
Subject: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [thesnark17](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 01:39:54 GMT

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Hey Case, could I get some information (maybe a better picture) of the watch above? I don't have it or any run of women's watches in 147xxx.

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 "

Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 02:10:19 GMT

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Will defer to afire.

But with that layout, isn't it a man's movement? Gotta be 13" or better, surely.

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 "

Posted by [thesnark17](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 13:01:38 GMT

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Okay, wrong twice... I thought you had posted it. Reading too fast.

And also I meant to say "wristwatch" rather than "women's watch". Writing too fast! I have no records of any small sizes in that SN area. (Which really isn't surprising. They turn up only rarely.)

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 "

Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 13:23:57 GMT

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My reply seems to not have made it through. I ought to say that this looked like the 9 3/4 ligne caliber 87. So yes, correct, women's watch probably...

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 "

Posted by [afire](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 17:22:20 GMT

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If we're talking about the watch I posted, it's an uncatalogued men's Dietrich Gruen wristwatch.

Here's a link to where I saw it:

<https://mb.nawcc.org/threads/help-resurrect-1933-dietrich-gruen-watch.147900/>

If you're a member and logged in, I think you can access larger pictures.
If anybody knows that owner, tell him I want his watch!

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 18:18:53 GMT
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Dude, yeah!

Barney—very close. Only 2 off! Cal 89. Hmmm.

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 19:19:56 GMT
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Size would tell. cal 89 is the 8 3/4 ligne version of the same movement...

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [thesnark17](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 20:53:53 GMT
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Which is smaller than 9 3/4. I do have an even smaller Dietrich Gruen movement somewhere around that *must* have come out of a women's watch, so the DG branding is not limited to men's watches...

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 20:54:52 GMT
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Those setting works suggest Piguet. Here's one of his early works. 124160971205. And one closer age to this 123901784302

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Ephemerald](#) on Thu, 18 Jun 2020 21:08:08 GMT
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Personally I think you could call this a unisex model.

It reminds me a lot of Strap 88, which is unisex, I have one engraved w a man's name and another engraved w a woman's.

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [afire](#) on Fri, 19 Jun 2020 16:22:48 GMT
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thesnark17 wrote on Thu, 18 June 2020 15:53 Which is smaller than 9 3/4. I do have an even smaller Dietrich Gruen movement somewhere around that *must* have come out of a women's watch...

I dunno. I had a rather large men's tank loaded with a little 8 3/4 ligne cal. 823.

A small movement doesn't necessarily mean a small watch. Although I don't have any reason to believe that there were not ladies watches with Dietrich Gruen on the dial.

Ephemerald wrote on Thu, 18 June 2020 16:08 Personally I think you could call this a unisex model.

It reminds me a lot of Strap 88, which is unisex, I have one engraved w a man's name and another engraved w a woman's.

I don't think of Strap 88 as unisex. It's in the men's section of the Master Book, which makes it a men's model in my mind. Of course, it's not terribly uncommon to see a men's watch from this era with a ladies' inscription. But that doesn't make it unisex, IMO.

That said, there are examples of men's watches being specifically marketed to both sexes, so I think it would be fair to call them unisex. Strap 16/26 and 17 are examples that comes to mind:

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Case](#) on Sun, 28 Jun 2020 18:52:52 GMT
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So going back to that Dietrich Gruen afire linked above. Remember I said it was Piguet setting works?

Here's a near perfect match Piguet on front plate & works—slightly larger (10L)—but you can clearly see what I mean. eBay item 143643826974.

I understand LeCoultre was finishing Piguet for their top ends at this time (in addition to finishing Tissot et al for lower end, too). I'd say Lecoultre or Piguet was the supplier to Gruen.

Thoughts?

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [afire](#) on Mon, 29 Jun 2020 16:38:58 GMT

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I definitely see it too. I looked at the 1926 parts book, and the 87 has that same long clutch lever and other similarities. Cary Hurt, who knows infinitely more than me about these early movements, has said before that he believes that LeCoultre was the supplier of some of Gruen's high end Precision Extra movements.

