

GG

The Watch That Saved the Swiss Watch Industry



Did Gérald Genta Design the Swatch?

"Indeed, Gérald told me about this watch. But it wasn't made for Swatch. You have to ask Omega about it."

- Evelyne Genta, December 2022



GG REF. 135.017 SP

I purchased the watch documented herein, henceforth referred to as GG, on Nov. 13, 2022.

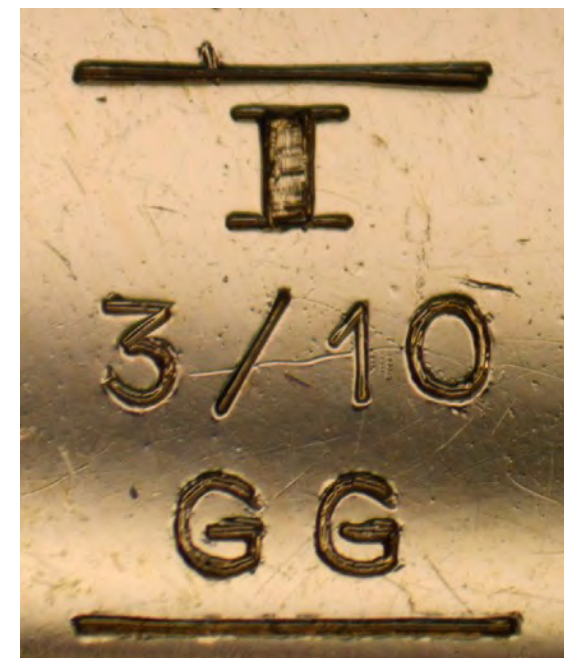
This document is a speculative evidence-based analysis of it as of June 14, 2023.

- It is a solid 18K gold monocoque case with a unique crab stamp containing an Omega movement.
- It is engraved with an Omega reference but appears similar to the now classic Swatch case design.
- It has an 18K gold pin buckle identical to the reference Swatch buckle with the same unique crab stamp.

The GG's 18K Solid Gold Monocoque Case



crab
(stamped)



GG signature
(pantograph)



Ref.135.017 SP

What do the Initials GG Stand For?

From the moment I first saw a photo of the GG I was struck by the possibility that "GG" represented Gérald Genta's signature, however, other inferences or facts may ultimately explain the letters, including Gelb Gold (yellow gold), Guillod-Günther (a precious metal case-maker at the time), or another meaning.

In theory it could even represent Swatch nomenclature: the Swatch's two-letter naming convention uses a "G" to signify Gentlemen's and "L" to signify Ladies'. So, for example, GB100 was the name given to the first Gentlemen's Black Swatch and LB100 to the first Ladies' Black Swatch. "GG" could therefore simply represent "Gentlemen's Gold."



GG caseback markings

[watch my video about this](#)

The Reference Number

REF. 135.017 SP belongs to a 1966 Omega C-Shaped Gérald Genta case design.

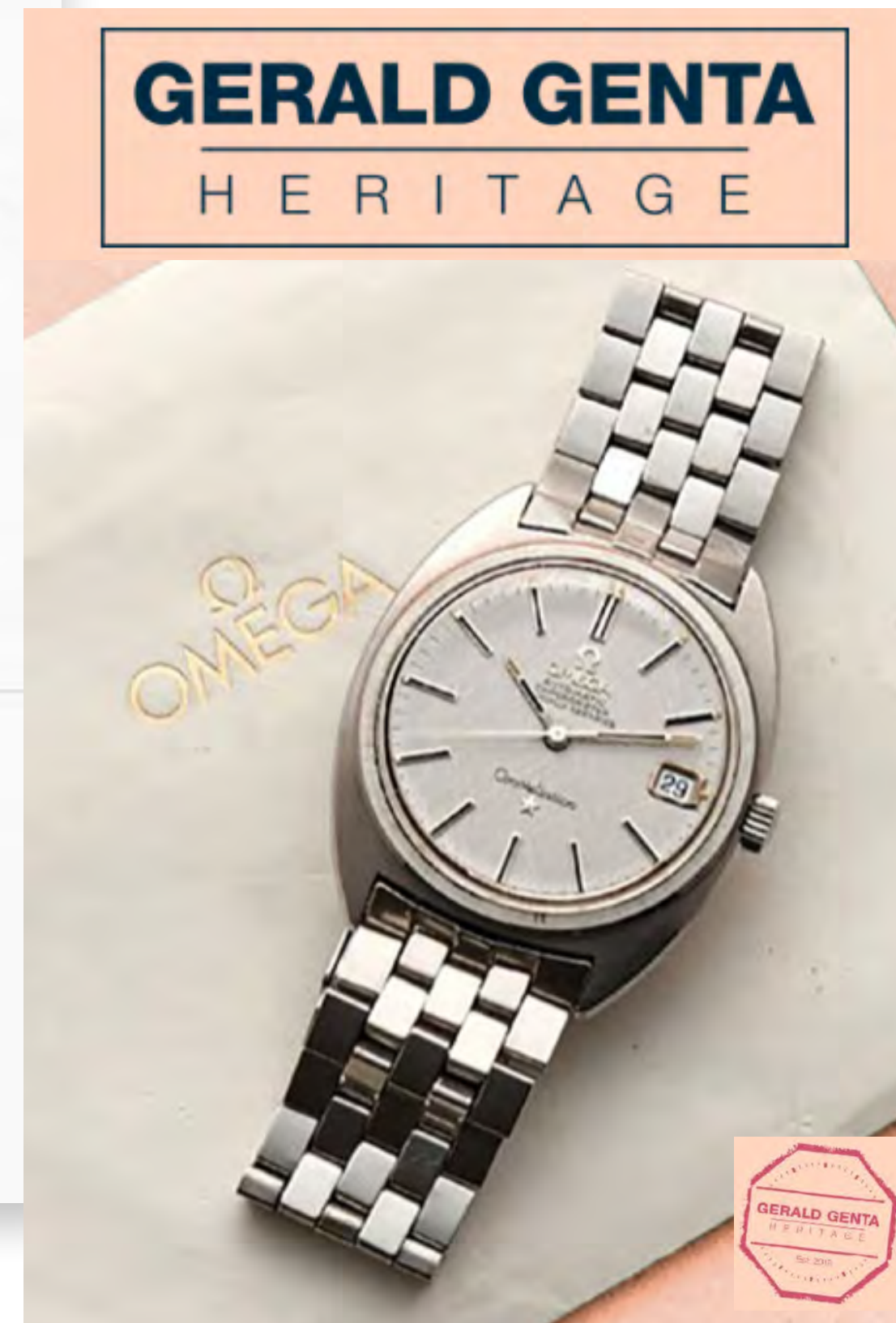


SEAMASTER

1966

COSMIC

ST 135.0017



Omega Seamaster Cosmic monocoque case Ref. 135.017 SP

source: [Gerald Genta Heritage website](https://www.geraldgentaheritage.com/)

The GG's Movement Cut-Out



GG

Ref.135.017 SP

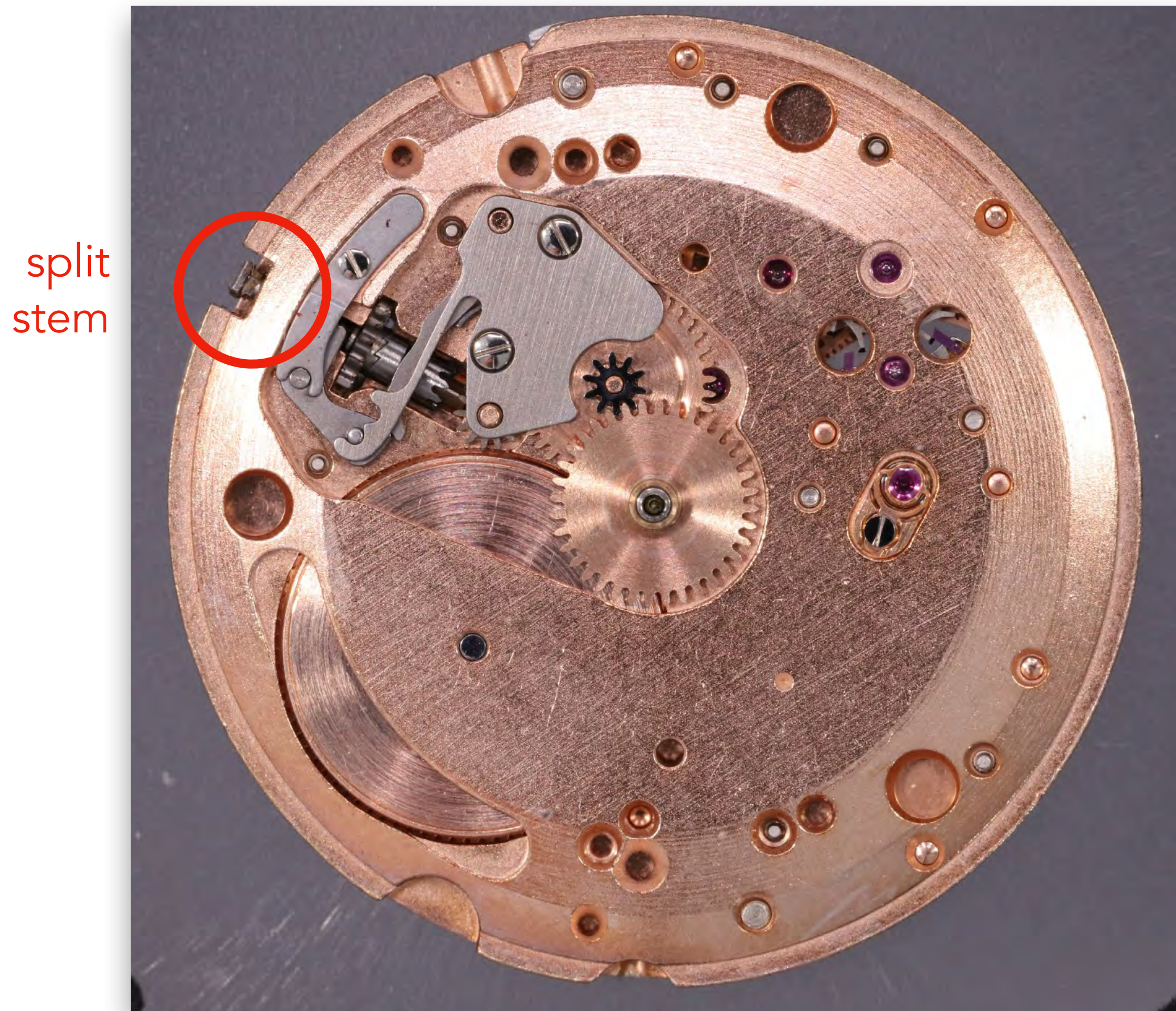


1966 Omega Seamaster Cosmic

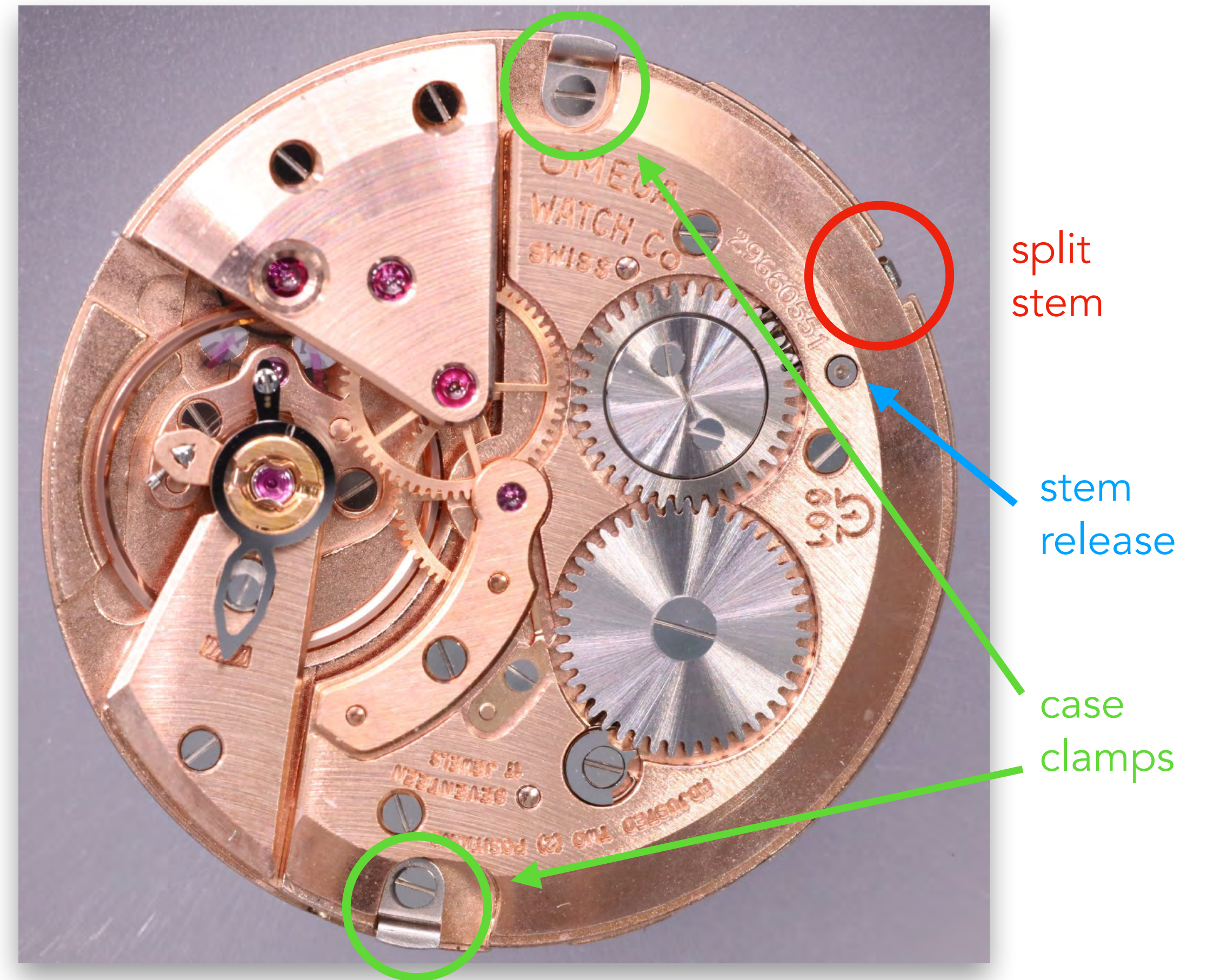
The GG's movement cut-out is functionally equivalent to the Omega case Ref. 135.017 SP, including the two release notches that are related to front access to the movement.

The GG's Actual Omega Cal. 601 Movement

The Cal. 601 was used in Omega's 1966 Seamaster Cosmic. Its production ended in 1970.



Dial Side



Case Side

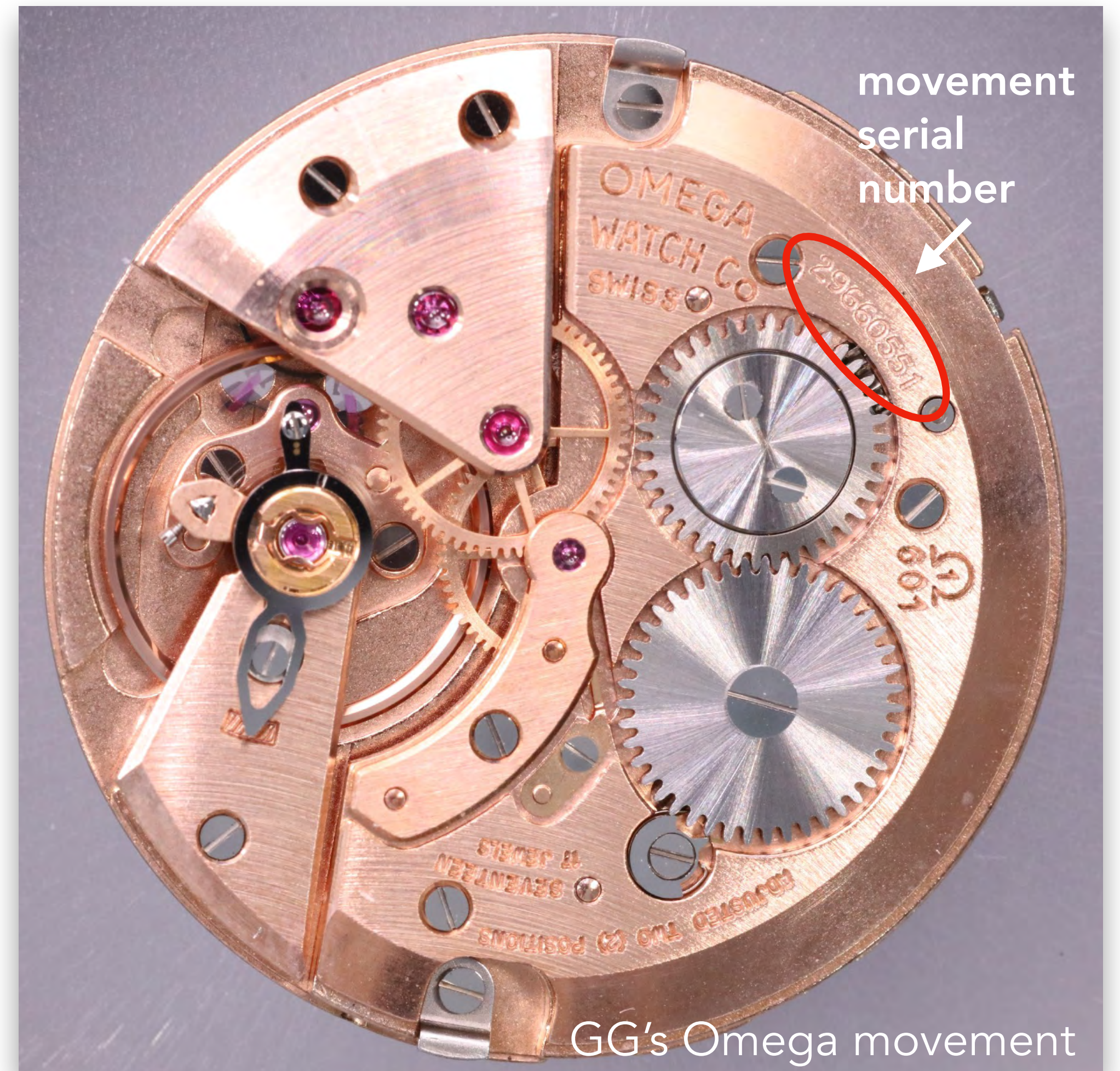


The GG Fitted With An Original 1966 Omega Seamaster Cosmic Dial 8

What's in the Omega Archives?

Loïc Voumard, Omega's Head of Brand Heritage, inspected the GG and has confirmed that the GG's Omega Cal. 601 is authentic and appears in the archives as having been sent to Omega's case division in March 1970 as a *spare part*.

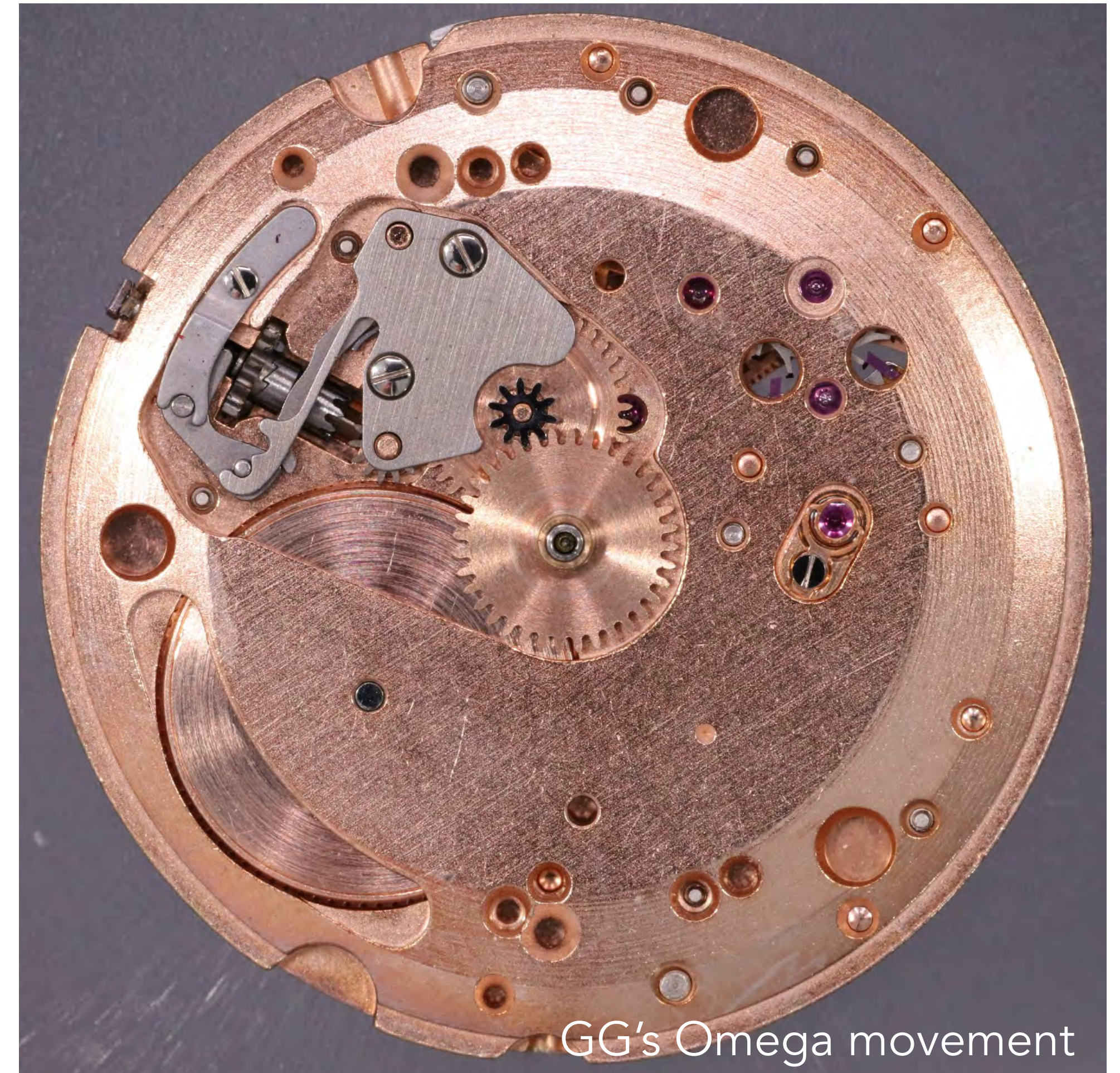
From Omega's archival records we do know that this movement was put into the GG after March 1970. However, the Cal. 601 was in production from 1962 to 1970. The case being designed for the Cal. 601 only dates the case itself to 1962 or later.



