 699k.

- But due to online pictures being what they are, and the Unadjustment text being poorly struck on many examples, I did not wish to suggest that they were unmarked. Clearly Jack's has no markings though. So I accept unmarked as valid from now on.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by afire on Mon, 02 Dec 2019 06:01:29 GMT
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thesnark17 wrote on Wed, 27 November 2019 11:57
SPECULATION ALERT

I think you're right about market considerations playing into this somehow. But in that case, why build a 325 caliber at all? Where does it fit? Did they quit production of the 123 for market reasons, only to find that there was still a marketIt seems to me that the 325 continues the numbering pattern, but in that case, why not number it 125? Does the "3" numbering relate to the Guild somehow? I don't know of any caliber 125.

END ALERT

The 325 wasn't made by Gruen. It's not really a part of the 117/119/123 family. Even it's size is similar, but not the same. And not being made in the Precision factory, that would be the reason that they are never marked Precision, but rather Guild instead. It certainly coexisted with the 123, and was often used in higher priced models, particularly the 3251 21 jewel version, so Gruen clearly positioned it as a premium caliber. As to why they wouldn't just use an up-jeweled 123 or similar instead of an outsourced caliber, I don't know. It would seem that the whole Guild concept

was an apparatus for keeping supply up with demand beyond what Gruen could accomplish with its own facilities.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by Case on Tue, 03 Dec 2019 02:44:19 GMT
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I'll see your Speculation and raise you one Wild Theory (to be expected from me, I know :p)

I believe the answer for mothballing the 117-123 coincided in time with Emile Frey's patent of 1929 and is explained in a word: Curvex!

I believe the Curvex launch was planned but delayed after the stock crash, treading water until the economy improved enough. That explains the trickling 117-123 remnants—no one expected the depression to be as deep or long lasting as it actually turned out. The techniquadron was there and got breathing room, but I expect Gruen had its sights set on Curvex.

As for naming 325, with 311 waiting in the wings, good things only came in "3"s!

How's that for revisionist history? :lol:

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by thesnark17 on Tue, 03 Dec 2019 04:05:05 GMT
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Works for me! I see the logic, and it seems to be a very reasonable explanation.

"Revisionist" means that there was some accepted history to revise. I think we're writing the history - who else discusses the tail end of Quadron production!

I've never had the 325 and 123 side by side to see the differences; I had assumed that it was a continuation of the caliber based on appearance only. Certainly 325s are Guild only, and have a different serial number system too.

I point out, though, that the UV390 pocket watch caliber uses the same serial number system, and is in fact a direct continuation of the UV (and not a Guild movement). So I did not think that serial number was conclusive evidence.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by afire on Tue, 03 Dec 2019 17:23:19 GMT
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thesnark17 wrote on Mon, 02 December 2019 22:05I've never had the 325 and 123 side by side to see the differences...
The footprint is very close, maybe identical, but the 325 is noticeably thicker.

Subject: Re: Quadron 109
Posted by Passion on Fri, 14 Nov 2025 18:17:16 GMT
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JackW wrote on Tue, 26 November 2019 17:18
....and it looks pretty good on the wrist I think.

Heu, non, je dirais que c'est TOPISSIMO !
Um, no, I'd say it's TOPISSIMO ! ;-)

Merci Jack pour l'information du réparateur de boite de montre "PETER WUISCHPARD", je vais le contacter car j'ai peux-être un autre projet de réparation de montre... rien de certain à 100% pour l'instant, mais le virus "Gruen" me colle à la peau !
Thanks Jack for the information about the watch case repairer "PETER WUISCHPARD", I'll contact him as I might have another watch repair project... nothing 100% certain yet, but the "Gruen" bug is biting me !