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Case](#) on Tue, 30 Jun 2020 13:36:40 GMT

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Yep, I've seen the LeCoultre signed repeater posted here, so they're in the Guild in some way. Perhaps only special orders, but would be great to find a deeper connection. I know others have tried. Piguet would be a win, too, but with Meylan and LeCoultre both verified—and using Piguet ebauches—it's likely LeCoultre sourced this 89, too. Hope to own one some sweet day!

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [C. Hurt](#) on Sat, 04 Jul 2020 22:05:36 GMT

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Re: the caliber 89 in afire's post:

Here is one of mine, unfortunately uncased.

I am of the strong opinion that these, along with 859 and 87 (and likely others) were made by Agassiz.

File Attachments

1) [9BEE31AF-1FE5-45EF-BF0F-A8697CD98473.jpeg](#), downloaded 2579 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Case](#) on Sun, 05 Jul 2020 03:14:07 GMT
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You mean something like this? Item # 202915938113

Good stuff, Cary! Bridges look pretty close, maybe a different size? Haven't found a front plate yet.

Talking of which, wanna add this to the caliber database as it's own thread?

Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [C. Hurt](#) on Sun, 05 Jul 2020 14:00:34 GMT
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Here it is next to its Agassiz relative. Bridges are close, screw positions are the same, pinions are the same, and keyless works are near identical.

File Attachments

1) [57CEE000-98F7-4209-B7C1-ADC500A26A4F.jpeg](#), downloaded 2575 times



2) [5ABAD4CD-C1BA-4136-A629-E0906351B6F2.jpeg](#), downloaded 2551 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Sun, 05 Jul 2020 16:28:10 GMT
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Great to see these asside. Really very close and I would also think they are related.
Still both companies had their own design protections.

Here is the Agassiz filing from 1910 which as No. 2 exactly shows the movement you have pictured.

And here is Gruen's 1911 filing for two similar movements, which I think are caliber 47 and 93. Still leaves caliber 89 open, but it is possible and has been usual practice to just protect one base design and slightly vary it over different sizes, so that the cal. 93 protection may have been also valid for cal. 89.

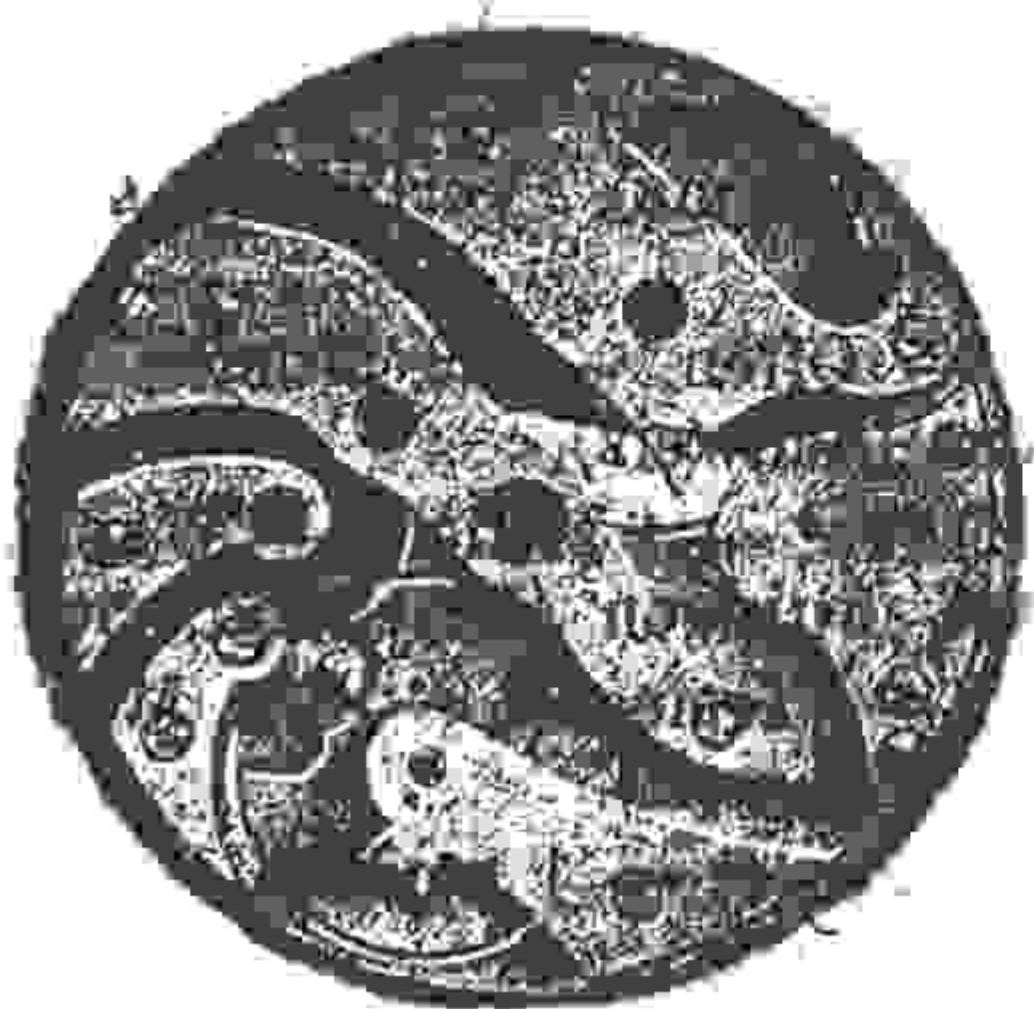
There are at least 10 other companies having very similar movements during the years around 1910. Some of them were clear copies of the LeCoultre design which have been the first with this style. Some were based on a famous copy from Sonceboz.

