Subject: Wristlet ???
Posted by Jenneke on Tue, 28 May 2013 21:20:52 GMT
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Model name : ??? (plate 24E???)
Type : wristlet
Period/date : ??? (1915 - 1925)
Gender : ladies

Case Maker : Gruen (cincinnati)
Case Material : 14 K.G.
Case Serial : 1022596
Case Style no : -

Caliber : 640 (10 1/2 L, 2 adj 15 jewels)
Movement Maker : ??? (Factory R)
Movement Serial: -

Bracelet : -

Other info :

File Attachments

1) front_res.jpg, downloaded 3527 times



2) caseback_res.jpg, downloaded 3498 times



3) movement_res.jpg, downloaded 3500 times



Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Thojil on Thu, 30 May 2013 09:36:33 GMT
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"Factory R". Fantastic, to me a new mystery manufacturer that I haven't seen so far. Most of them have been identified by now, except "Factory V".

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by C. Hurt on Thu, 30 May 2013 13:58:49 GMT
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Thojil wrote on Thu, 30 May 2013 04:36"Factory R". Fantastic, to me a new mystery manufacturer that I haven't seen so far. Most of them have been identified by now, except "Factory V".

I thought "V" was Villeret. If not, maybe "R" is Villeret's alter-ego, Rayville. Maybe.

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by JackW on Thu, 30 May 2013 14:43:19 GMT
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Jenneke, Do you have a shot of the pillar plate? Do you know the caliber number? 'R' is a new one to me too. Interesting.

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Thojil on Thu, 30 May 2013 14:44:13 GMT
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What I have found in Blancpain historical data is that Blancpain-Villeret was renamed into Rayville-Blancpain in June 1933, which looks to be a good 10-15 years after this wristlet was produced.

I agree that "Factory V" could be referring to Blancpain-Villeret however again according to their own historical data they didn't start supplying to Gruen until the mid 30's, which isn't matching with the calibers that carry this signature.

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Jenneke on Thu, 30 May 2013 18:21:02 GMT
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I gave this watch to my mum about one week ago. Running fine. At that time I had not looked inside. Two days ago she dropped it on the bathroom floor. After that it is running like crap. So, I opened the case and found out that "Gold colored" was solid gold and that it was of an unknown factory! Surprise.

Quote:Most of them have been identified by now,
Factory D still has to be identified (see VWF)!

Quote:Do you have a shot of the pillar plate?
You mean that part under the dial? No, but I think it will go to a watchmaker. Can try if he if willing to make a picture.

Quote:Do you know the caliber number?
No, that is why it is in de Identification forum
I do not see a caliber number and can't match it with movements in the Gruen material catalogues. I hoped some (one?) of you would recognize it. R for Rolex?

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by JackW on Thu, 30 May 2013 18:33:26 GMT
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Jenneke wrote on Thu, 30 May 2013 18:21 R for Rolex?
You should roll your eyes. No.

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Thojil on Fri, 31 May 2013 17:50:59 GMT
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I'm stranded in Frankfurt airport for 5 hours waiting for my connecting flight to Geneva So to make good use of otherwise lost time I did some more digging into this factory letter mystery.

I looked again at all the companies that were part of the Union Horlogère in the period that Gruen was also a member of this joint venture and found the movement manufacturer Robert Frères, Villeret (from 1929 Minerva SA).

Given the letter logic for all the other confirmed movement suppliers, I'm pretty confident that we can assume that "Factory R" is Robert Frères, Villeret.

I recall that Robert Frères was previously suggested for "Factory D" however your movement find makes this assumption less likely to me now. There was however an ebauche manufacturer called "Duret & Colonnaz, Geneve" that was also a member of the Union Horlogère. Maybe this company is "Factory D"?

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by JackW on Fri, 31 May 2013 18:02:24 GMT
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It wasn't Robert Frères suggested for factory 'D' it was Font Roberts a branch of Fontainemelon. It looks like Robert Frères is a different company completely. I think you might be on to something with this connection. Are there similar movements?

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Bazzab on Fri, 31 May 2013 20:23:07 GMT
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Thojil wrote on Fri, 31 May 2013 17:50I'm stranded in Frankfurt airport for 5 hours waiting for my connecting flight to Geneva So to make good use of otherwise lost time I did some more digging into this factory letter mystery.

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I really hope you get stuck in Airports more often, because this is fantastic stuff
Well Done! Great research!
B

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by JackW on Fri, 31 May 2013 20:39:47 GMT
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Here is the post of WUS where Dr. Ranfft posts about Font Roberts:
http://forums.watchuseek.com/f11/any-gruen-103-620-out-there -767146.html

Here is the one from eBay that is marked as "Factory D"

What Dr. R. shows is slightly smaller, but there is more than just a passing similarity to the two movements. Hence this is my basis for associating Factory 'D' with Font Roberts.

File Attachments
1) pilfered_Fact_D.jpg, downloaded 3137 times



Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Jenneke on Sat, 01 Jun 2013 09:12:22 GMT
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Looking all over the internet but can't find good pictures/patents of movements from Robert Frères (minverva/montblanc).

Did find a modern one (62-00) that is inspired on the old models. This one has some resemblance with the unknown Factory R movement.

File Attachments

1) minerva-62-00.jpg, downloaded 3020 times



Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Jenneke on Tue, 01 Oct 2013 19:13:53 GMT
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Quote: Do you have a shot of the pillar plate?

Not from my watch, but there is one on ebay that is very similar (not having factory R)! See item: 190901393235

Any new thoughts?

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Thojil on Tue, 01 Oct 2013 20:56:15 GMT
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Looks like a match to me. If the dial is right then the movement is a cal 640. I have quite a few pocket watches from the same era where the caliber is stamped in the dial back.

Subject: Re: Wristlet ???
Posted by Jenneke on Fri, 29 Nov 2013 23:04:14 GMT
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I bought that spare movement from my Gruen 2013 contest prize money! Hope to find a clue under the main or barrel bridge for the maker of the caliber 640...