Omega used special bridges with a prototype serial number on prototypes. The GG's bridge is a not such a bridge.

What Does the Movement Tell Us?

Philippe Marti, Swatch Archive Manager and Historian (since 2013), examined the GG and also concluded that the Omega Cal. 601 movement in the GG is authentic and that the case is clearly designed for the movement, further concluding that the case can not be a Swatch prototype. He assured me, as others have, that it has never been allowed by Swatch Group to put any Omega movement in a Swatch - not even a prototype - and it also makes no sense to do that, because ETA was and still is a movement manufacturer itself.

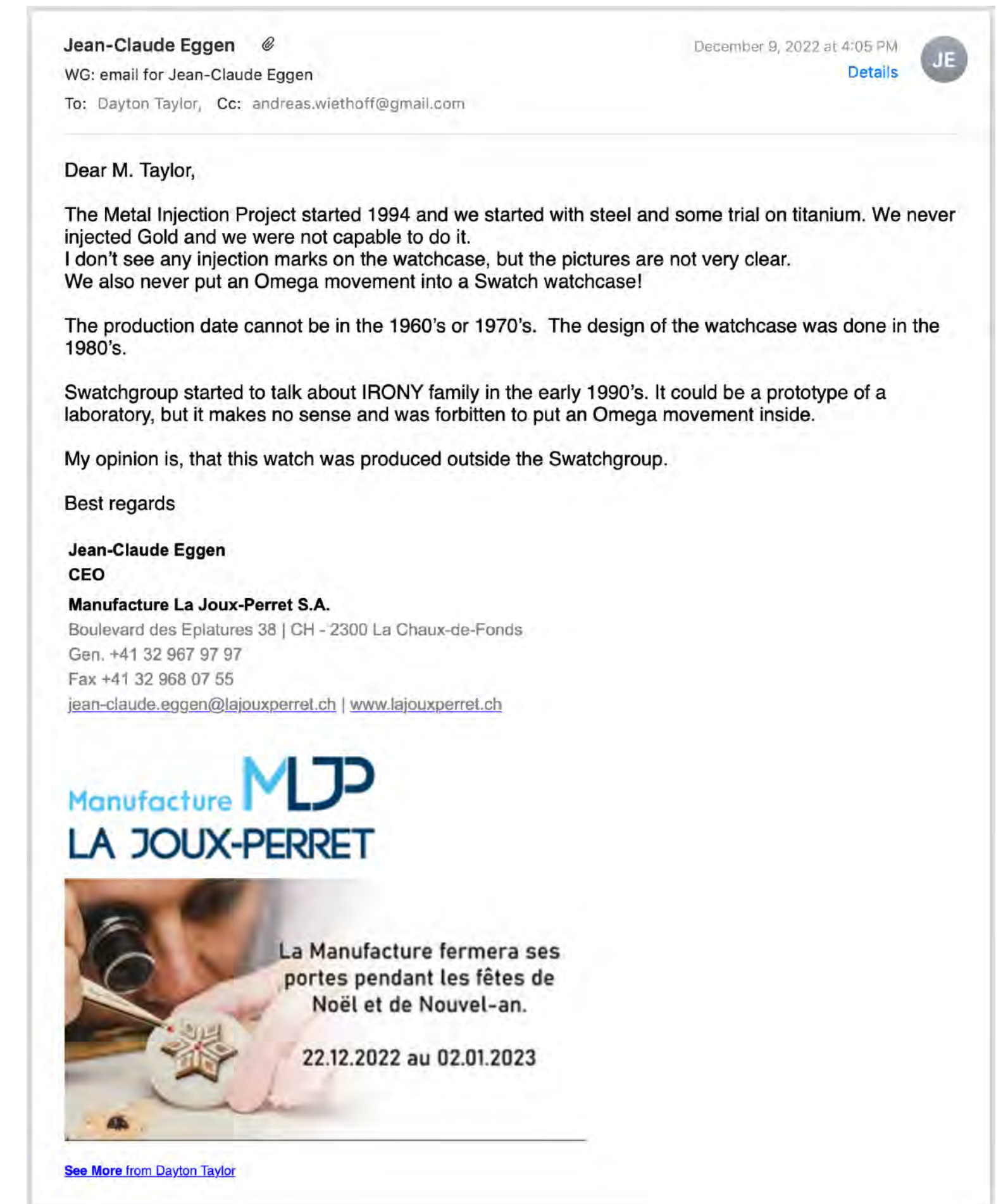


ETA Plant Manager, Metal Injection Molding

Jean-Claude Eggen, now CEO of the manufacturer La Joux-Perret, held management positions at ETA and then Swatch between 1992 and 2020 - including Plant Manager, Metal Injection Molding from 1994 to 1998.

Andreas Wiethoff (Stay Tuned to Swatch) kindly introduced me to Mr. Eggen. Mr. Eggen wrote back that it was forbidden at Swatch to put any Omega movement in any Swatch case - even a prototype.

Mr. Eggen states plainly that the Swatch case design was from the 1980s, but that is of course the challenge that the GG itself presents: is the GG evidence that its case and buckle design predated the Swatch?



1982 Swatch GT 100

First Swatch design released - market tested in Texas in October 1982



1993 Swatch Trésor Magique

Limited edition of 12,999 pieces
100,000,000 Swatches had been
sold by the end of 1992



Side-by-Side



GG



1993 Swatch Trésor Magique



Omega Archives - The Seamaster Cosmic



SEAMASTER

1966

COSMIC

ST 135.0017



GG with Seamaster Cosmic dial

The Omega Seamaster Cosmic: hewn from a solid gold (or steel) ingot. Water-resistant, calendar, automatic or manually wound. In gold, gold-plated or steel.

The new Seamaster Cosmic, hewn from a solid gold or steel ingot, brings you Omega sturdiness and precision

From every angle, the Seamaster Cosmic's modern appeal stands out. Its one-piece watertight case shields it from shocks, dust and water.

■ Before placing the new Seamaster Cosmic in your window, feel its weight in your hand. No wonder it is heavy: you are holding a solid gold or steel case, hewn right from the ingot. Notice the thickness that protects it from any possible mishap: armor-solid, more than able to withstand the most violent blows.

Made to last. And yet the massive, handsome lines have their own elegance.

■ See how the crystal is tightly lodged in the case, as if it formed part of it. It can only be removed with a special tool. The winding crown, too, is protected by a joint made of a special synthetic material.

■ This solid mass houses the ultra-precise Omega movement and gives it total protection against shocks, dust and water. Added advantage: the bevelled case back fits tightly on the wrist. Dynamic, purposeful men, all those who live intensely, will appreciate this new model which adds impact to your Omega collection.

■ Quality guaranteed in 156 countries. Omega World-wide service is carried out only by trained specialists - thoroughly qualified to advise you. And the Omega guarantee is valid in 156 countries around the earth.

■ Omega and American astronauts. The very first American space walker wore an Omega Speedmaster. An exceptionally sturdy watch was a must for this space pioneer. And an Omega, a strictly normal, "off-the-counter" model, was chosen for this space test. Outside the space suit, in a near-absolute vacuum, despite enormous temperature changes, the watch behaved... quite normally. Since this historic space walk, an Omega is standard equipment for every American astronaut. Omega has the confidence of the world.

OMEGA

Omega Archives - The Seamaster Cosmic 2000



SEAMASTER

1972

COSMIC 2000

ST 366.0825



GG with Seamaster Cosmic dial



The Design History of the Swatch

Marlyse Schmid and Bernhard Müller

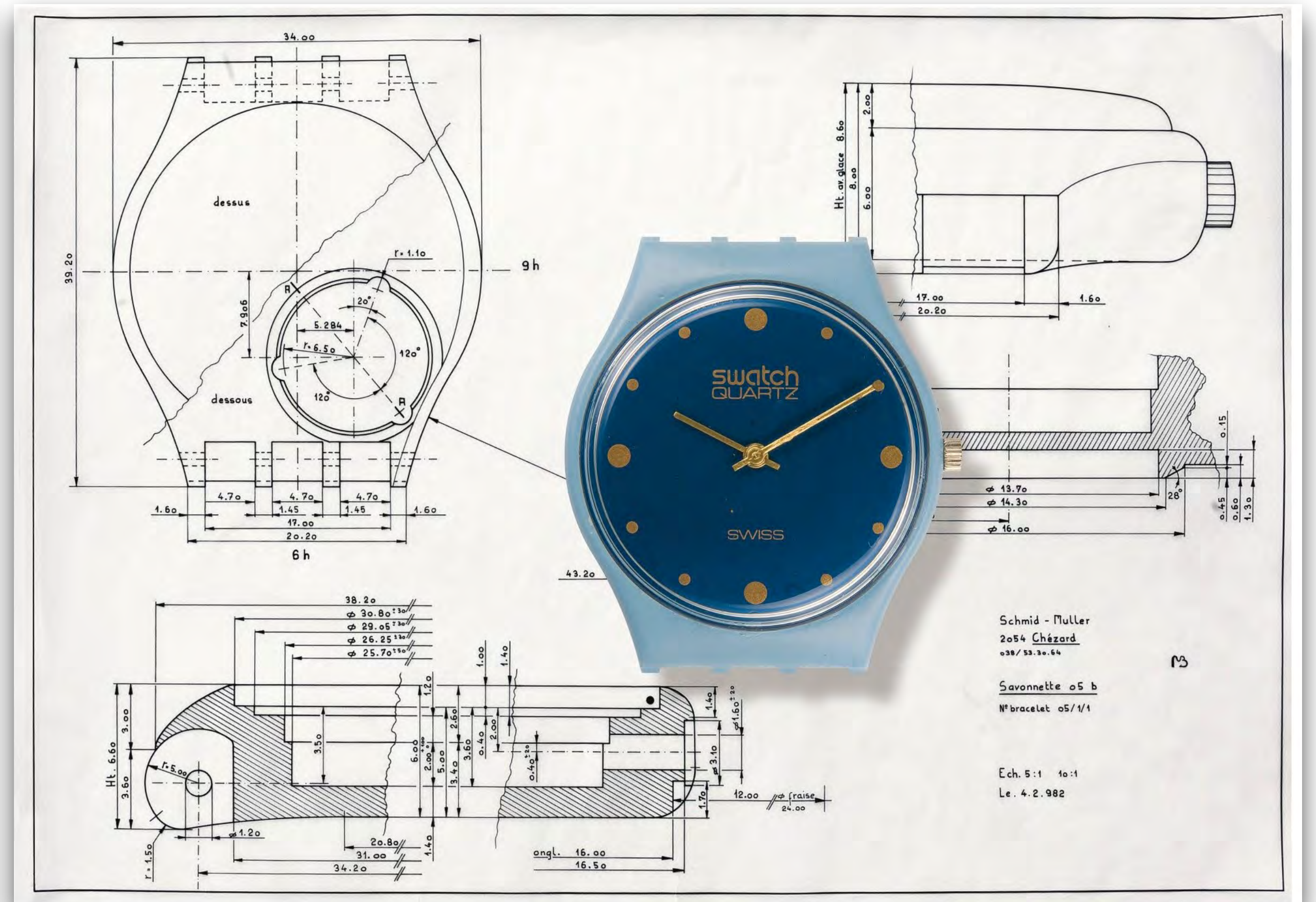
The contribution of Marlyse Schmid and Bernhard Müller to Swatch



It is impossible to list all the achievements which have been made by Marlyse Schmid and Bernhard Müller. If Elmar Mock and Jacques Müller represent the inventors of Swatch, Marlyse Schmid and Bernhard Müller can be described as the ones who gave Swatch its identity. They designed the final version of the casing: the shape and the two additional bridges for stabilizing the mount of the strap, which is one of the main characteristics of Swatch watches. They have designed almost all dials from 1981 prototypes up to

1986 market models, integrating in a very intelligent way the fluctuations in style and changes in color preferences through the 1980ies.

Even the Swatch logo has been created by them, which is one of the easiest recognizable logos along with the one from Coca-Cola. But also the Swatch logo passed a transformation phase during 1982 before becoming the one which we all happen to know.



from: <https://swatchprototypes.com/schmid-muller-design/>

1982 Swatch case design. Image credit: Schmid-Müller Design

Swatch Prototypes "Vulgaris" and "Zaugg"

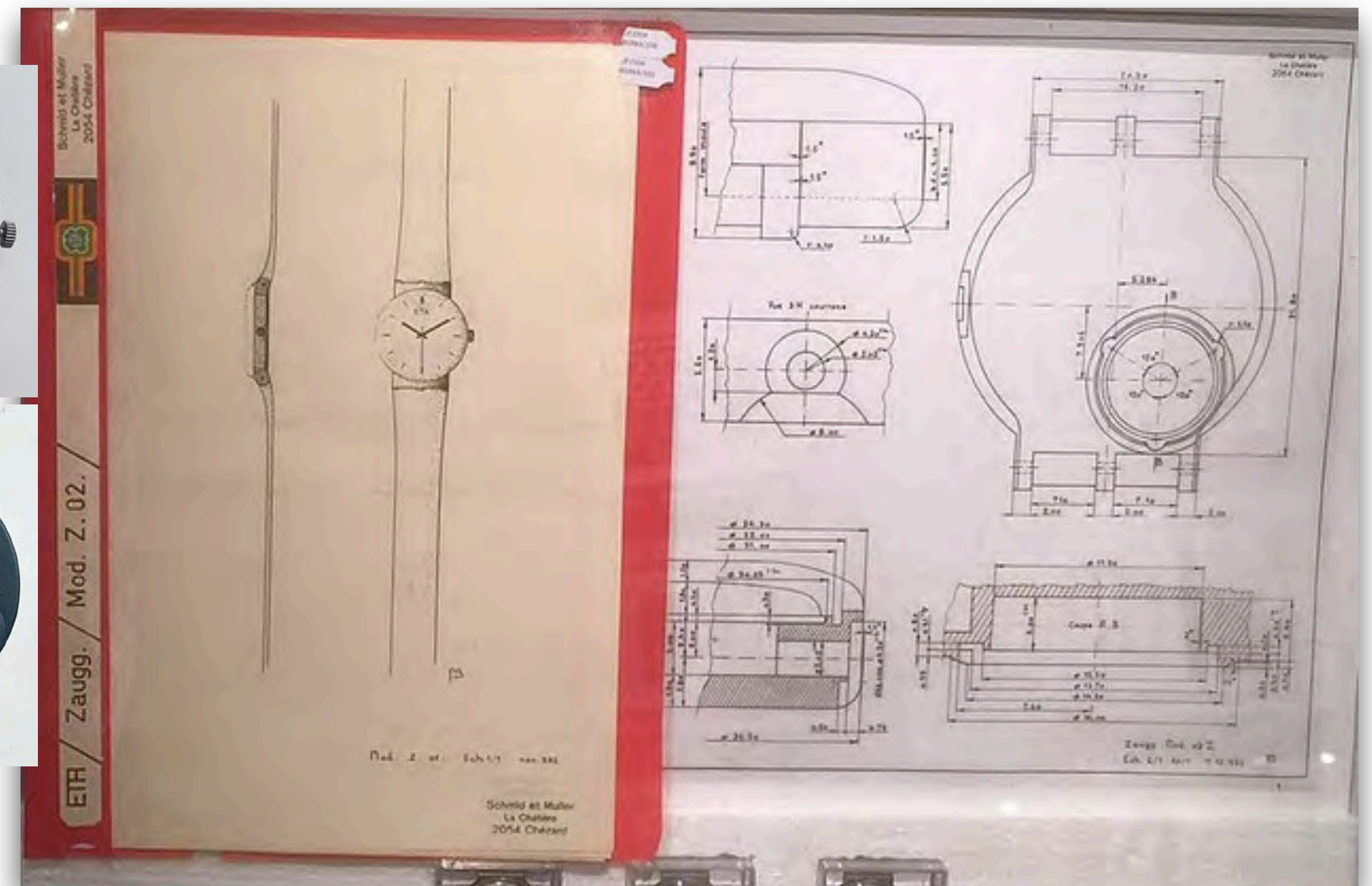
Engineers and designers including the Schmid-Müllers, Elmar Mock, Jacques Müller, and Hans Zaugg experimented with lug design in the early plastic Swatch case designs. The 1981 "Zaugg" Z. 02. design incorporated a single mid-lug reinforcement bridge. Two bridges were used in the final Swatch case design.



Hand-Made 1980 "Vulgaris" prototype without lug bridges
from: https://www.stay-tuned-to-sw.de/schmid_muller.html



1981
"Zaugg" prototype
from my own collection

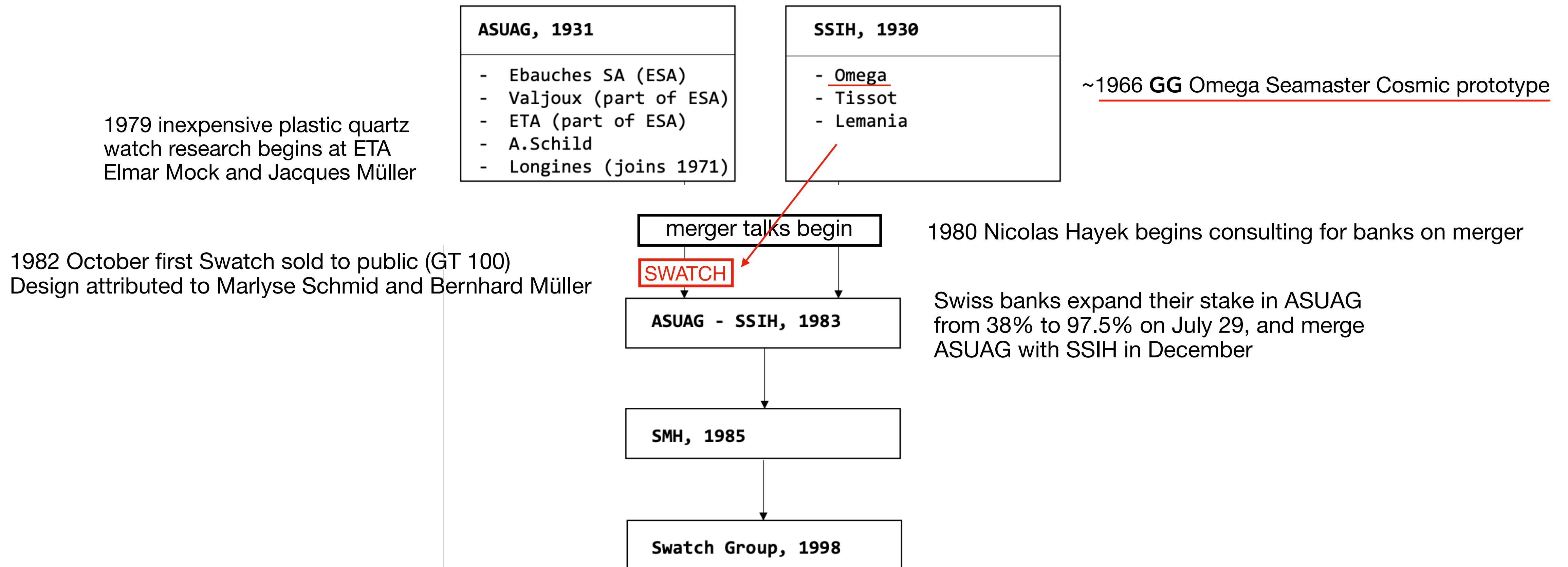


1981 "Zaugg" drawing (Z. 02.)
from: <https://www.swatchprototypes.com>

Swatch Corporate History

How might the Omega GG design have ended up at Swatch?

Swatch Group Organization Merger Timeline



Sources (edited): swatchgroup.com, omegaprototypes.com, watch-wiki.net

Swatch Development History

Top Secret

The Swatch was developed in extreme secrecy, not because anything nefarious was going on, but because it was an important project for the Swiss banks, the ASUAG member companies, and ultimately the SSIH member companies as well. The Swatch was aimed at gaining back market share from the Japanese watch industry. It was secret for competitive reasons and one can presume that all parties involved had a strong sense of duty to keep it a secret. **One of the problems with secrets is that keeping them can lead to lies that then also must be kept secret.**

Whatever the origin story of the GG is, Omega almost certainly owned its design outright regardless of who designed it. Omega ended up under the ownership of the merged ASUAG / SSIH in 1983, and subsequently the Swatch Group. Swatch Group never had any obligation to credit any individual designers of any of its cases. Schmid-Müller were involved in the Swatch's external case design, but others including Elmar Mock and Jacques Müller were involved in its internal design. There's no reason the GG design couldn't also be referenced. All of the designers had waived any rights they may have had to their designs to either ASUAG or SSIH.

[watch my video about this](#)

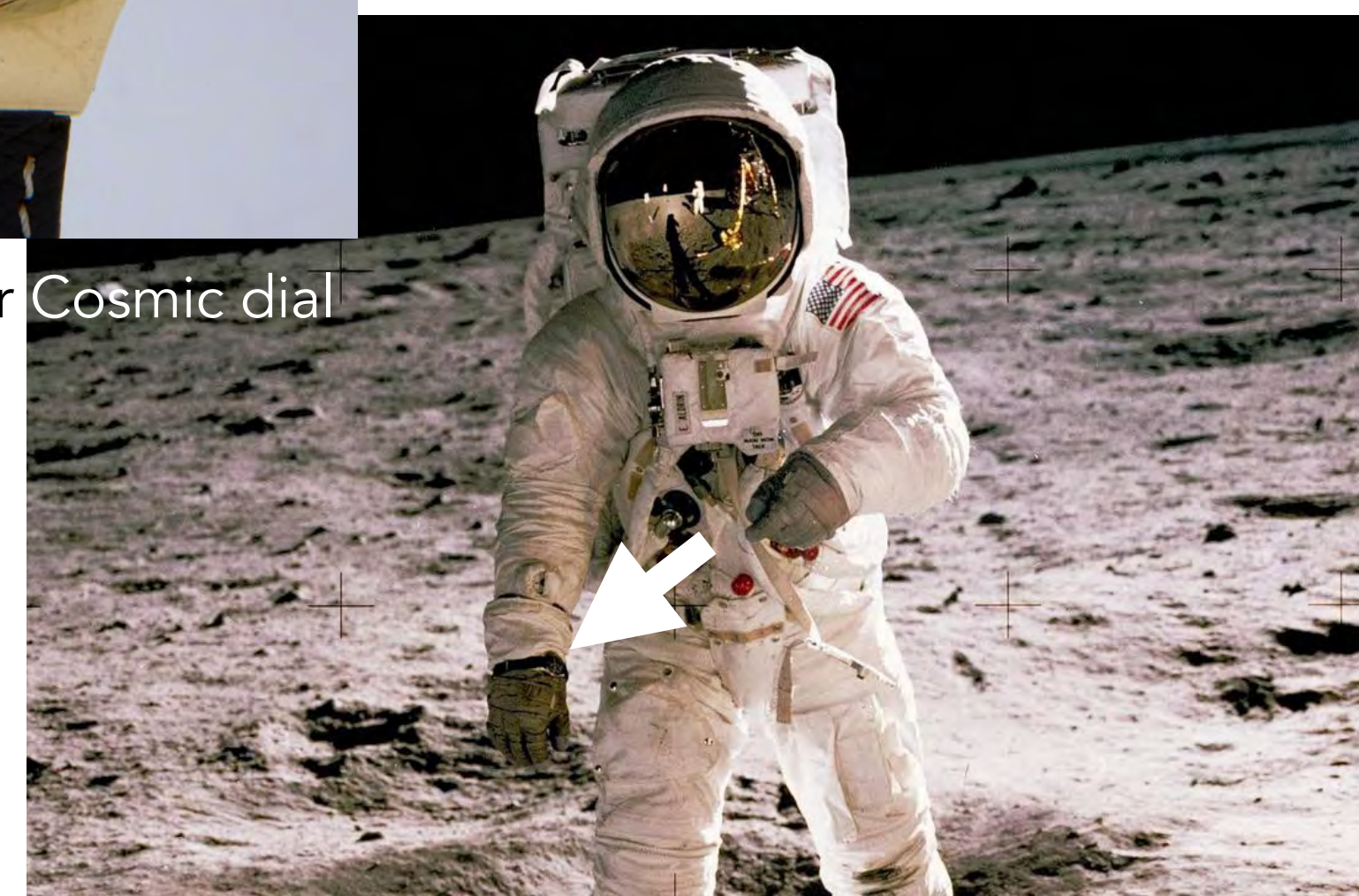
Omega and Space Exploration

In 1965 the first Omega Speedmaster was worn by an American astronaut in space. The Omega Seamaster Cosmic embraced this exciting new relationship with NASA. With its monohull design and tool-fitted crystal it was extremely watertight and pressure resistant. If the GG was indeed a prototype for the Seamaster Cosmic its smooth outer shape is an inspired design that is even less likely than the Genta-designed "C-Shaped" production version to slice into a space suit or ding critical equipment.