Barney

File Attachments

1) [Agassiz.jpg](#), downloaded 2532 times

Nº 18599. 30 septembre 1910, 7 h. p. — O
et raquettes de montres. — Agassiz W
Mandataire: E. Imer-Schneider, Genève
Nº 1.



2) [Gruen 47 93.jpg](#), downloaded 2740 times

N° 19813. 16 septembre 1911, 6 h. p. — Ouvert. — 2 modèles. — Calibres de montres. — Gruen Watch Mfg. Co. (S. A.), Maderetsch (Suisse). Mandataire: A. Mathey-Doret, La Chaux-de-Fonds.

N° 1.



N° 2.



Subject: Re: Caliber 151 - (Extra) Precision - 5 1/2 '"
Posted by [thesnark17](#) on Mon, 06 Jul 2020 00:07:26 GMT
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I note that while the setting is very similar and the train elements are in the same places, the holes in the base plate are not the same. Particularly the dial feet holes.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75'" 18J, All Adjustments
Posted by [Case](#) on Mon, 27 Jul 2020 14:27:31 GMT
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The 89 is now in its own thread.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75'" 18J, All Adjustments
Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 11 Feb 2021 03:04:41 GMT
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Coming back to Caliber 89... the makers we've discussed so far are all so close, but there is no match so far.

For me the sticking point is the cutaway around the setting works: in all our proposed sources, it tapers in close to the gears; in the Cal 89 it does not.

I would like to propose a new possible source: Camille Pourrat & Fils (C. Pourrat Fils), out of Geneva. He was also finishing Lecoultré ebauches in fine grades. He was active as a maker and a representative (beside Vacheron & Constantin and Lavina's own Paul Brack) of Swiss watchmaking from 1910 until his death in 1923.

He assumed his father's company (J. Pourrat & Fils), continuing to use its mark: JP & F

But here is a look at his much earlier pocket watch setting bits (a lever set Lecoultré 6). Apologies for the low res, but it's taken lots of looking to find anything at all.

Finding his work will be difficult, let alone in a matching size: in the teens & twenties he appears to be making for others vs. branding his own. Hoping others may have better luck.

File Attachments

1) [20210211_015418000_iOS.jpg](#), downloaded 2221 times



Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [Jenneke](#) on Mon, 15 Feb 2021 22:49:38 GMT

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Isn't that picture the same as over here:

<https://www.watchuseek.com/threads/my-j-pourrat-fils-movement-lecoultre-ebauche.4951255/>

So, not a picture from lecoultre 6 but a pourrat&fils movement?

