Subject: Caliber 861 -- Factory L -- and a magic show
Posted by Case on Sat, 14 Dec 2019 19:40:35 GMT
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Maker: Factory L
Size: 6.5 ligne
Jewel Markings: 16 Jewels
Adj Markings: 4 Adj
Config: Hunter
Dial feet: 1 & 6.25 positions
Dial release mech: side screws
Example date: late 1922-1923

Sister caliber to the 849. Note the difference in train jewel orientation on back plate, setting bits and layout on front plate. This is a later version, now no longer marked "Gruen Watch Co" or "Gruen Watch Co Factory L" but transitioned to "Gruen Guild". This would be ca. 1923, possibly later 1922. Apologies for the poor quality photos of the back plate, it's currently fully disassembled for service, so can't get better for now.

Note that the machining Gruen did to remove any maker's marks has also totally effaced the Serial Number on this one. A little magic trick happened when I viewed the pic I took at the watchmaker's yesterday--some of the maker's stampings that were machined off the front plate by Gruen partially re-emerged! If you look closely at the front plate pic: by the click spring you can see writing ending in "Co.", and more writing in lower/left center. I assure you, these marks are ground completely away and cannot be seen by the eye or under a loup (I also find evidence of machining down on my 849s). No matter what I did, I could not replicate this. Now you know where to look for any remnants on yours--best of luck! So close to Factory L, but so far!

Any forensic science hobbyists out there? Or any idea of the base metal of these plates? I know there are reagents that can make all these stamps reappear clearly.

File Attachments

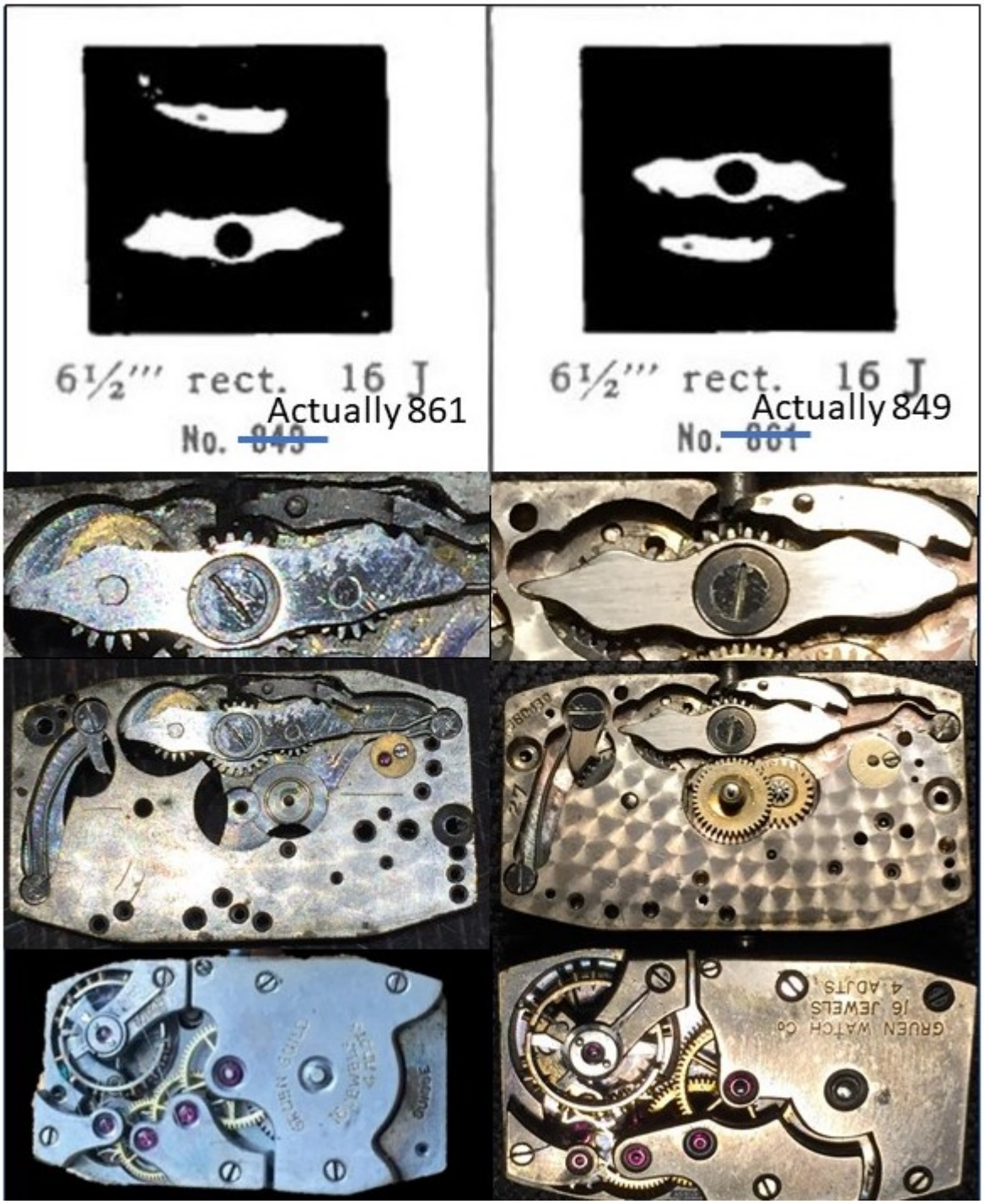
1) E08D5DFA-0857-4971-97D6-873A4D1AD016 (4).jpeg, downloaded 3192 times



2) 861 back plate.jpg, downloaded 3224 times



3) 849 vs 861 (corrected).jpg, downloaded 3237 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 861 -- Factory L -- and a magic show
Posted by Ephemerald on Sat, 14 Dec 2019 19:55:34 GMT
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Atta boy! Forensic science the "L" out of it :lol:

Super intriguing. Thanks for sharing.

Subject: Re: Caliber 861 -- Factory L -- and a magic show
Posted by Case on Sat, 14 Dec 2019 20:23:19 GMT
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I see what you did there.... :lol:

Subject: Re: Caliber 861 -- Factory L -- and a magic show
Posted by Case on Thu, 16 Jul 2020 19:41:25 GMT
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Always interesting to see another match pop up... this one under AXA (Clemence Freres)

Swamp item 174077940000

Subject: Re: Caliber 861 -- Factory L -- and a magic show
Posted by Case on Sun, 02 Aug 2020 20:14:05 GMT
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Here's a 1922 ad that shows what looks like this movement (or a variant), but with the diamond denoting "Extra Precision" 313091056994

I think it is the same movement as in Liz's 1921 ad she posted in the 849 thread, but I never noticed that detail. I say it could be a relative, because there looks to be some variance in screw location or sizing & I've found no reference to the 861 being EP grade.

Anyway, it's a verification that the EP stamps were in play here in 21-22. And my Guild version above has pre-1922 tariff stamps. Is there another "Factory L" movement out there to be discovered?