The GG's design also happened to be perfect for the Swatch: a timeless, futuristic neutral shape that would be decorated with colorful materials, hands, and dials applied to its strap, case, and movement and then permanently welded shut.



GG with Seamaster Cosmic dial



Buzz Aldrin on the moon, July 20, 1969

The Monocoque 1966 Seamaster Cosmic Case

Most watch case blanks are stamped out of rolled metal plates, not "hewn from solid gold ingots." However, the pockets under the GG's shrouds can not be stamped or machined. The GG was likely poured as a solid gold ingot so that its shrouded lugs could be formed in the mold and the remainder of its shape machined from the molded ingot.

Was the release version of the 135.017 SP formed from an ingot? Perhaps, but it is a design that could have been entirely stamped and machined.

[watch my video about this](#)

135.017 SP lugs



The Omega Seamaster Cosmic: hewn from a solid gold (or steel) ingot. Water-resistant, calendar, automatic or manually wound. In gold, gold-plated or steel.

The new Seamaster Cosmic, hewn from a solid gold or steel ingot, brings you Omega sturdiness and precision

From every angle, the Seamaster Cosmic's modern appeal stands out. Its one-piece watertight case shields it from shocks, dust and water.

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Made to last. And yet the massive, handsome lines have their own elegance.

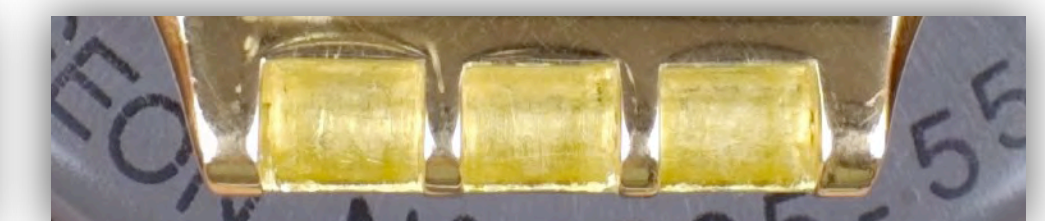
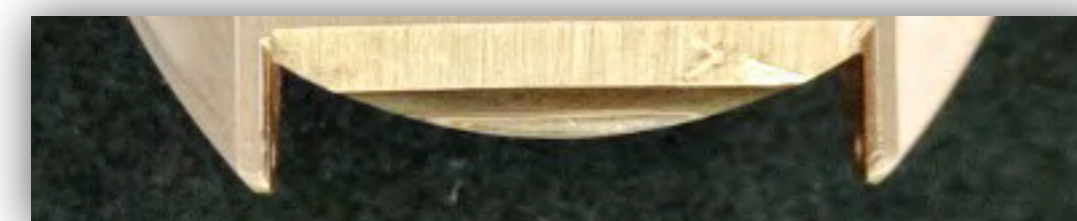
- See how the crystal is tightly lodged in the case, as if it formed part of it. It can only be removed with a special tool. The winding crown, too, is protected by a joint made of a special synthetic material.
- This solid mass houses the ultra-precise Omega movement and gives it total protection against shocks, dust and water. Added advantage: the bevelled case back fits tightly on the wrist. Dynamic, purposeful men, all those who live intensely, will

appreciate this new model which adds impact to your Omega collection.

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the-counter" model, was chosen for this space test. Outside the space suit, in a near-absolute vacuum, despite enormous temperature changes, the watch behaved... quite normally. Since this historic space walk, an Omega is standard equipment for every American astronaut. Omega has the confidence of the world.

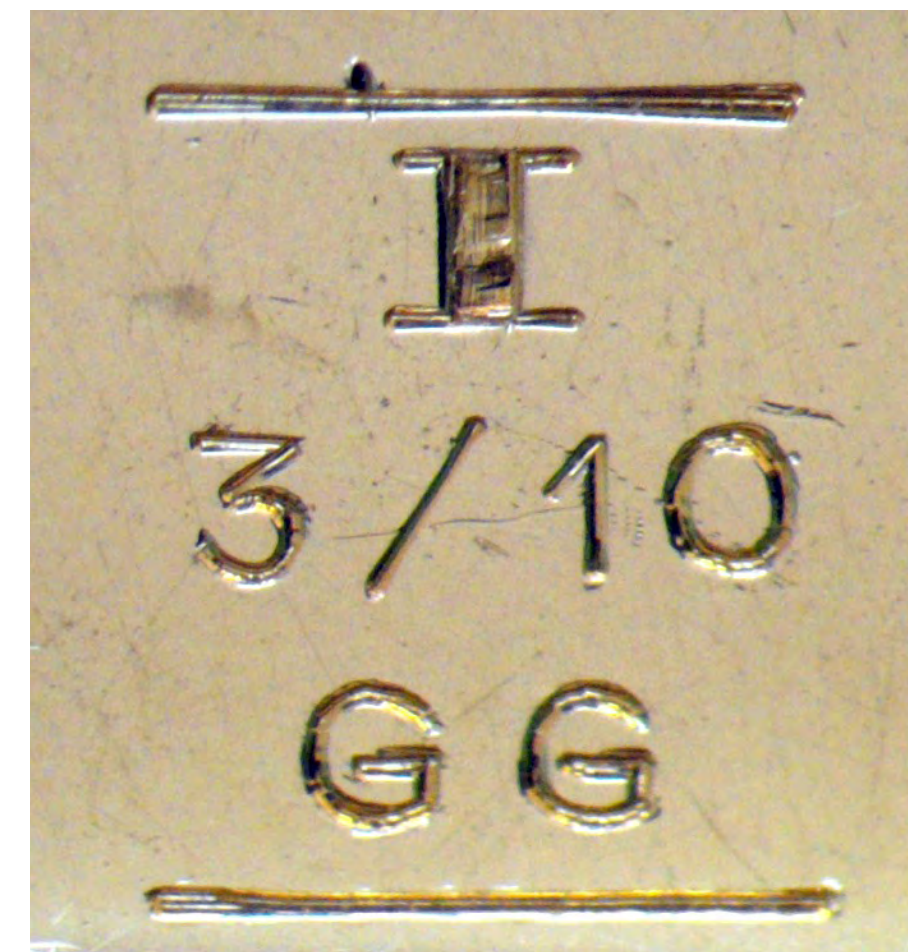


GG lugs

The GG's Case Stamps

Will the GG's markings reveal its designer?

Possibly. The markings each have unique features that can potentially be cross-referenced with other artifacts and archival records.

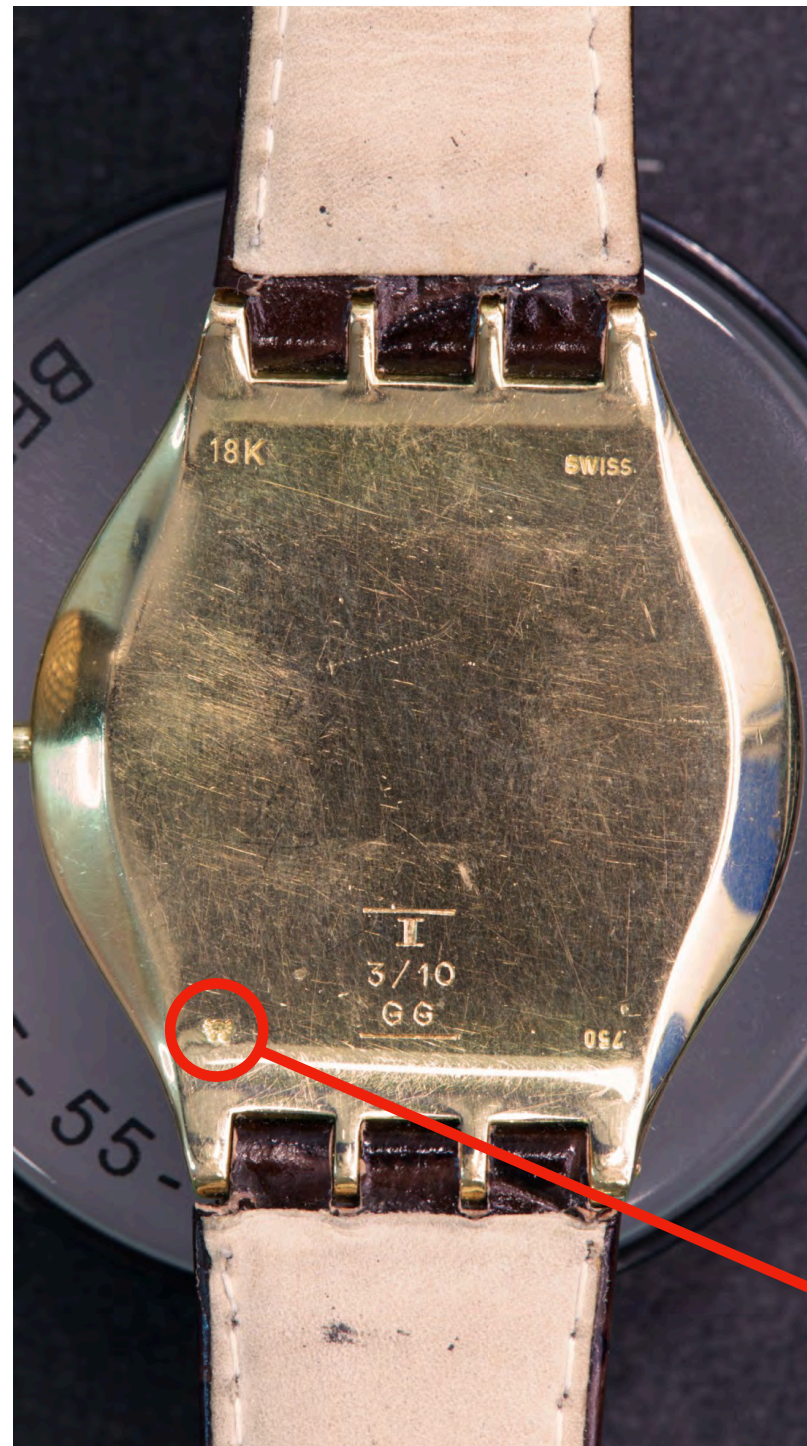


The GG's Gold Case - Historical and Forensic Clues

- Gérald Genta is known to have worked on the Seamaster case design for Omega in the 1960s.
- In 1969 Gérald Genta opened his own workshop for prototype manufacture in the neighborhood of St. Jean in Geneva. However he did not register his now famous GG trademark (with the second G reversed) as a precious metal responsibility mark until December 15, 1971.
- Established casemakers have casemaker marks. The GG was not marked with a casemaker's mark unless the initials "GG" or the crab stamp is a casemaker's mark. The absence of an established casemaker's mark is unusual, but perhaps less so if the GG is a 1960s Genta prototype.
- The font of the reference number inside the GG is different from the outside markings. The movement cut-out may have been cut by a different casemaker than the outside shape.
- The designer may have worked with an outside casemaker and then added the designer's own marks to the outside of the case. The crab stamp in particular suggests a post manufacture mark stamped by the designer because it is on both the case and the buckle.

Is the GG's Unique Crab Stamp a Clue?

Many of Gérald Genta's designs are known to have been inspired by nature and animals. The GG is a monohull case. The GG's crab stamp is likely related to this. The Rolex Oyster case design is based on an oyster shell, which has a top piece and a bottom piece and opens around its perimeter where the two pieces meet. Crab shells are different: they are monohull shells like the GG. Actual crabs have eight legs in addition to their pincers. The six-legged crab stamp on the GG appears to be a reference to the case itself rather than its designer, relating both to its monocoque shell and to its shrouded lugs with their three separate joints on each side for attaching the three "legs" of a leather strap or a hinged bracelet.



A Hallmark Expert's Opinion

David Boettcher is an Engineer in the UK that has catalogued case-maker stamps and hallmarks over the past two decades. David wrote about the GG, "The mark on the back that you say might be a casemaker's mark is I think right."

David noted that the missing Helvetia head hallmark for 18K gold would have been added by the Swiss bureau de contrôle, not by the manufacturer, and that 3/10mm was the minimum gold thickness allowed in Switzerland in the 1960s. If the GG was a prototype that did not go on the market it would not need to be hallmarked. The back of its case is 14/10 (1.4) mm at its thinnest.

* [David Boettcher](#), by email, Dec. 14, 2022

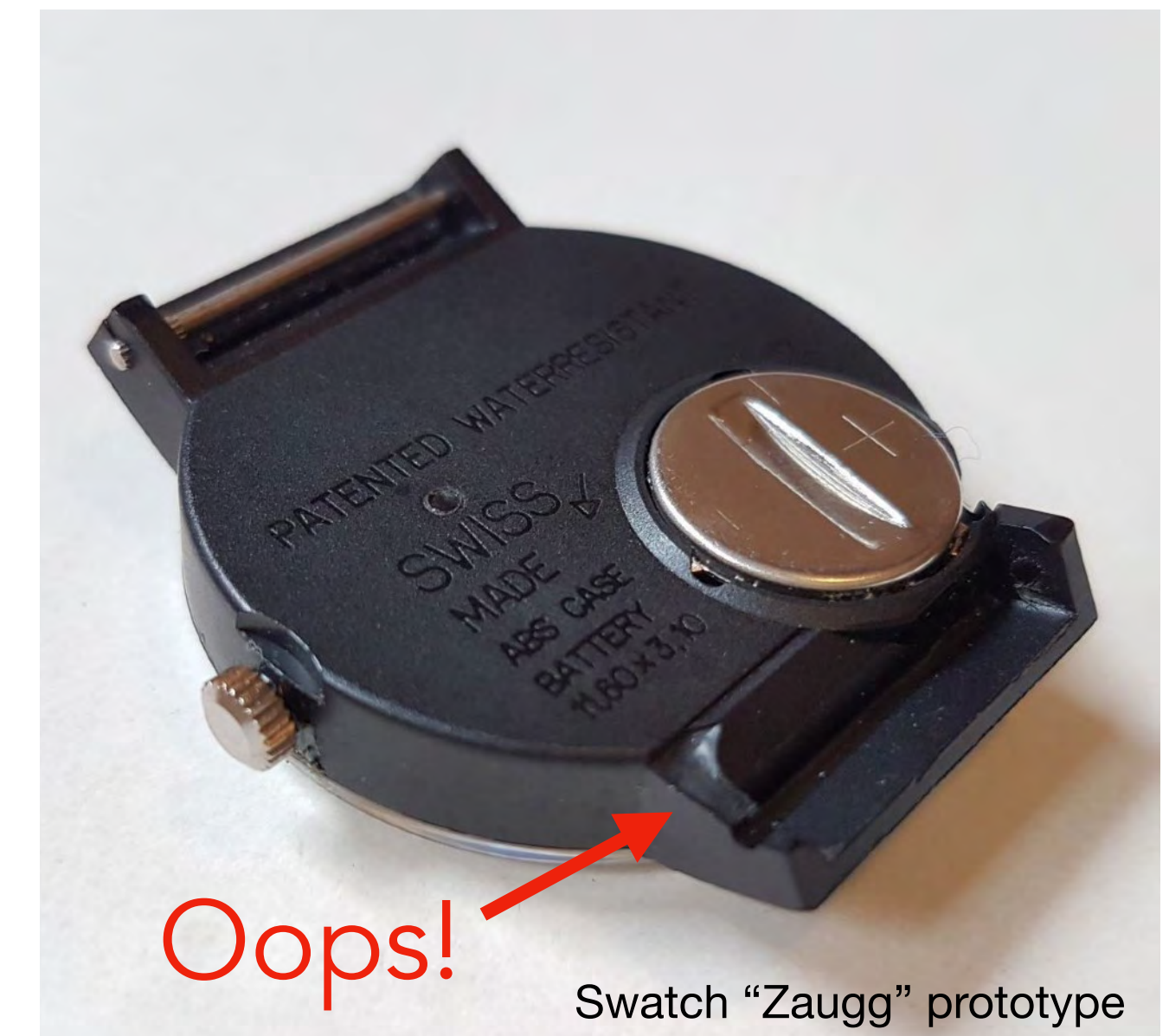
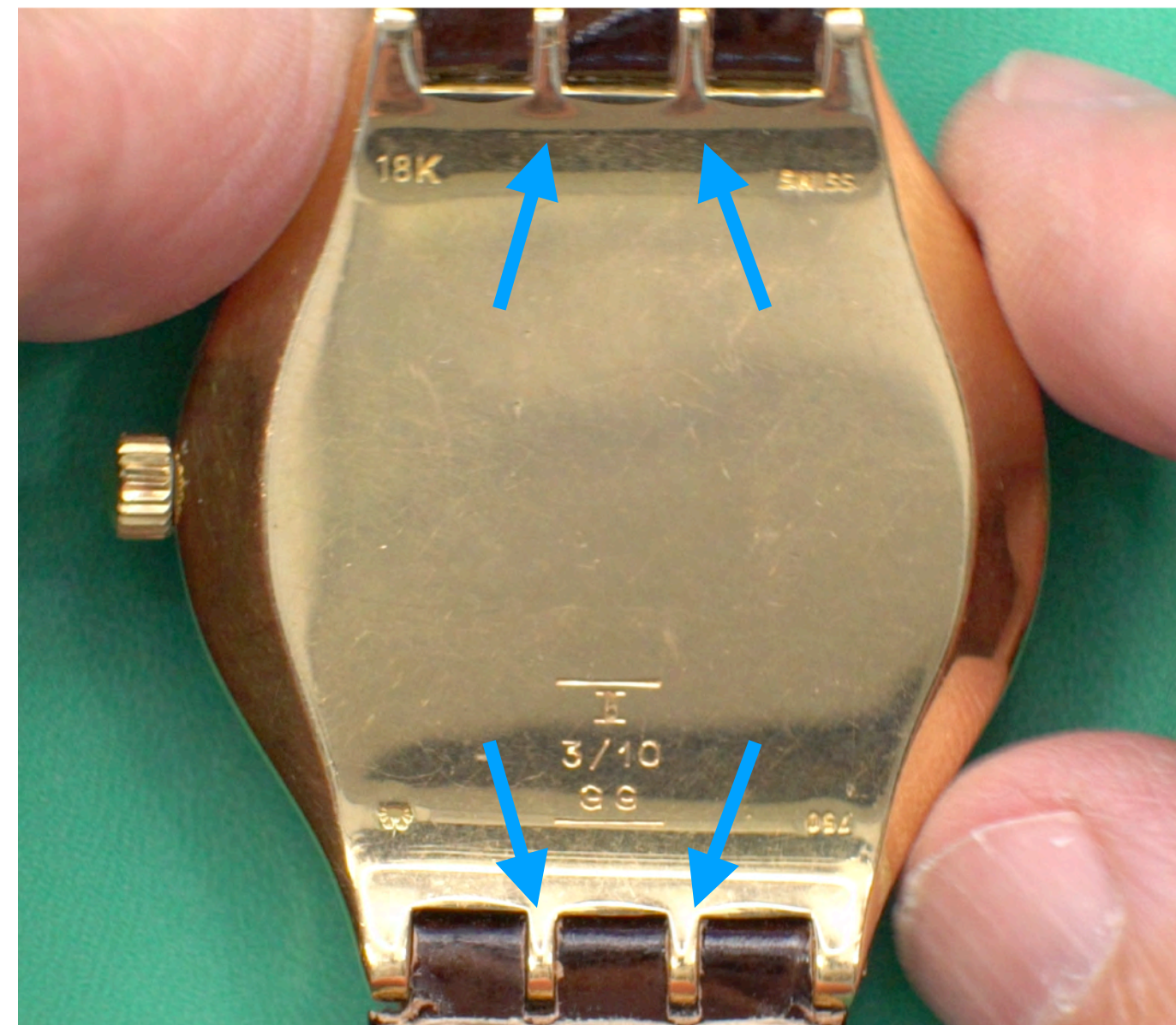


missing official hallmark

GG caseback markings

Shrouded Lugs with Two Extra Bridges

The bridges on the GG support its soft gold split screw bars and connect a strap or bracelet.



This design also happens to be perfect for a plastic case because of the extra support bridges.

Gérald Genta was known to have designed cases that could be manufactured with structural integrity. In the mid-1960s he was also beginning to design integrated bracelet cases. Was the GG's double-bridged shrouded lugs design one of Genta's first integrated bracelet designs? The "SP" insignia in the reference number implies that the GG was a "strap" version, which in turn implies that a bracelet version may have been prototyped as well.

The GG's Buckle and Free Ring



The GG's buckle is stamped with the crab and 750. Its free ring is only stamped 750.

750 (18K) Gold Stamp Mismatch

Under a microscope it's clear that the 750 gold stamp on the pin buckle was made with a different punch than the case and free ring. These punches were probably used over many years on many different watch case parts and those same details should therefore match other artifacts. The GG's stamps may eventually date not just the buckle but also the case and free ring.