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [afire](#) on Tue, 16 Feb 2021 18:55:46 GMT

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What I've learned from these caliber database discussions is that apparently nothing in the world of Swiss watchmaking simply is what it seems.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Tue, 16 Feb 2021 20:10:46 GMT

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Jenneke,

LeCoultre may most likely have just provided the ebauche as caliber 6, not a finished movement. This was the common procedure, that someone provided raw movements, the ebauches, and another company like for example Cattin made complete movements from these ebauches. Other third parties were involved got galvanisation for example so that very often the movements went through several factories before a watch was built from them.

This has been the Swiss way at that time and this is something Gruen wanted to change with the precision factory.

It now makes it often very difficult to find out who did which steps. Sometimes it is a little easier when the factory was acting a little more modern and provided finished movements from ready made ebauches.

Barney

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [afire](#) on Wed, 17 Feb 2021 18:30:25 GMT

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Barney Green wrote on Tue, 16 February 2021 14:10

This has been the Swiss way at that time and this is something Gruen wanted to change with the precision factory.

But did they eventually? My naïve blue pill perception previously was that there were two categories of movements - those supplied by other Guild factories and marked with a factory

letter, and the Precision grades produced at the Precision Factory. Evidently it was never that simple. Some of what I had previously assumed were entirely in-house movements actually started as outsourced ebauches.*

I also had the impression that around 1935 Gruen basically consolidated all production to be in-house at the Precision factory. Obviously by the 1950s they were clearly outsourcing movements, but was there ever actually a period during which all (or nearly all) Gruen movements were produced start to finish at the Precision factory?

*Which begs the question, what exactly differentiates Guild, Precision, and Extra Precision grades? I had assumed Guild meant outsourced, Precision meant in-house, and Extra Precision meant the highest quality in-house. It would appear that the scale did not have much, if anything, to do with source, but rather simply quality.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments
Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Wed, 17 Feb 2021 20:03:06 GMT

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Afire,

you are correct that from 1935 to the mid 50s only some specialties were sourced from a few other vendors and the vast majority had been built in house.

The time frame I was referring to, and yes, I did not mention that, has been the state before the precision factory was built. This has been the status quo at that time and there were many exceptions arising. Aegler, Lavina, Marc Favre and some others did many complete designs as most Guild members did. Not all of them were assigned a factory letter, not all of the factories which had a letter were building complete movements from plate stamping to the finished product. There were hundreds of movement factories until the 1920s, some very small like Gruen in the 1870s/80s, some already large factories like FHF Fontainemelon.

At some point of time Precision and Extra Precision grades were built in house. But not before the precision factory was opened. Gruen did not have their own factory at that time! They left their customers under the impression that they had that, but this is not true. St. Imier, Madretsch, these have not been solely Gruen owned factories, all the factory A,D,R,T,V,... whatsoever movements were outsourced for manufacturing. In some cases they have been own designs, but Gruen always partnered with someone for manufacturing and most movements were simply sourced by others. The Guild marking was developed later in time.

The first years of the the Precision Factory it is said that only pocket watch movements have been built there. It took Gruen more than 10 years to move also other products to their own factory. Just what I learned from closer looking into the "real" sources of many movements which I tried to track down.

This is a rather huge puzzle with thousands of pieces and the third dimension of time makes it even more complicated as some of the movements were acutally moved from one factory to another in time.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [Jenneke](#) on Wed, 17 Feb 2021 21:52:43 GMT

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Barney Green wrote on Wed, 17 February 2021 21:03: St. Imier, Madretsch, these have not been solely Gruen owned factories. horror, shock! So, Gruen did not make their own movements in the Piattostrasse?

Does the setting parts define the ebauche maker and the non-dial side the last supplier? I mean, how raw was a raw ebauche movement?

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [afire](#) on Wed, 17 Feb 2021 22:55:33 GMT

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Barney Green wrote on Wed, 17 February 2021 14:03: At some point of time Precision and Extra Precision grades were built in house. But not before the precision factory was opened. Gruen did not have their own factory at that time! They left their customers under the impression that they had that, but this is not true.

...