[watch my video about this](#)



Case



Free Ring



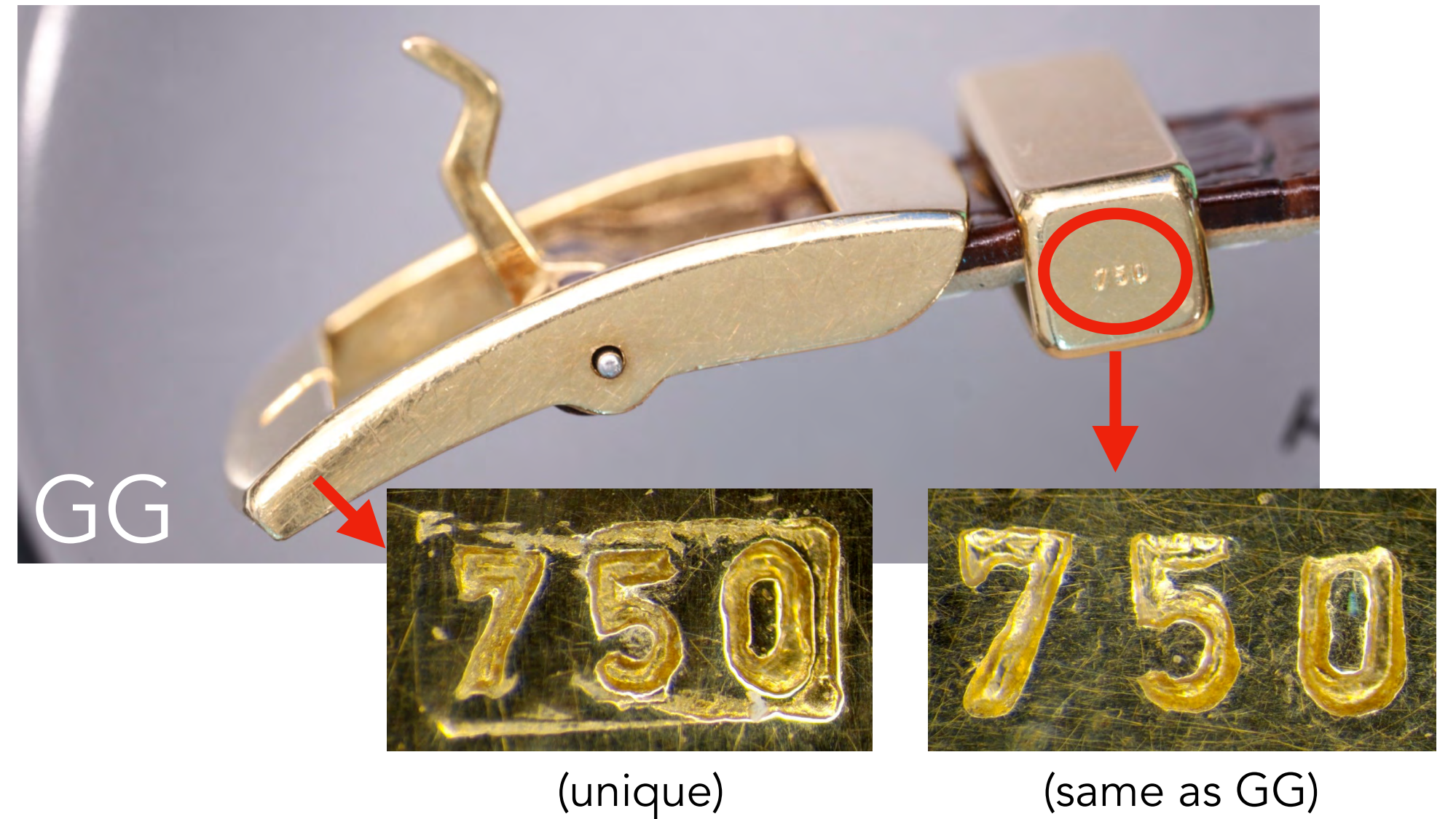
Buckle

The GG's Buckle

Because of the GG buckle's 750 gold stamp mismatch I suspect it was stamped 750 in a different room or facility than the case. This would be normal if it was made by a large manufacturer or contractor.

The GG buckle bears no trademark other than the crab mark. This may indicate that it is a prototype by an outside designer. Omega would decide whether it would go into production bearing Omega's trademark or not.

A 1967 Omega buckle attributed to Raymond Thévenaz for the 1968 Omega Genève Dynamic echos the GG buckle design. Like the GG buckle it requires special straps without a fixed keeper loop.



The GG's Free Ring

The GG's free ring does not fit even the thinnest of Swatch leather straps. Its inside vertical dimension is only 3.6mm and Swatch leather straps require at least 4.1mm for two layers of strap to pass through.

Unless it was designed for plastic straps, the free ring was designed for much thinner straps that were common in the 1960s and 1970s. Vintage watches often appear on thin leather-backed lizard straps. Swatch leather straps, like most modern straps, are padded to increase their thickness.

[watch my video about this](#)



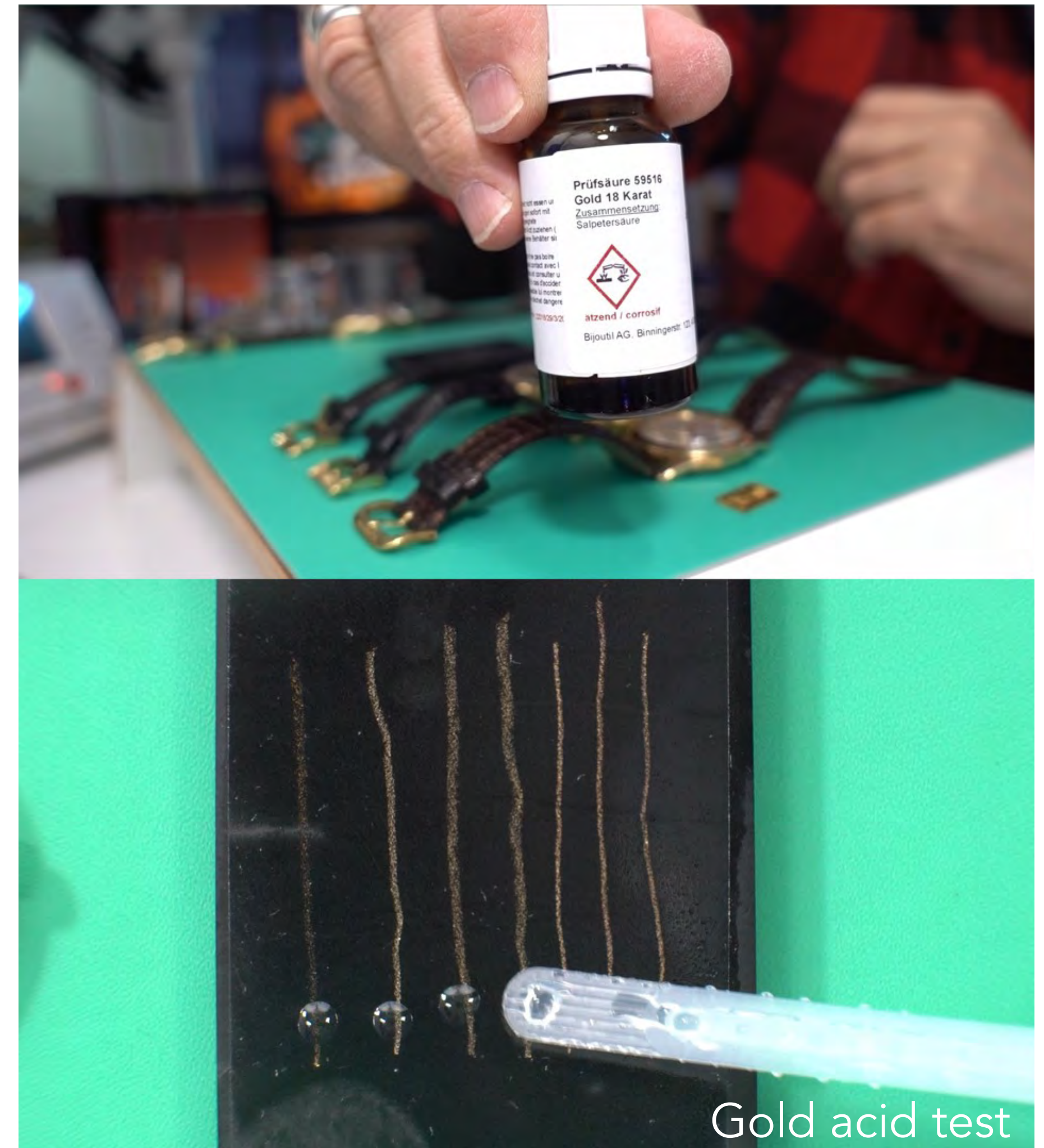
GG buckle and free ring with 1990 Swatch Chrono leather strap

Gold Test - 18K Gold Case, Buckle and Free Ring

Because of the lack of a hallmark from a Swiss bureau de contrôle I did an acid test on the GG case, buckle, and free ring and confirmed that they are all solid 18K gold, with a gross weight of 77g (valued at ~US 3,800 at today's gold price). The legal minimum thickness for Swiss watch cases is and was 0.3mm. The GG case is in no place less than 1.4mm thick.

To "control" my own test I compared the GG's gold test streaks to 24K gold bullion, as well as to gold watch cases from IWC, Eterna, and Lanco that have hallmarks from the Swiss bureau de contrôle.

[watch my video about this](#)



Gold Test ~24K Gold Split Screw Bars

The GG's screw bars are 1.13mm diameter. The 22K or higher gold content and thread pitch of the screw bars may help date the design and manufacture of the GG by correlating it with the other 18K gold watches from the same period. The hands and crown are the same found on stock ~1969 Omega Seamaster Cosmics.



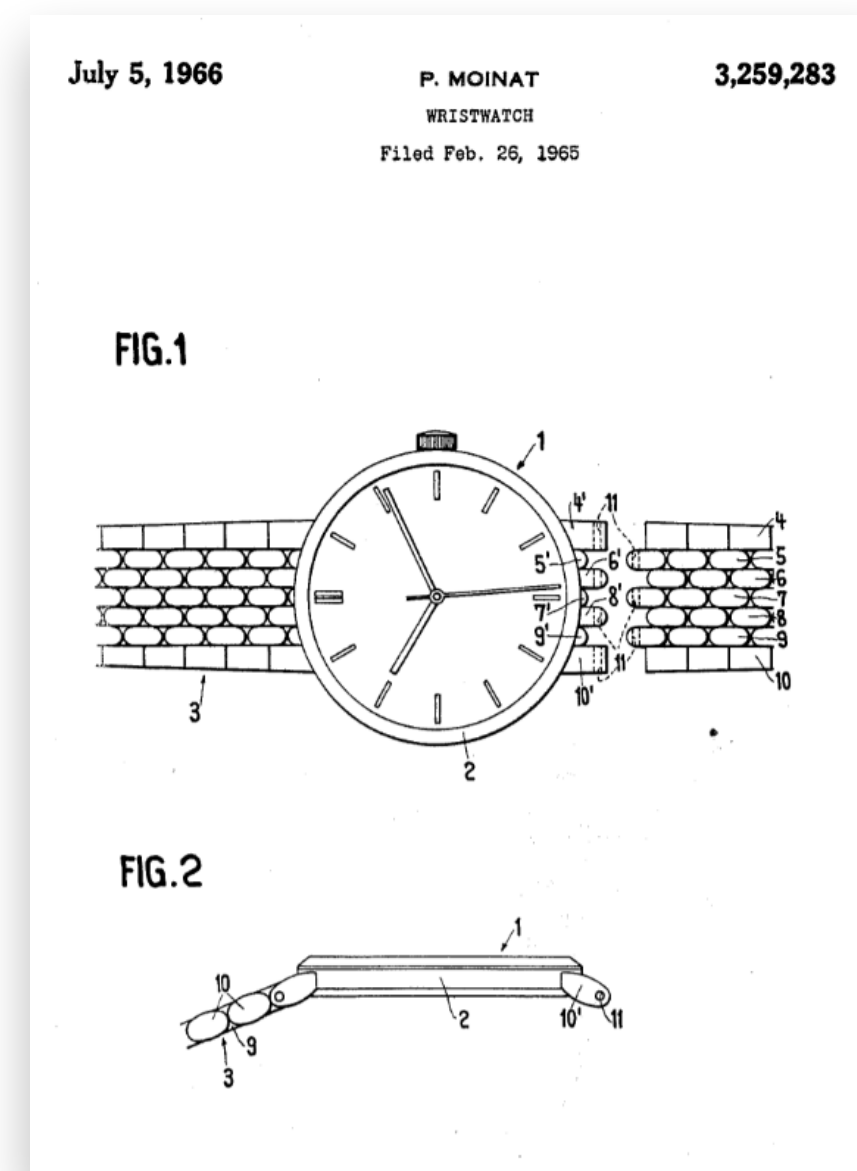
Omega's Dual Coaxial Screw Bar Patent

Pierre Moinat, Head of Creative for Omega from 1955 to 1981, patented the first functional design of a four-lug integrated bracelet in 1965. Claim six of his patent describes the dual coaxial screw bars used in the GG design. This patent was cited as prior art in ETA's 1982 Swatch case hinge patent:

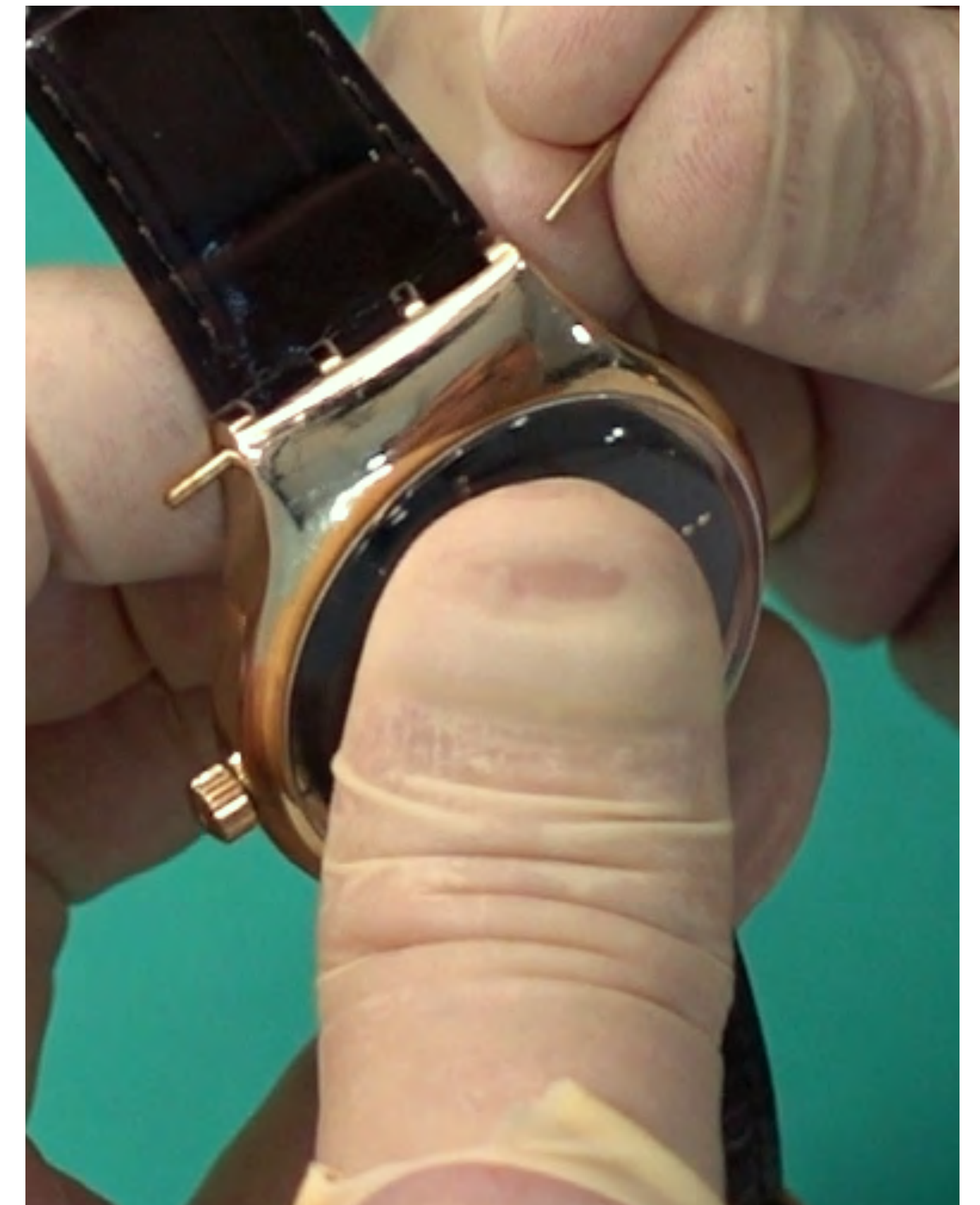
"A wristwatch as claimed in claim 1, wherein said fastening member comprises two separate coaxial elements each introduced through one of the lugs."

Mr. Moinat's claim specifically on split coaxial screw bars

[watch my video about this](#)



[Pierre Moinat's integrated bracelet patent](#)



The GG's split coaxial screw bars

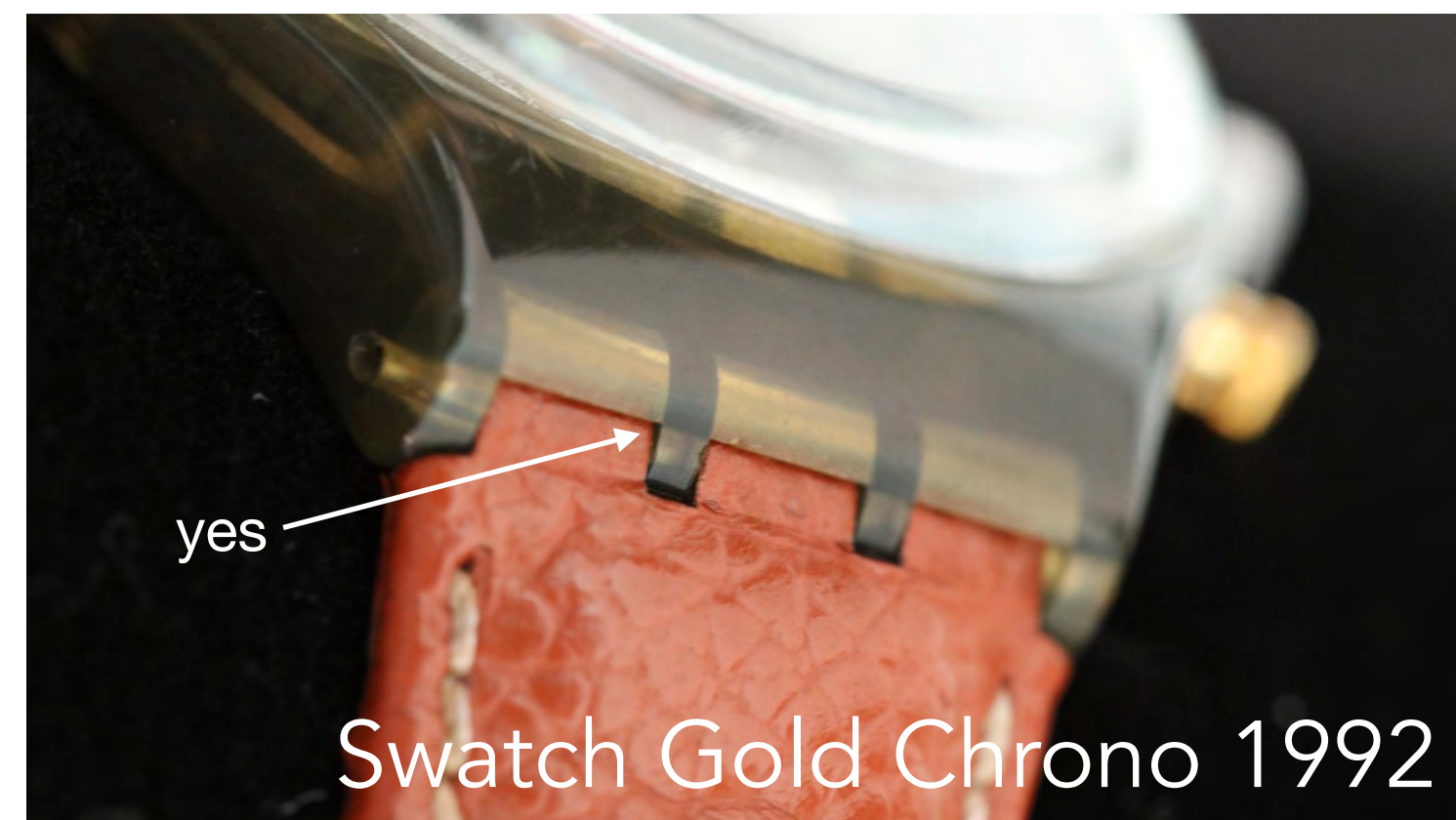
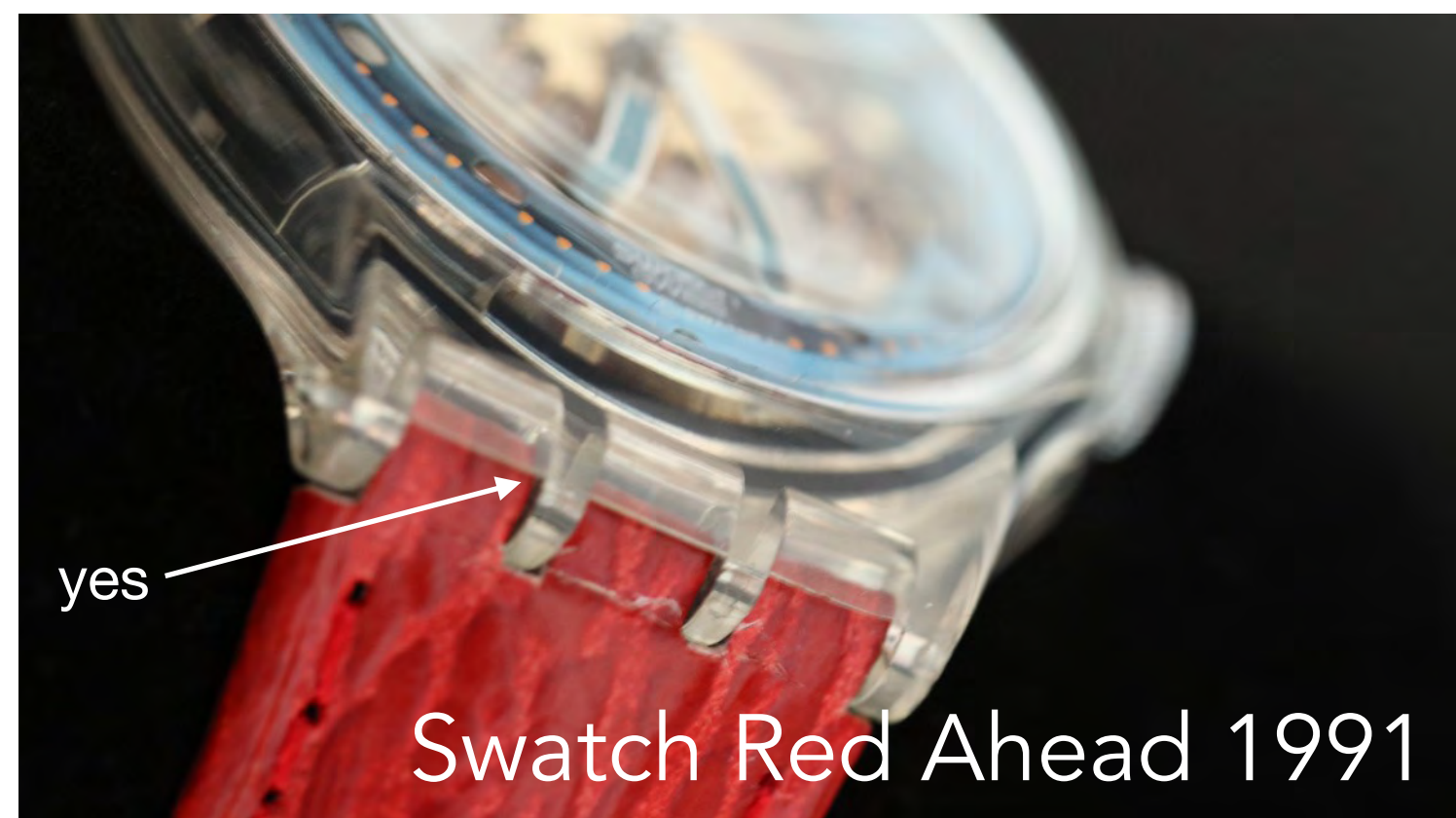
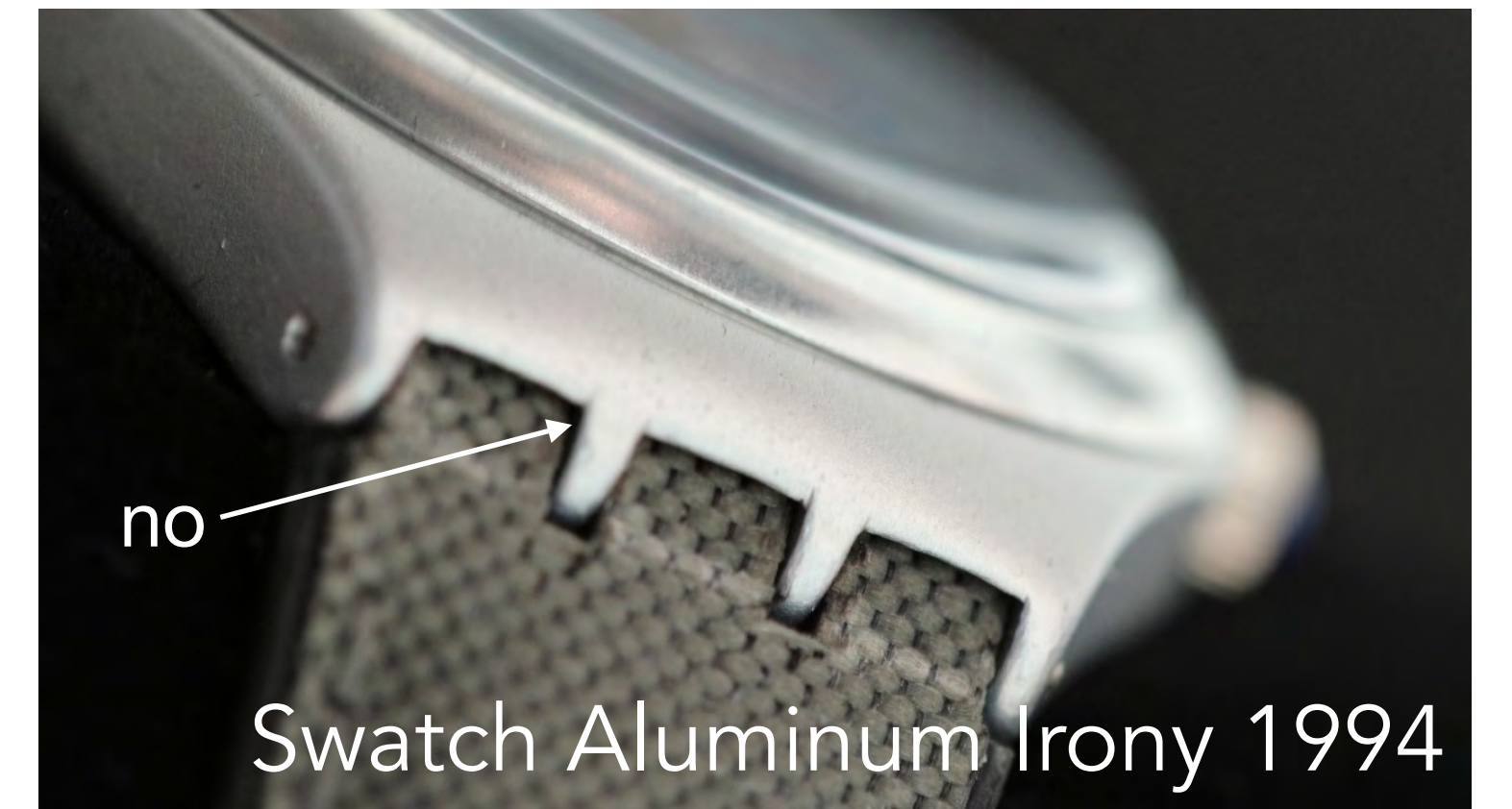
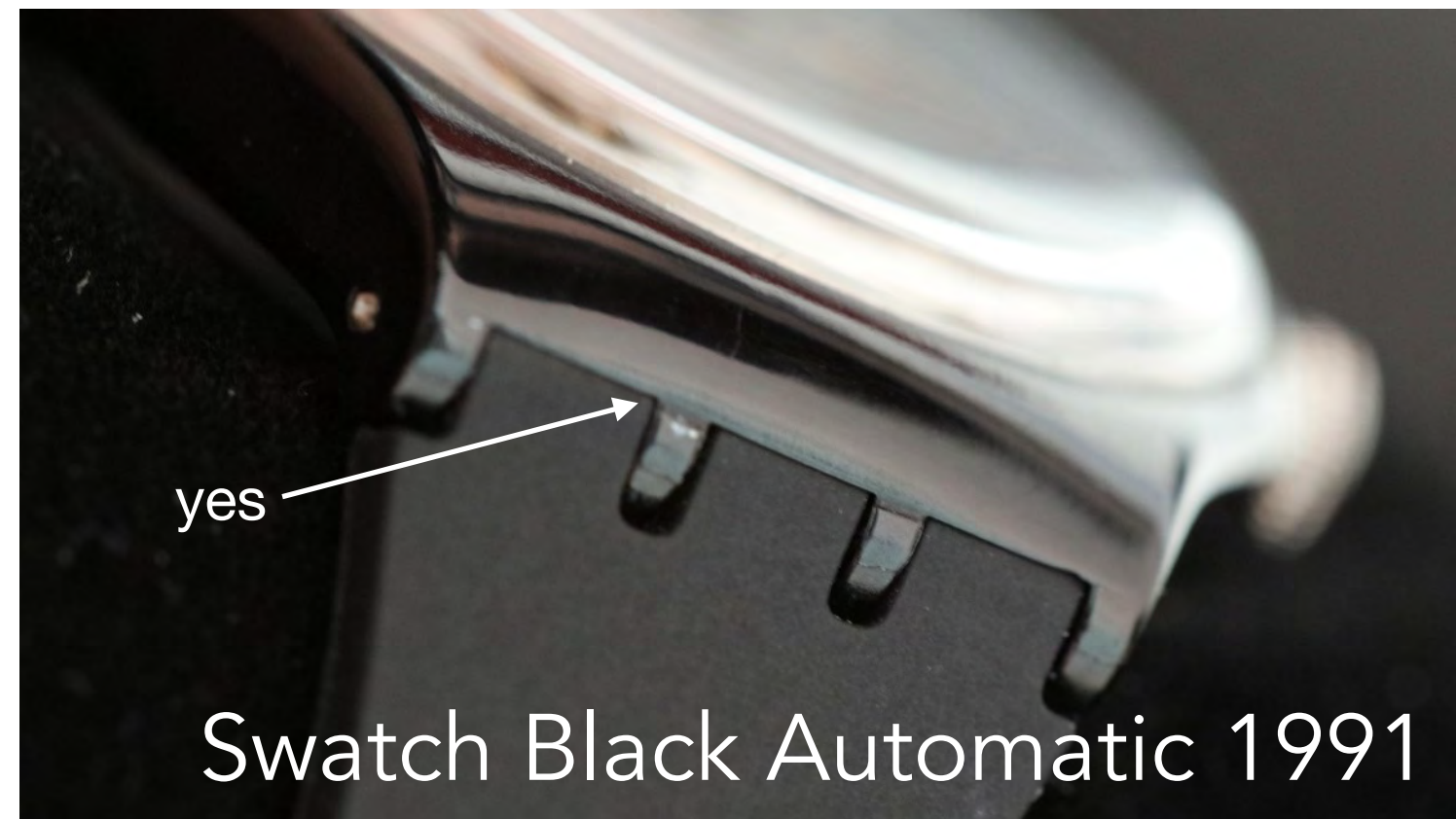
The GG's Lugs

The GG's lugs have an indentation at the intersection of the shroud and the lugs. Early Swatches also have this indentation. Later Swatch designs have perfectly blended shroud-to-lug contours that do not have this indentation. This detail dates the GG design to the first decade of the Swatch or before the Swatch.

Like the GG, the lug bridges of the Swatch can not use traditional springbars. The Swatch is instead fitted with press-fit steel push-pins. This reduces the number of parts needed to fix the strap to the case and simplifies assembly, reducing the manufacturing cost of the Swatch.



The Evolution of Swatch Lug Indentation



Swatch design details change over the years. This detail links the earliest Swatch case designs to the GG.

The GG's Crystal

The GG's acrylic crystal measures 32.95mm in diameter. The 1981 Swatch Zaugg prototype crystal also measures 32.95mm. No production Swatch has ever had a 32.95mm crystal.

Why was exactly 32.95mm chosen for the Zaugg?

Did the ETA team reference a monocoque Omega Seamaster design from 1966? It would make sense if they did. They were designing a monocoque, sealed watch. Was the GG the design that they referenced?

[watch my video about this](#)



Omega Tool 107 / 3295



Ø 32.95mm

GG with Seamaster Cosmic dial



Ø 32.95mm

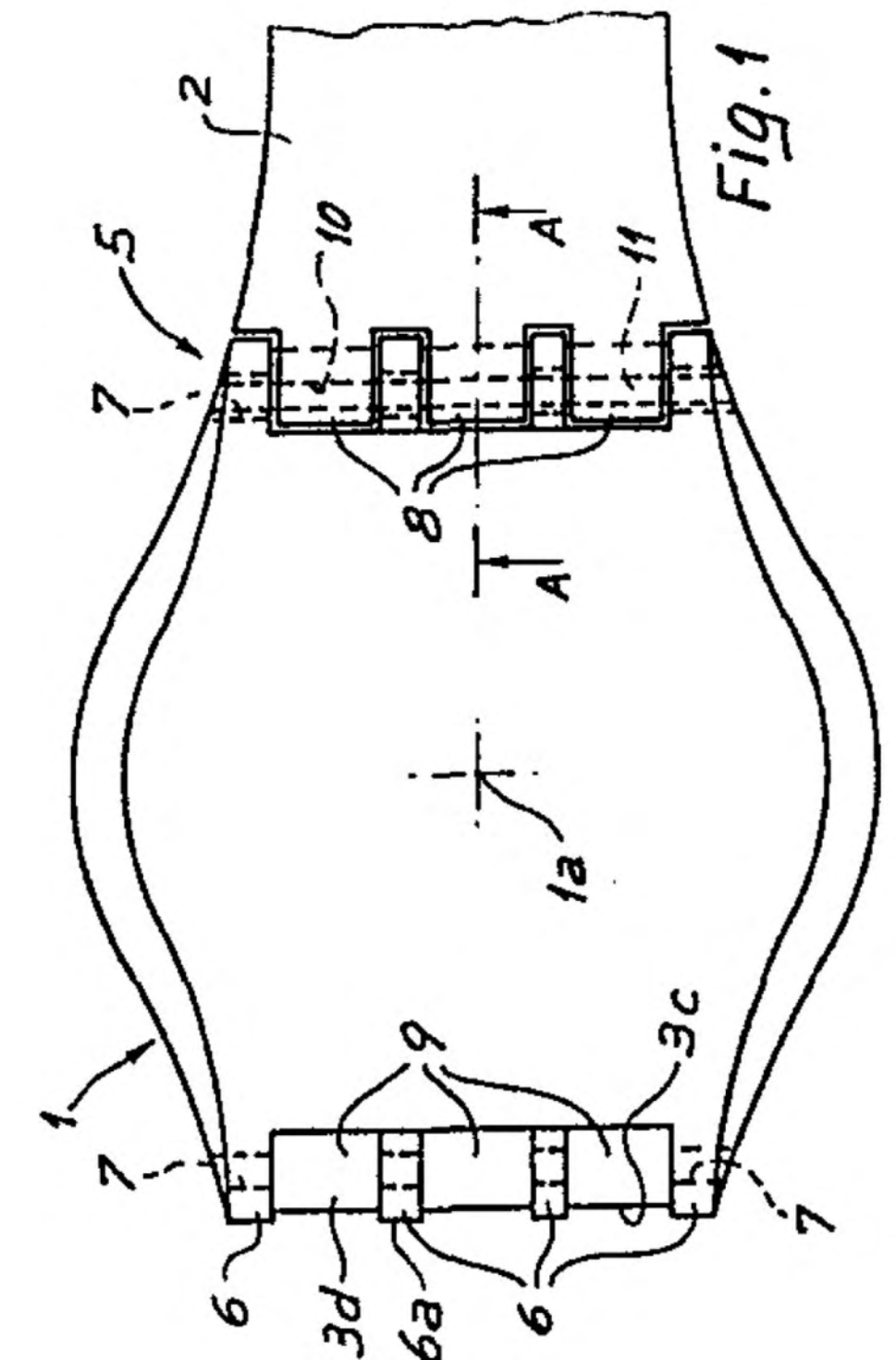
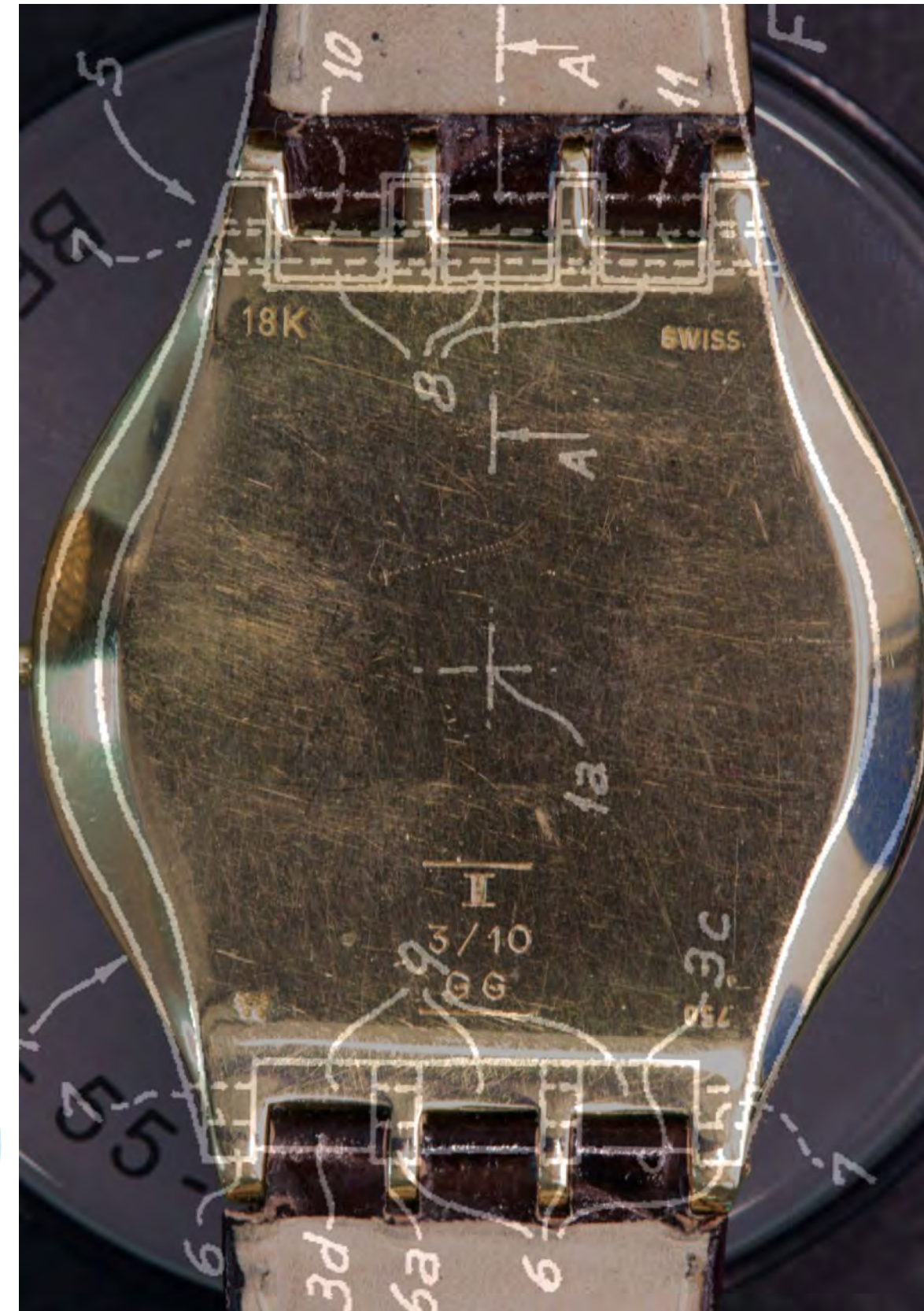
1981 ETA Swatch Zaugg Prototype

The 1982 ETA Case Hinge Patent

Andreas Wiethoff, the creator of the Stay Tuned to Swatch website, brought the 1982 ETA patent on the Swatch case hinge design to my attention in December of 2022. An illustration in the patent attributed to inventors Elmar Mock and Alphonse Bron shows the flat monocoque case bottom tapering angularly to the case's curved sides almost identically to the case design of the GG.

This curved contour was not a design feature of any of the early plastic Vulgaris, Zaugg, or Schmid-Müller designed watch cases.

<https://www.stay-tuned-to-sw.de/>



Swiss Patent Application CH 3620/82

1982 ETA US Pat 4,561,077 ETA EPO 0 098 239 A1 (English Translation)

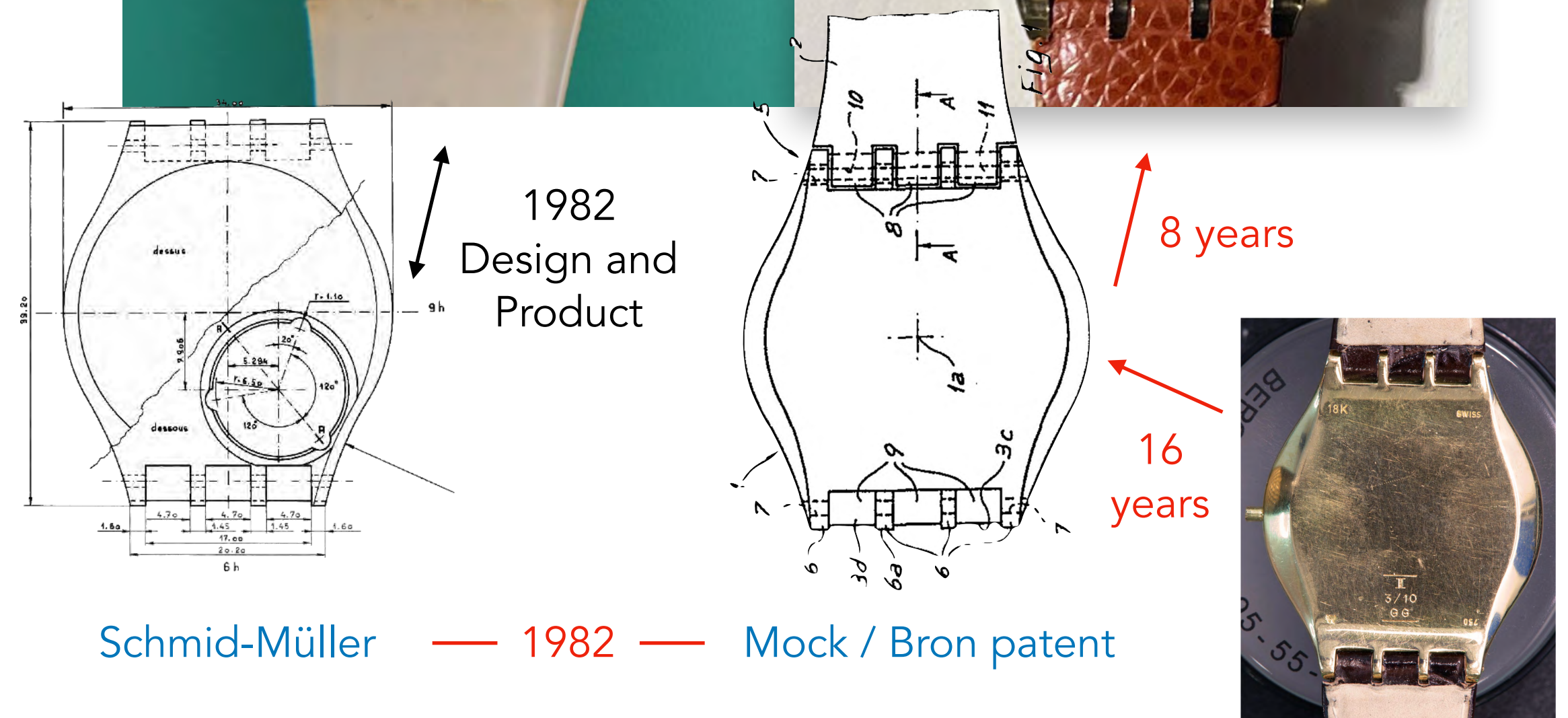
Time Traveling Caseback Design?

The curved contour back did finally show up in the design for the Swatch Chrono in 1990, but the fact that it was in the 1982 ETA patent drawing suggests that the patent was based on drawings of a design closer to the GG than to the actual Swatch Schmid-Müller design.