The first years of the Precision Factory it is said that only pocket watch movements have been built there. It took Gruen more than 10 years to move also other products to their own factory. Well, they sure fooled this customer. I really thought that anything with "Precision" on the dial was in-house production by the mid 1920s, while anything that didn't was outsourced in that 1925-1935 timeframe. For example, looking at Quadrans I assumed that the 157 was outsourced (as it definitely was), while the 117-119-123 were made at the Precision factory, and then the 325-3251 was outsourced (at it presumably was). From what I'm getting here, it's likely that none of them were manufactured at the Precision Factory.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 18 Feb 2021 03:51:56 GMT

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I wouldn't be too scandalized. First, I'm guilty of only posting movements here from the teens to 1922, so mostly before the Precision factory was in play.

My perspective would be, almost anything "Precision" after Precision starts appearing on the lady movements (I think 1922ish) was at least finished in house. There are a few Guild outliers with the odd "Precision" irregularly on movements—I think only from Frey, who was branding "Precision" on his in house movements and a bridge with house markings was used inadvertently.

I think the V1-4 & UV line of pockets was truly in house, Gruen's specialty to a fault. All brands (even Lecoultré & PP) had to diversify by using ebauches or white labeled movements for

at least some sizes, particularly ladies movements & recangles/ovals.

There were always ebauche suppliers in the mix, but the reorganization at the end of 1921 moved us very close to your system:

- Precision finished in house
- A 1-2 year consolidation of the Guild network
- EP calibers gradually replaced by guild & discontinued

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [thesnark17](#) on Thu, 18 Feb 2021 05:05:23 GMT

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I think the Quadrans 117-123 were also truly in-house, because of the way the serial numbers mesh with the pocket watches.

I am certain that the V4-7 and UV/UV390 were in-house; not actually sure about the earlier versions (V1-3). Regardless, the design is Gruen's.

This has been a great thread to read.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [Barney Green](#) on Thu, 18 Feb 2021 09:10:10 GMT

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I fully agree that Quadrans 117-123 are Gruen designs as are V4 to 7 and several other movements.

What I doubt is that Gruen had its own production facility before the Precision factory which was a) Gruen owned and b) only made movements for Gruen. All they had before in Switzerland was an operating unit managing production in one or more foreign owned fabs. This operation unit was managing everything, they even hired their own personal to work in the factories. Plus they sourced many movements which were then marked Gruen Guild, Factory XYZ, United Watch Co., Watch Specialties, you name them...

With the advent of the Precision factory things changed and more and more production went truly in house.

Gruen may have finished the Precision and Extra Precision marked movements in the controlled facilities by their own people, but did they built all these movements from scratch? For sure not, so someone else did this.

As I said at that time movements went from one factory to the other before they were finally assembled into a case to build a watch.

And Jenneke, to answer your question regarding the grade of raw movements: this varied a lot on a) the ebauche maker and b) customer specifications. FHF was able to deliver any grade from a real raw ebauche consisting of probably 10 stamped and partially milled metal parts to a finished and trued movement. Customers decided if the jewel settings, the train, the escapement, the setting bits or whatever was included.

All this makes it extremely complicated to trace back the roots of a movement nowadays. There are hundreds of possibilities and a hundred thousand combinations...

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [afire](#) on Thu, 18 Feb 2021 17:03:43 GMT

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thesnark17 wrote on Wed, 17 February 2021 23:05 This has been a great thread to read. 100% agreed. I always knew that the pre-1935 Gruen supply chain was a tangled web, but in my childlike mind, a movement simply involved either one or two factories - completely in-house, or an outsourced ebauche finished in-house. I didn't realize that there was much more to it than that.

Subject: Re: Caliber 89 (Extra Precision) – 8.75" 18J, All Adjustments

Posted by [Case](#) on Tue, 14 Sep 2021 13:21:23 GMT

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Mention of Caliber 89 elsewhere cued up some info I gleaned on Agassiz:

-In addition to their US distribution, their production (and Touchon's) appears to have been largely/exclusively controlled by Wittnauer from 1895 until the 1920s. See attached quote from 1913 tariff & 1925 article quote from Miss Wittnauer.