This may have another explanation, but it begs the question: why would ETA use a "non-existent" design in the 1982 patent drawing when the Schmid-Müller design, which was the design used for the Swatch for the next eight years, was completed months earlier and did not exhibit this unique contour?

1982 Swatch

1990 Swatch Chrono



Schmid-Müller

1982

Mock / Bron patent

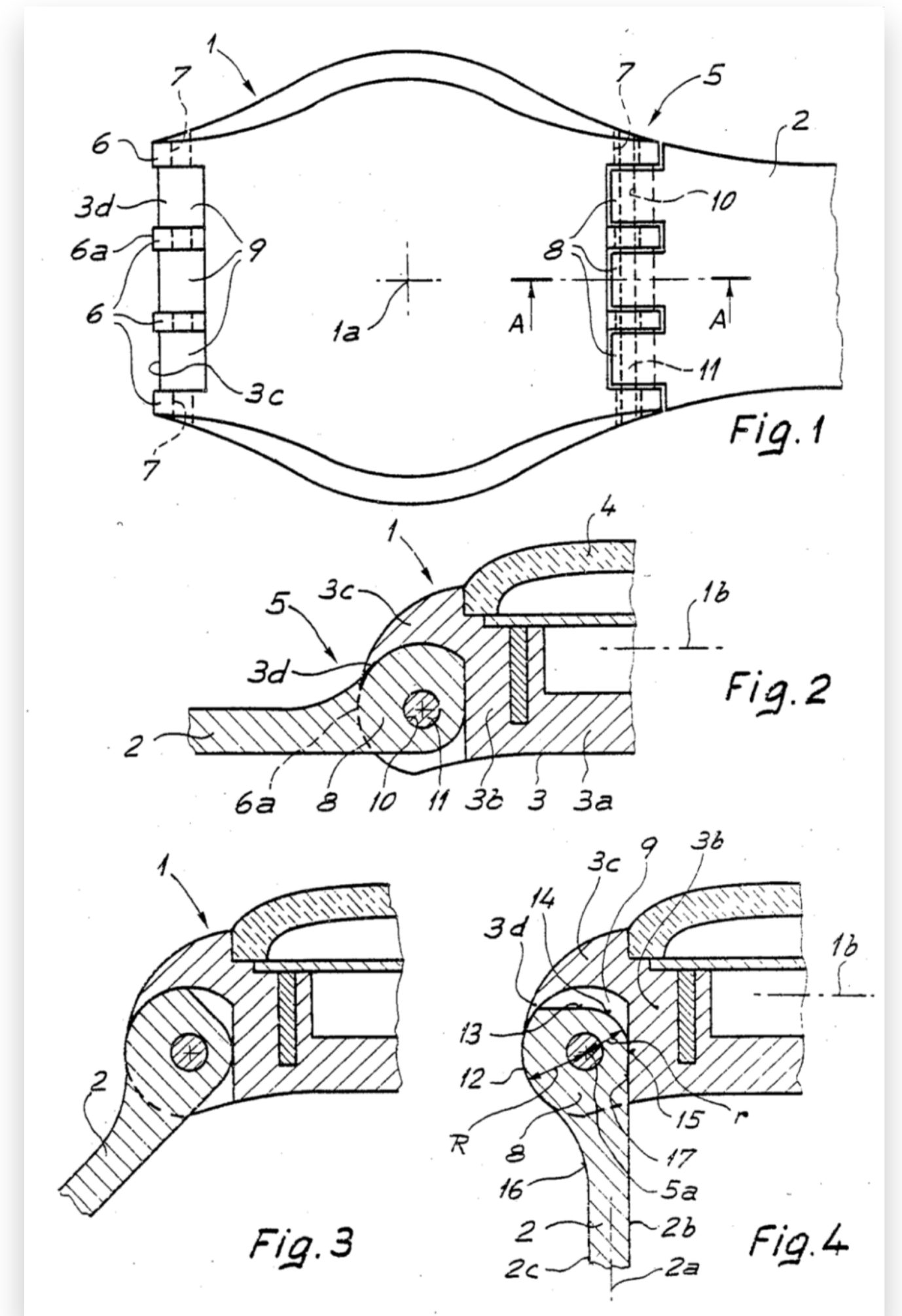
GG ~1966?

Did a Metal Case Already Exist in 1982?

The 1982 ETA patent is specifically a utility patent on the hinged, double-bridged shrouded-lug design for a *plastic* watch case. Because the patent is limited to plastic it was arguably a patently novel invention in 1982 even if the gold GG preexisted it by over ten years. This is because patent law allows for non-obvious *new uses* of existing inventions.

Connectedly, the fact that the patent is limited to plastic suggests that the same watch case design *already existed in metal*: otherwise ETA's patent attorneys likely would have recommended including a dependent claim for metal in the event that ETA ever wanted to make a similar product in metal. If the GG had been sold, offered for sale, or shown in public more than one year before June 1, 1982 claiming metal could invalidate the patent.

The importance of having a strong patent to protect the product from knock-off designs is why there would have been extreme secrecy around the use of the Omega design. The plastic *new-use* defense would be stronger if no one knew that the gold watch had ever existed.

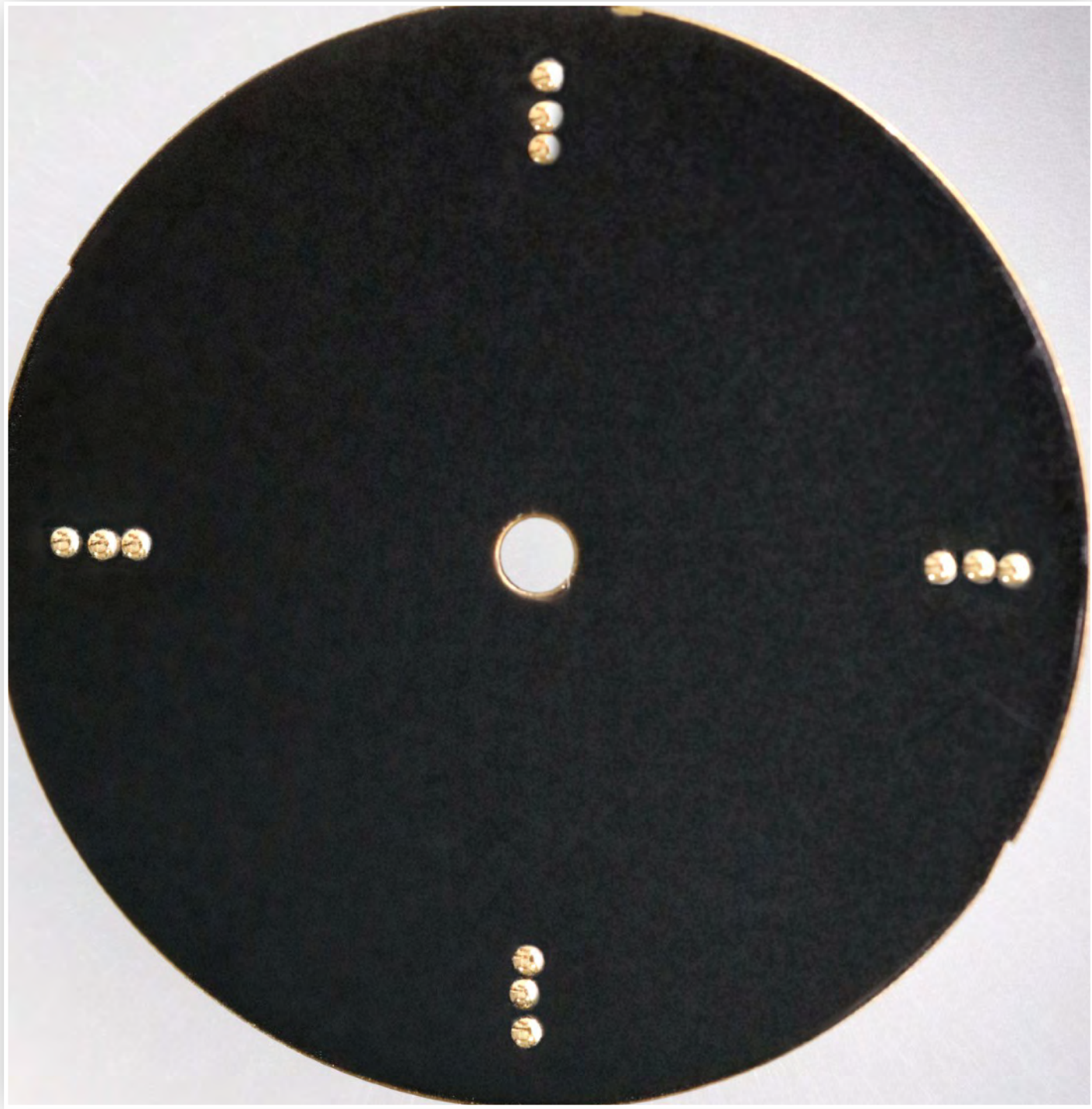


[watch my video about this](#)

Mock / Bron 1982 ETA Utility Patent

The GG's Circa 1966 Singer Dial

12 o'clock



front of GG dial

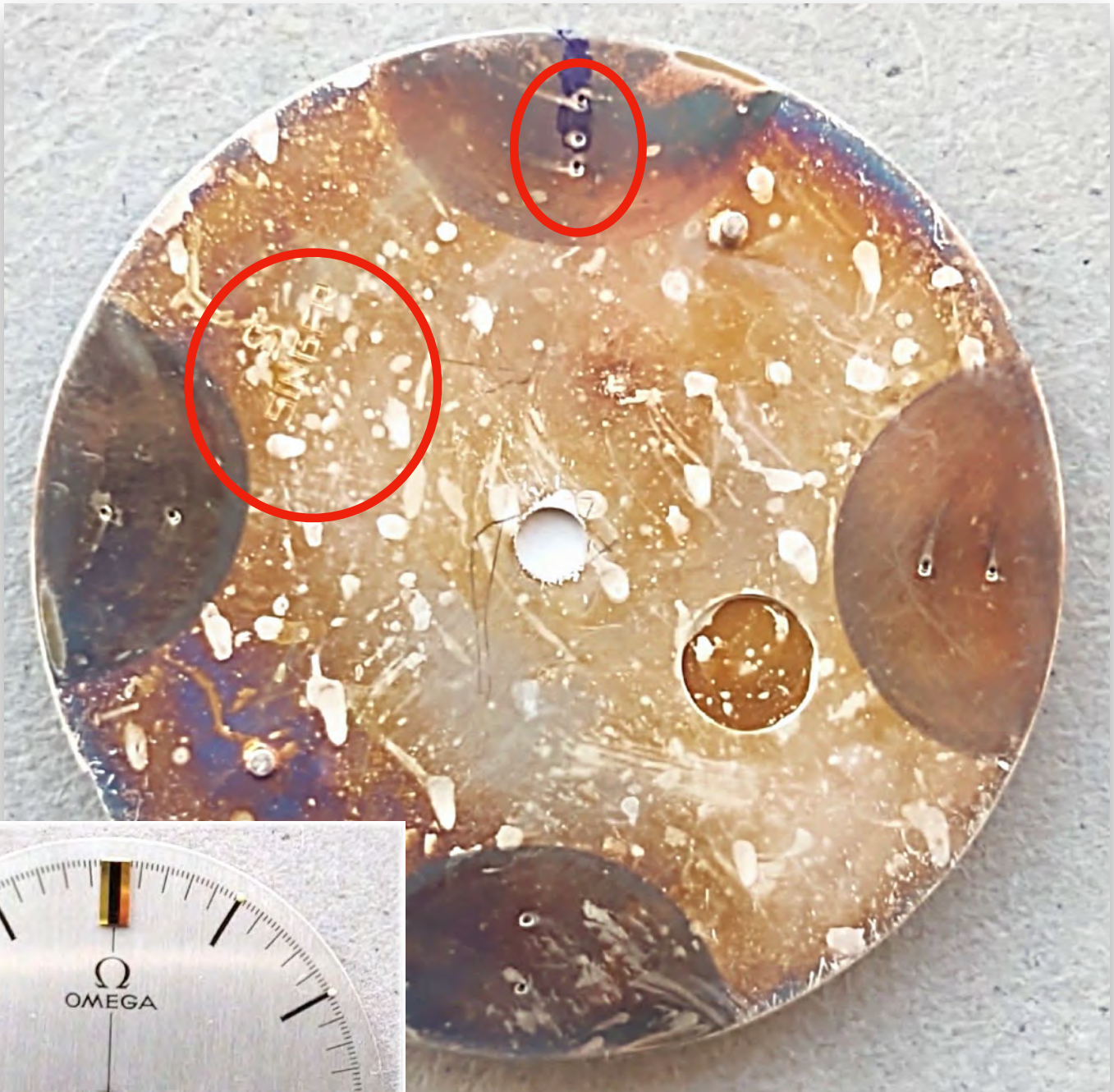
12 o'clock



back of GG dial (Singer)

1966 Cosmic Dial

12 o'clock



(Singer)



The GG's dial is a modified Omega Seamaster Cosmic dial made by Singer circa 1966. The original indices have been removed and it has been painted over in black. The original indices have been replaced with 0.8mm 9K gold dots.

The Dial and Hands - What do they Tell Us?

According to Desmond Guilfoyle's 2009 interview with Evelyne Genta, Gerald's wife and business partner, "For a Seamaster, he (Genta) designed the case, the dial, the bracelet, and the indexes separately." "Omega then put together these ideas in one watch." She (Evelyne) went on to mention that the applied markers with the "index in ebony" (we know them as onyx inserts) was an original Genta idea.

The hands on the GG first appeared on the production Cosmic in 1968 or 1969 in three variations: with both lume and onyx inserts, with lume-only inserts, and with onyx-only inserts as found in the hands of the GG.

[Gerald_Genta_Designed_Omega_Constellations.pdf](#)



GG with Omega Seamaster Cosmic dial with Genta's onyx index inserts

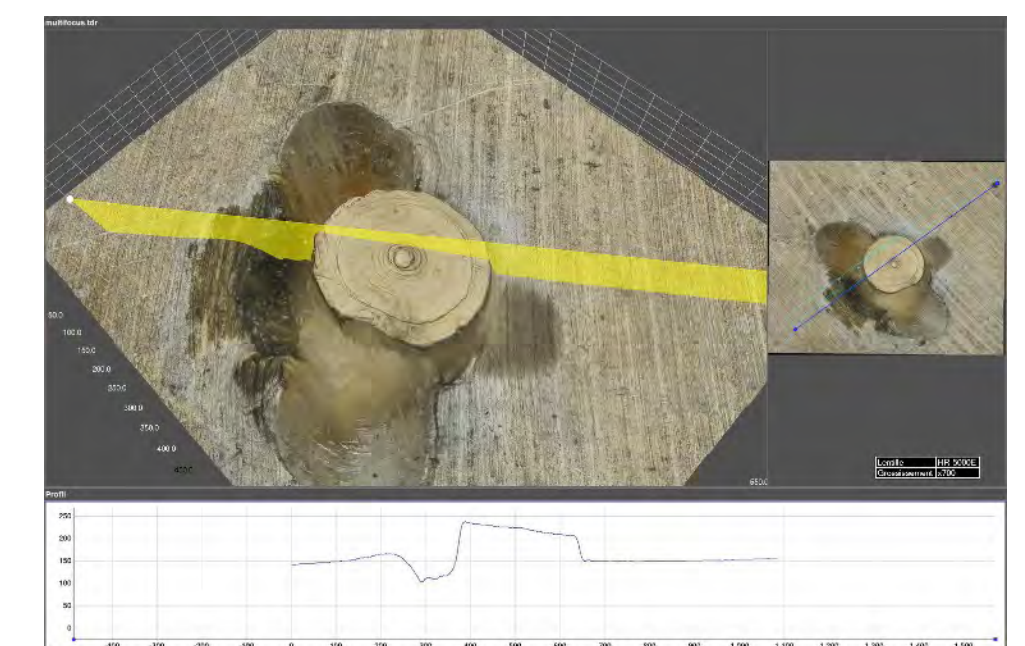
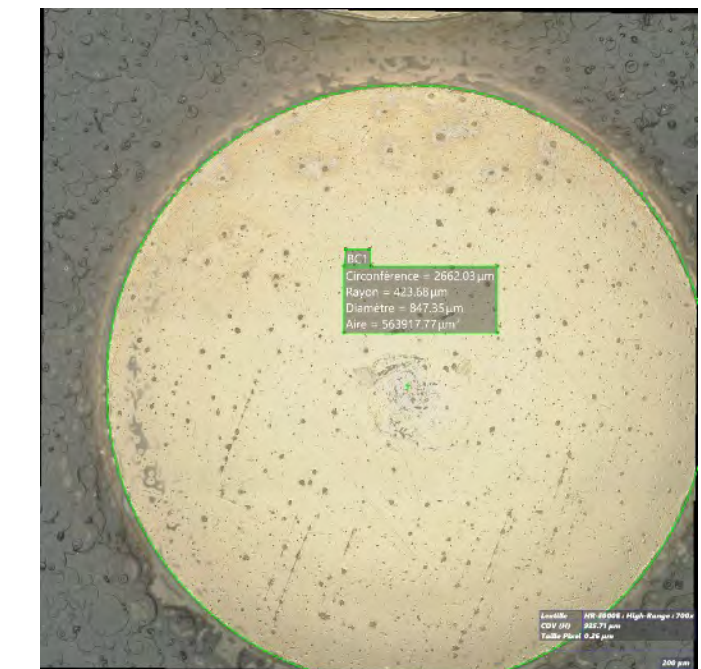
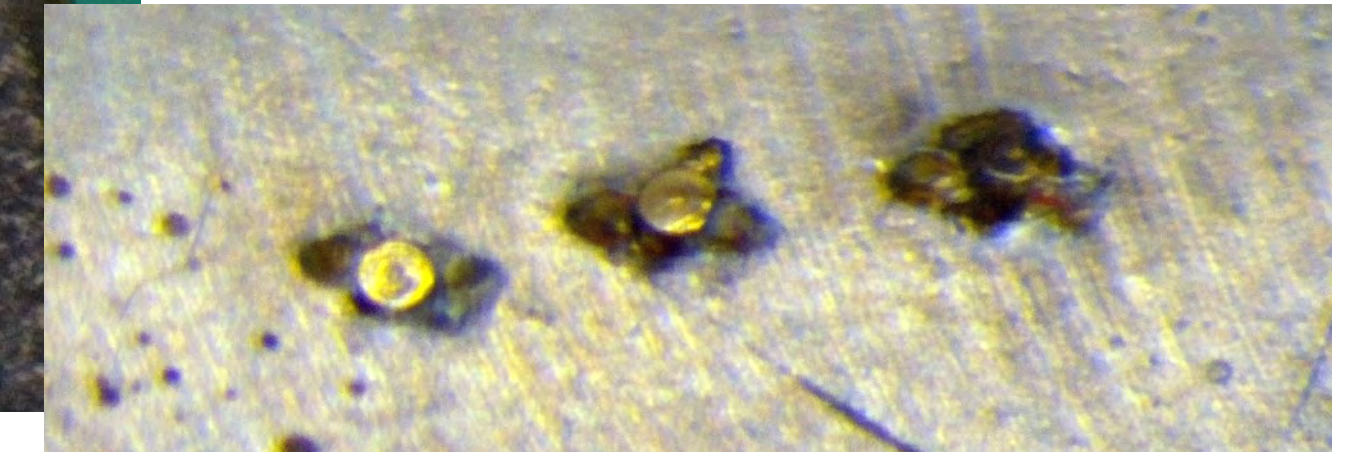


GG exactly as purchased with overpainted dial hiding Omega branding and with gold index dots

The GG's 9K Dial Dots

The 9K gold dots on the GG's dial were inserted into the index stem holes of an overpainted Omega Seamaster Cosmic dial. From its index drill points and the burnishing around them we can deduce that the overpainted dial was previously a *finished* circa 1966 Cosmic dial: its original indices were removed, it was overpainted in black, and new 0.8mm diameter 9 karat gold unburnished index dots were added. A potential source for the dots is the 1982 Omega Constellation Manhattan which also uses 0.8mm diameter 9K gold dot indices.

[watch my video about this](#)



hirox-europe.com

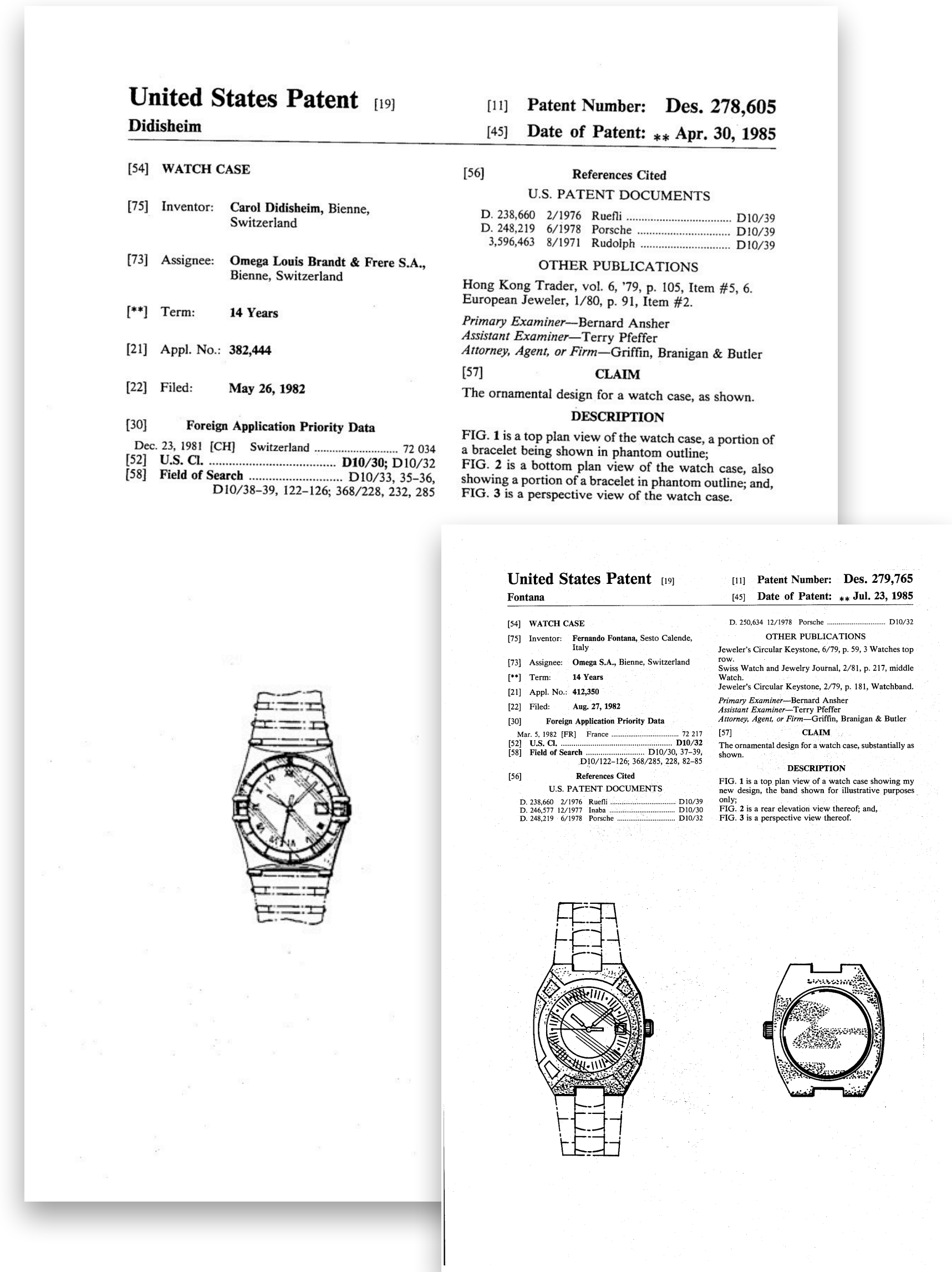
Carol Didisheim's 1982 Omega Constellation Patent

On May 6, 1982, Omega filed a patent on the design of the Constellation Manhattan designed by Carol Didisheim. Because Omega was in the midst of a financial crisis the Manhattan was likely considered an important new design, thus warranting the expense of patenting.

This patent is significant to the GG because it dates the GG's 0.8mm 9K index dots to Omega circa 1982. Around this same time Gerald Genta was developing the Seamaster Polaris Titanium for Omega, the design patent for which would be attributed to Fernando Fontana and filed in August.

[The Genuis behind the Omega Constellation Manhattan V2.pdf](#)

[watch my video about this](#)



Hidden in Plain Sight?

If the GG is a ~1966 prototype for the Omega Seamaster Cosmic that was transferred from Omega to ETA in 1981-1982 then its modified dial was likely put inside it at Omega to hide its origins while at ETA.

The reason I think this was likely done at Omega is its index dots appear to be parts from the 1981 Constellation Manhattan *and* their stems are *unburnished*, implying manufacturer access: they could not have been taken from a finished Constellation dial because if they were they would be burnished.

[watch my video about this](#)



GG with Omega Seamaster Cosmic dial



GG with its blacked-out Cosmic dial as purchased

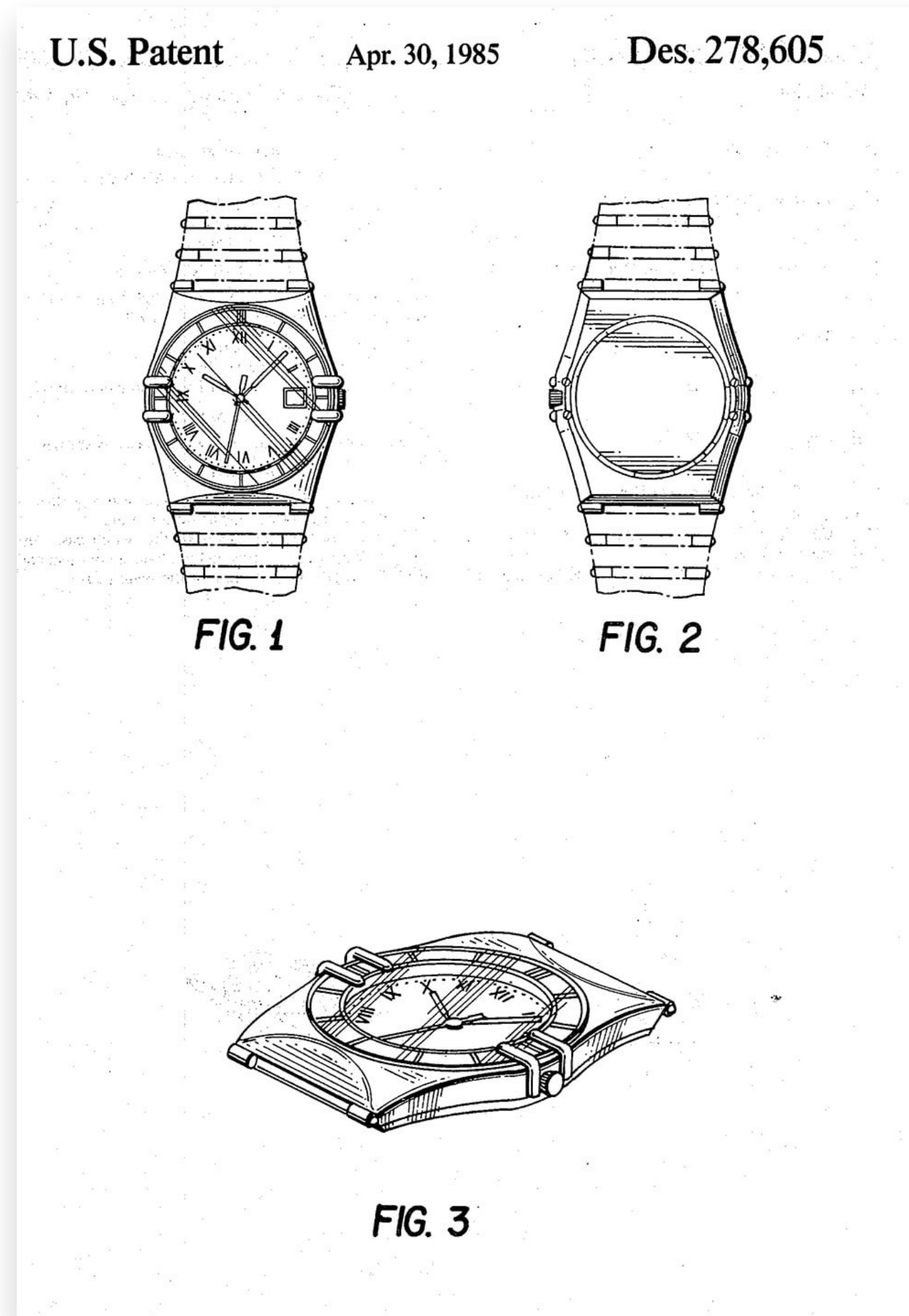
Why Did ETA Only File a Utility Patent in 1982?

Just two weeks before the Mock / Bron case hinge *utility* patent was filed at ETA, Omega filed a *design* patent on Carol Didisheim's design for the Constellation Manhattan.

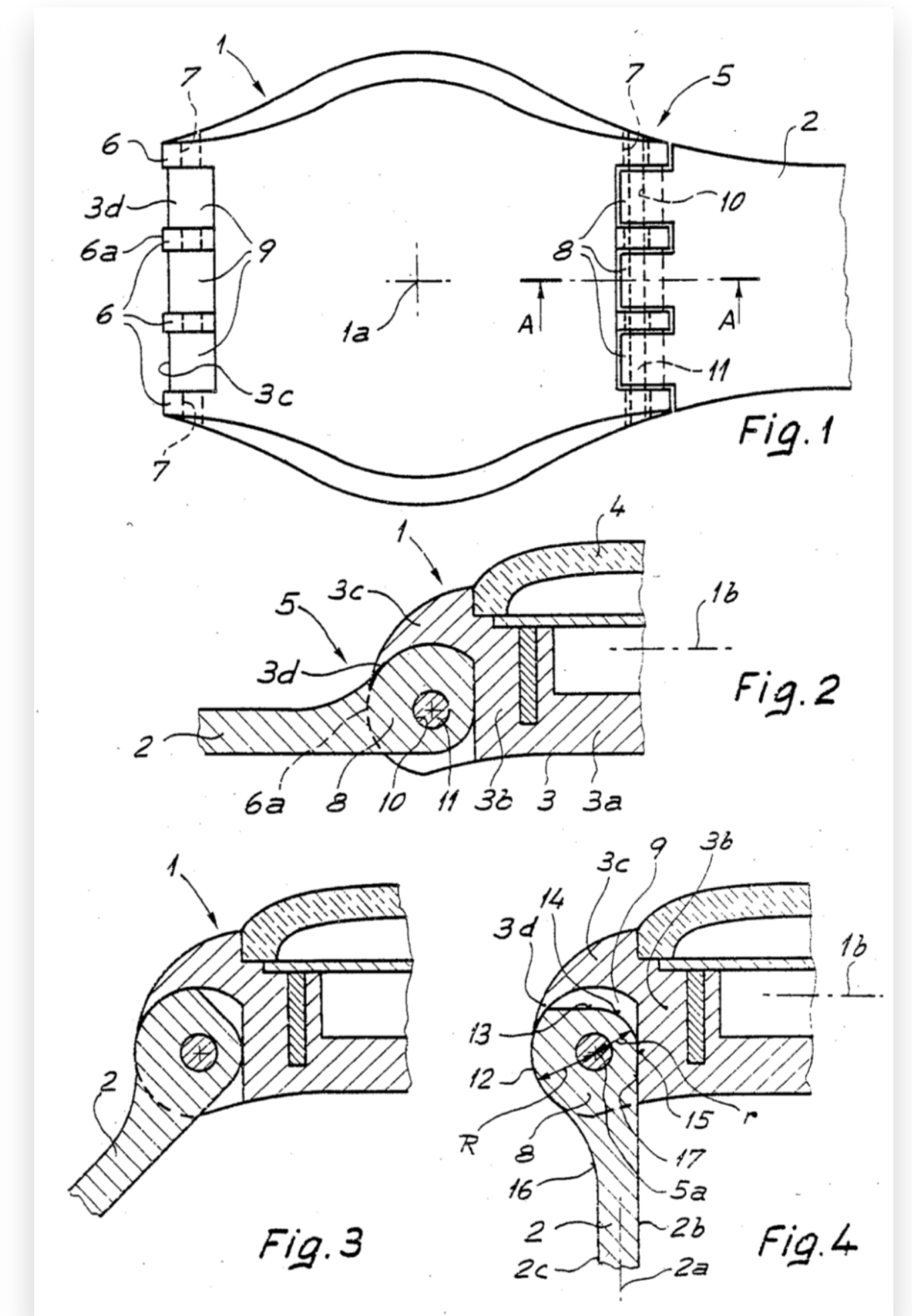
But ETA elected to file only a *utility* patent (and not a *design* patent) on the Swatch case design? Why? Again, this could be as a result of the one year bar, which also applies to design patents.

But if so, where and to whom was it sold or offered for sale? And why don't other copies exist? Another reason that ETA didn't file a design patent could be that they did not own or control the GG design and could not be certain that copies did not exist. After all the GG is marked 3/10!

[watch my video about this](#)



Didisheim 1982 Omega Design Patent



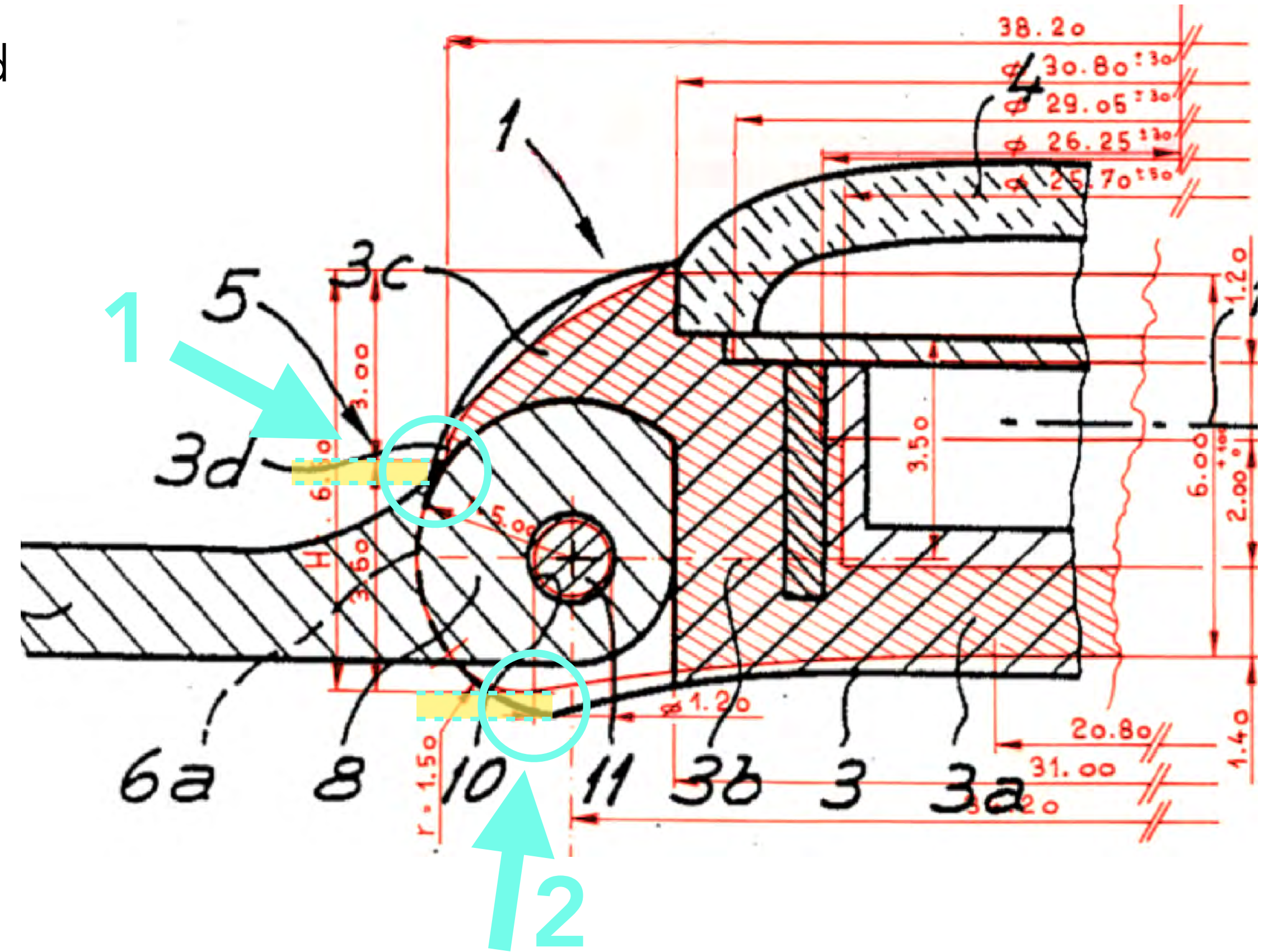
Mock / Bron 1982 ETA Utility Patent

Other GG Details in the 1982 ETA Utility Patent

The 1982 ETA utility patent on the Swatch case has other features that are unique to the GG. To the right is a February 1982 drawing of the Swatch design in red laid over the June 1982 ETA patent drawing in black.

The design in the patent has a deeper downward curve to its shroud (1) and lugs (2) than the Swatch design. This suggests again that the 1982 ETA patent is based on the GG design.

Because of the difference #1 circled in cyan, the watch case in the patent drawing and the GG are both *incompatible* with Swatch plastic straps. Actual Swatches follow the hinge design in the actual Swatch drawing and are compatible with the hundreds of millions of plastic straps made over the past 40 years.



[watch my video about this](#)

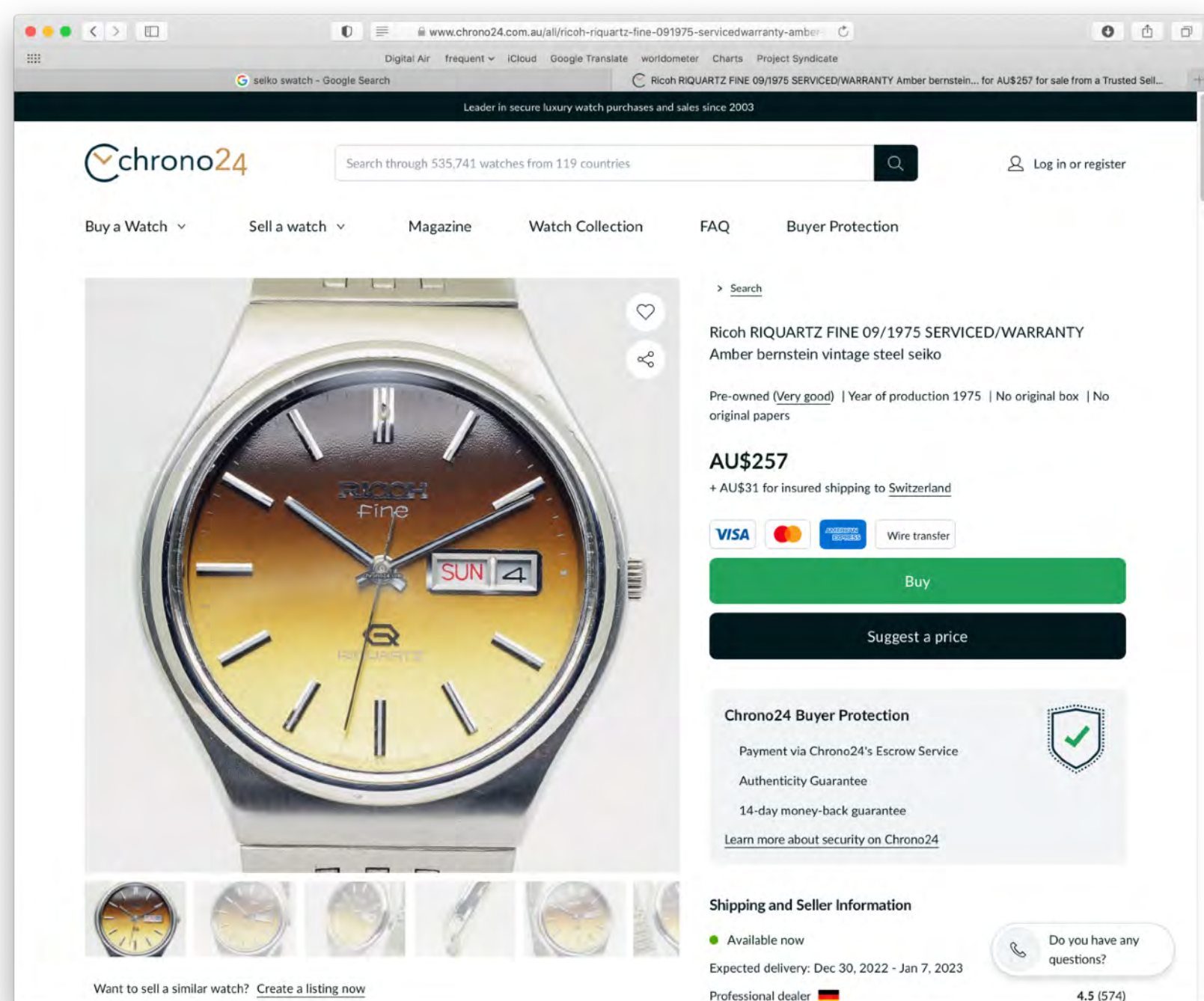
Mock / Bron June 1982 ETA Utility Patent Schmid-Müller February 1982 Design Drawing

It All Comes Down to Patents!? Really!?

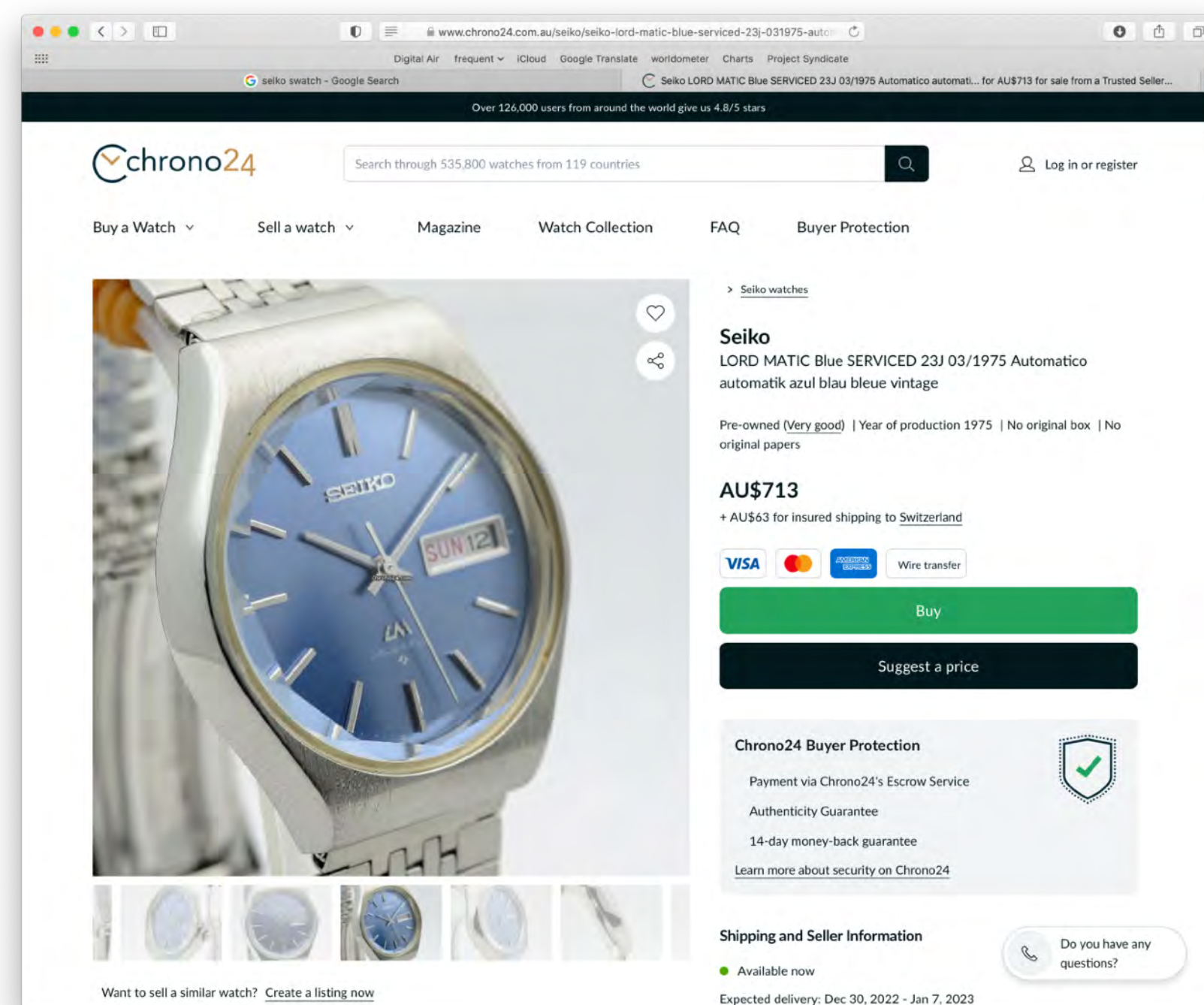
You might ask, "Are patents even necessary? Who's going to copy a Swiss watch design?"