-Agassiz serial number 255733 was stolen in 1917, so their serial number range is not a fit. But Cary now has good benchmarks for dating his: between 1910 deposit & 1913 tariff changes.

File Attachments

1) [agassiz serial number 1917.JPG](#), downloaded 2101 times

JEWELERS WARNED

Check Swindler Who Has Been Operating
Successfully in New York Still at Large

Jewelers in New York and throughout the country are warned to beware of a man who has been going about in the jewelry and allied trades passing worthless checks. An investigation has shown that he has visited several concerns in New York. In the man's recent operations he has used the name of "Ernest Sawyer."

The man is described as wearing a dark suit and a dark fedora hat and had several small badges stuck on the lapel of his coat. He is about 50 years old, five feet six inches tall and weighs about 145 pounds. He has brown-gray hair, a thin face, is smooth shaven, has a light complexion, wears glasses, has a prominent nose and receding chin and is a good talker.

One of "Sawyer's" recent victims is Lester Cerf, 49 Maiden Lane. Mr. Cerf stated to a reporter of THE JEWELERS' CIRCULAR that on Oct. 9, at 2 P. M., a man giving his name as "Ernest Sawyer," called on him and stated that he was desirous of purchasing two chronometers. Before he left he selected two chronometers, two watches and

the First National Bank of Ridgefield Park, which "Sawyer" later gave to Mr. Cerf in part payment for the diamond.

Mr. Baldwin stated that he was somewhat suspicious of the transaction and that the first thing the next morning he called on the Chelsea Exchange Bank and there learned that the check was bogus, and then stopped payment on his \$500 check. "Sawyer" promised he would call on Mr. Baldwin that day and make further payment on the house.

A description of the articles taken from Mr. Cerf follows:

Fine perfect round diamond, weighing 3.30/100 carats.

"F. W. C. Nieberg," New York, 8-day chronometer, No. 210, with mahogany brass inlaid box 8½ inches high by 8 inches wide by 8 inches deep, 4½-inch dial. Lester Cerf, N. Y., stamped on key.

One pair of "Trieder" 6 power binoculars, No. 3743.

One pair of "B. & L. Ziess" 8 power binoculars. Gold open-face 12 size minute repeater stem-wind watch, case No. 129782, with "Huguenin Breguet" name on movement. Arabic dial with name "Lester Cerf, N. Y.," smooth polish.

Gold open-face 12 size 21 jewel "Agassiz" chronograph and register stem-wind watch, case No. 16309, movement No. 255723, smooth polish.

Should any of the seven above articles be offered for sale, jewelers are asked to

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2) [agassiz wittnauer 1925.JPG](#), downloaded 2110 times

"IT WAS a great responsibility," Miss Wittnauer's thoughts were with that first hard decision. "You see, the business was worth well over a million dollars. There was the famous Longines factory in Saint Imier for which we were American agents and importers. We were handling the Majestic and the Audemars Piguet, too. There were the Agassiz and Touchon factories which made our own watches. There were our offices in Geneva, Montreal, Chicago, and New York. Looking back, I don't see how I had the courage to step into the presidency."

3) [agassiz wittnauer tariff hearing 1913.JPG](#), downloaded 2132 times

TESTIMONY OF EMILE J. WITTNAUER, REPRESENTING A. WITTNAUER CO., 30 WEST THIRTY-SIXTH STREET, NEW YORK.

Mr. Emile J. Wittnauer was duly sworn by the chairman.

Mr. WITTNAUER. I have been in the Swiss watch business 25 years. I represent several Swiss watch factories. My firm has made Swiss watches for the last 50 years. We make the Longines, Agassiz, and Touchon. We believe in protection, but we do not believe in prohibition. The present duty on watches is slightly high. The specific duties are very confusing. The customhouse people make mistakes all the time. They overcharge for goods and then send back rebates afterwards. So we think it is highly confusing. I believe that an ad valorem duty is more advantageous for the general business. It used to be very successful before the McKinley bill. The duty on gold cases is rather high, at 40 per cent ad valorem. It costs in this country to make gold cases from \$2 to \$5. I do not think it is exactly fair to charge so much on gold, as most of the gold comes from the United States and is sent to Switzerland to be manufactured.