1972 Seamaster Cosmic 2000



1975 Ricoh Riquartz Fine



1975 Seiko Lord Matic

Patents are important. In the 1970s Japanese companies were stylistically copying almost everything that Omega released. Gérald Genta was even helping some of the Japanese companies, including Seiko, make equally beautiful designs by designing watches for them (within the constraints of patents, of course). It would have been irresponsible of ETA not to protect the Swatch design and so they did with the 1982 utility patent.

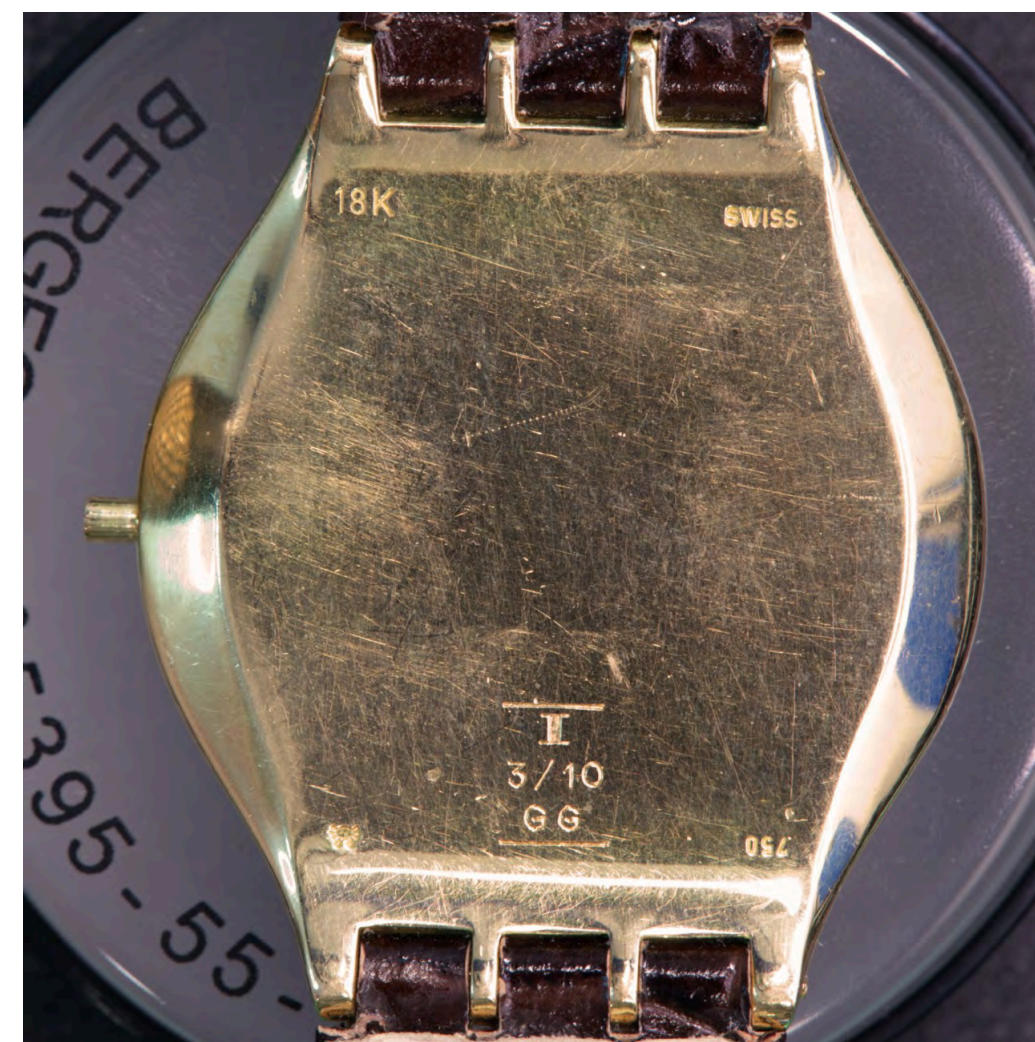
1960s Omega Designs

The GG shares design elements with other production Omega cases from the late 1960s. The GG could easily be a contemporary of the three steel Omegas shown on this page. In particular it is very similar to the Omega De Ville Ref. 166.051 (released in 1969), differing only in its hinge-like lugs and more rounded contours both of which make an appearance in the 1972 integrated-bracelet Seamaster Cosmic 2000.

GG with modified Seamaster Cosmic dial



GG with Omega Seamaster Cosmic dial



GG Ref. 135.017 SP



1969 Omega De Ville Ref. 166.051



1966 Omega Ref. 135.017 SP



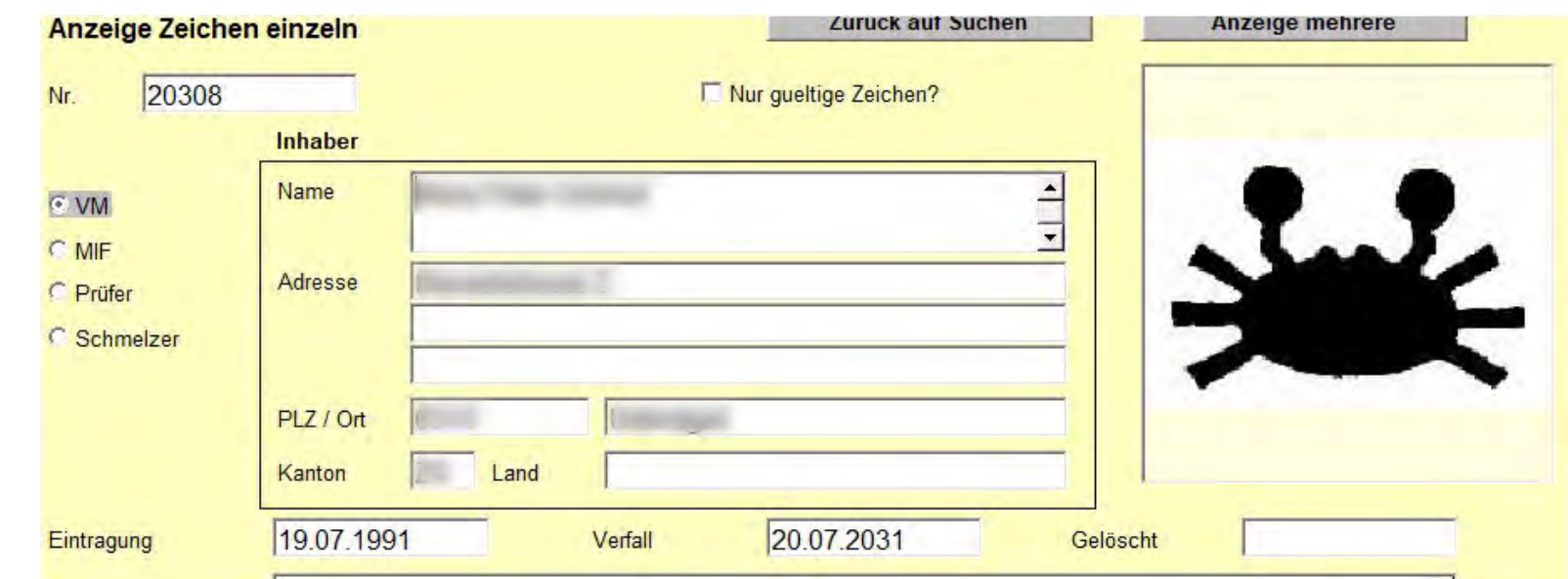
1972 Seamaster Cosmic 2000

1991 Crab Responsibility Mark and Trademark

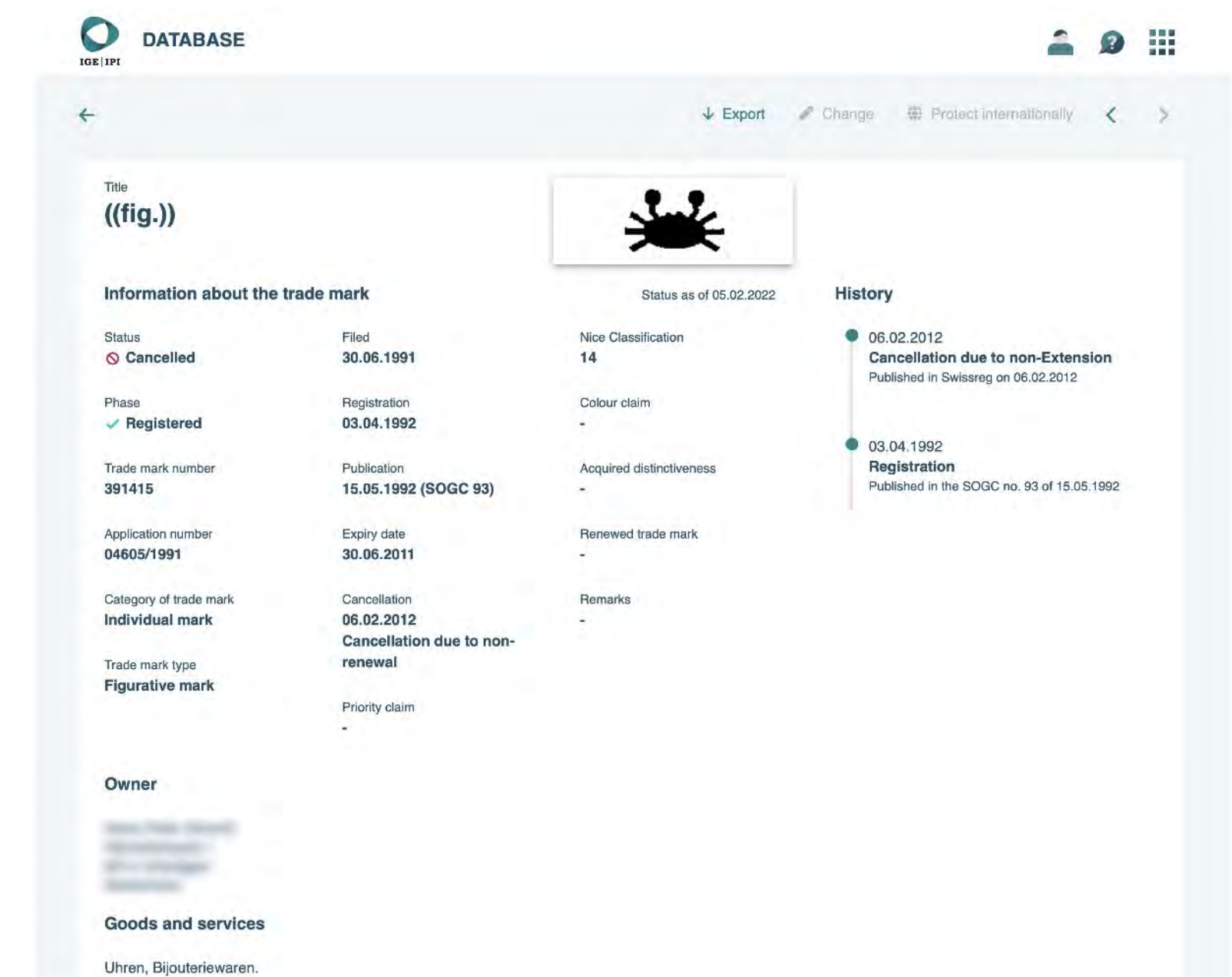
On March 9, 2023 I emailed the Swiss Central Office for Precious Metals Control (COPMC) requesting information about the GG's crab stamp.

I receive notice of a similar mark registered in 1991. I sent a paper copy of the most recent draft of this document with 100 Chf to the mark's registrant asking for information.

I don't believe that the GG was made in 1991. In my view the similarity in the marks is a coincidence, or the registrant purchased the GG at auction and registered the crab mark they found on it as a "reverse look-up" to try to find out who the mark belonged to, or the GG was lost by Swatch and the registrant registered the mark as a proxy to help Swatch locate the GG through a collector like me contacting them about the registration.



July 1991 responsibility mark - 20 year term - renewed in 2011



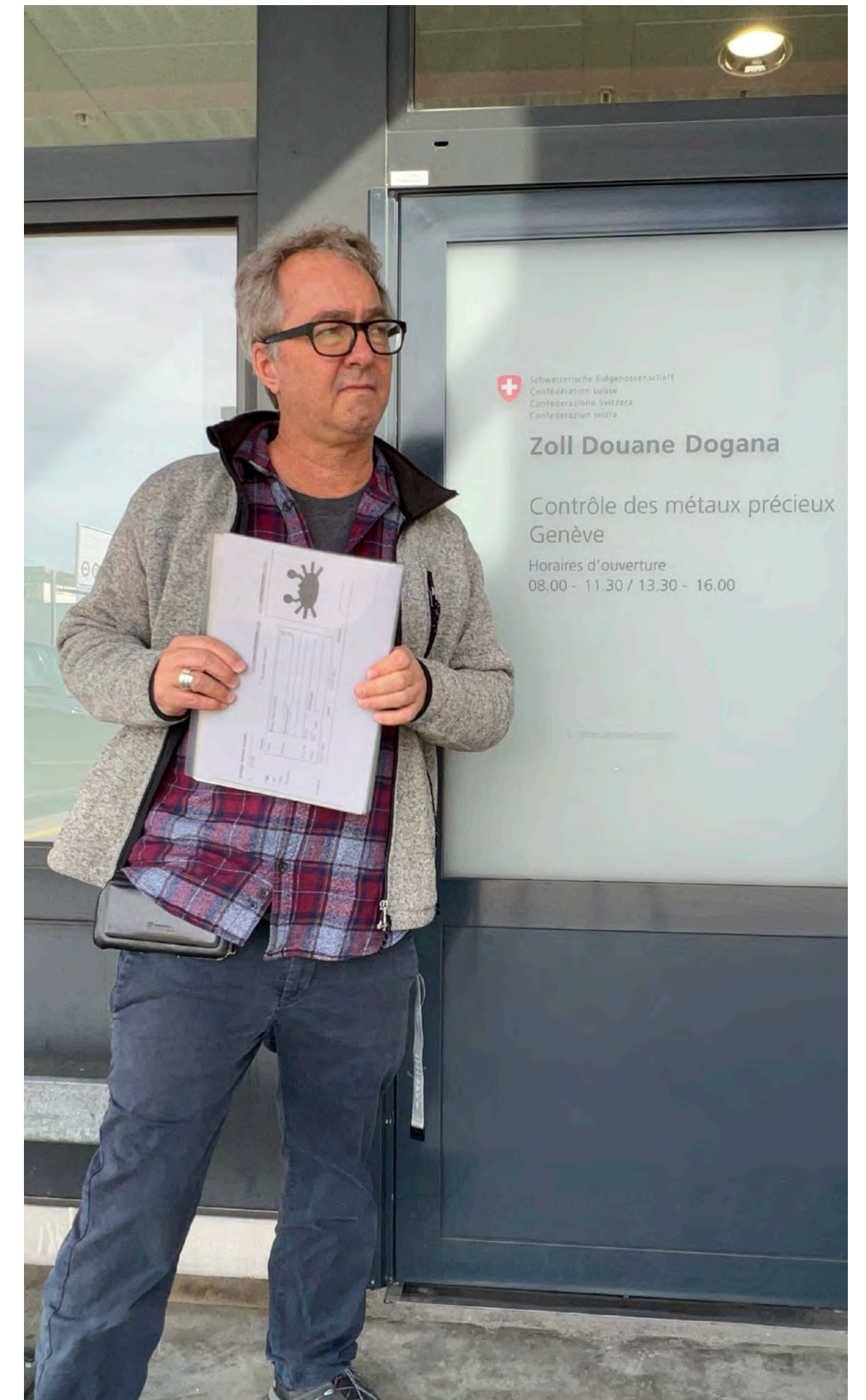
June 1991 trademark (same applicant) - expired in 2012

The Geneva Office of Precious Metal Control (CMP)

On March 17, 2023 I took photos of the GG to the Precious Metal Control (CMP) office at the Geneva Airport. They told me that they would not accept the crab mark on the GG as being the same crab mark in their database. (I went again with the actual watch on April 12 and they examined it and told me that even though the marks are different they would not reject it.)

Regardless, if the GG was a copy of the Swatch it could have been subject to patent infringement under the doctrine of equivalents (gold/plastic). Why stamp one's registered mark on a patent infringing design? Registering the mark leads back to the registrant whether the CMP controls it or not. Anyone could find the registrant, as I did, including Swatch's lawyers.

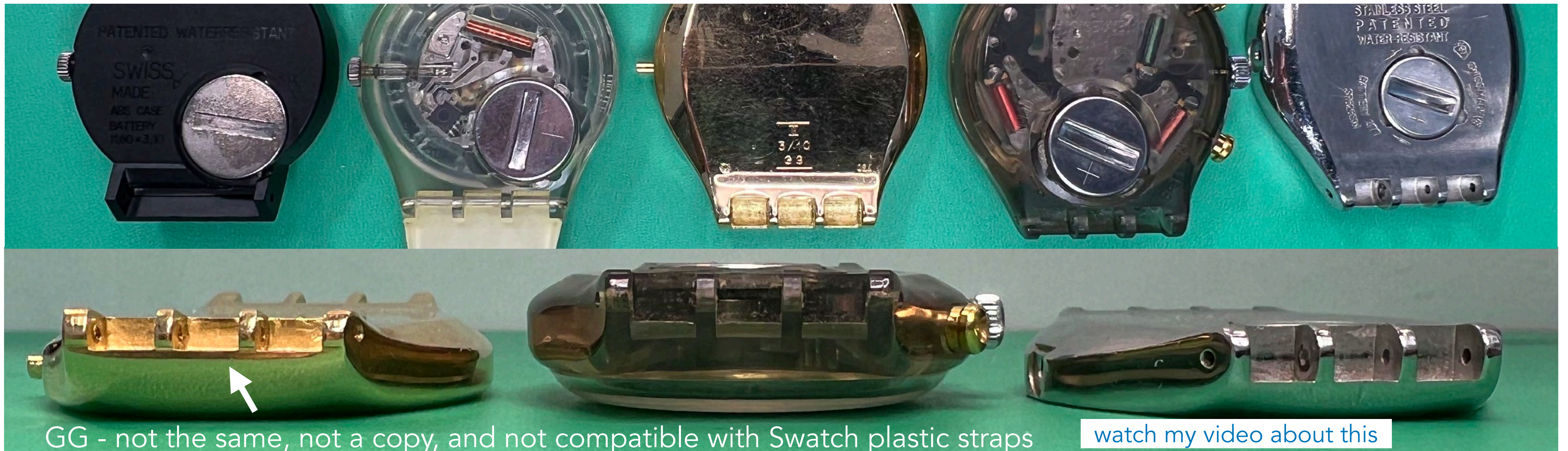
Not only did the registrant register the mark for 20 years in 1991, they also renewed the registration in 2011. But they *never had the GG controlled*, which has been [mandatory](#) in Switzerland since 1880. I think that the registrant was looking for the watch. It doesn't make sense to register and maintain the unused responsibility mark for 40 years for any other reason.



[watch my video about this](#)

Which Came First, the GG or the Swatch?

In my opinion there's no way that a simple series of random coincidences can explain the complex tapestry of interconnected details that I've documented herein. If there's one piece of evidence that the GG came before the Swatch that rises above all the others it is the ETA case hinge patent. This one patent speaks to three irrefutable facts: 1) the otherwise improbable *absence* of a design patent, 2) the patent being limited to *plastic only*, and 3) the patent containing a drawing of the GG's contoured case back which was not used in any public Swatch case design until eight years later.



GG - not the same, not a copy, and not compatible with Swatch plastic straps

[watch my video about this](#)

Was the GG Designed by Gérald Genta?

If it was made in the 1960s it was probably designed by Genta. It may have been made in his own workshop between 1969 and 1971, or with a casemaker such as Lascor, Louis Lang (LL), Ervin Piquerez (EPSA), or La Centrale Boîtes (CB) between 1965 and 1969. Unless it was a prototype the established casemakers would almost certainly have stamped it with their own marks. That they didn't suggests that it is a prototype. This also allowed Genta to mark it and sign it himself.

It is unlikely that the designer was anyone other than Gérald Genta. Mr. Genta was well known throughout the industry and any other designer or casemaker would likely have avoided signing any prototype with his initials to avoid confusion.



GG with Omega Seamaster Cosmic dial

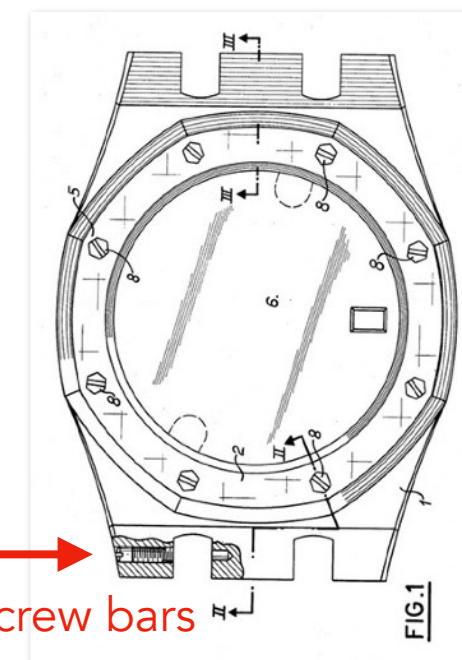
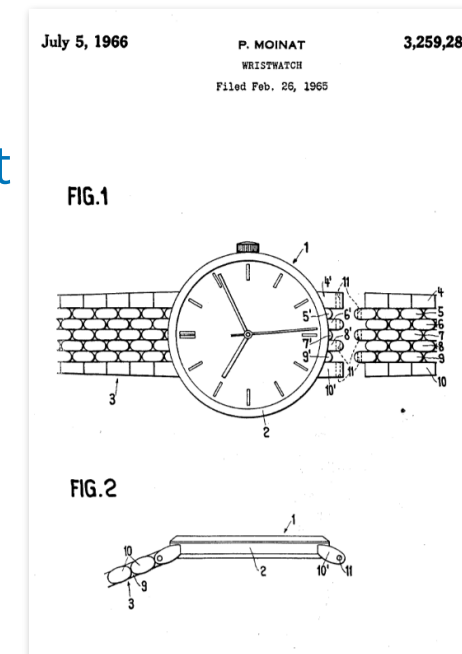
Why Wasn't the Original Design Used by Omega?

Gérald Genta was on exclusive contract with Omega from 1960 to 1965. During that time he worked closely with Omega's Head of Creation, Pierre Moinat. Mr. Moinat's 1965 patent is considered to have introduced the integrated bracelet concept to the industry. Like other Omega patents Genta went uncredited but he would nevertheless continue to make his own advances in integrated bracelet case designs into the 1970s.

[Moinat's Integrated Bracelet Patent](#)

Was the GG an integrated bracelet design that was abandoned before production because it would require custom-cut leather straps? Non-standard straps would have been costly to supply and support globally over the years. Whatever the reason Omega used Genta's C-Shaped Constellation case shape for its 1966 Seamaster Cosmic and it uses conventional leather straps and metal bracelets.

[Omega_Constellation_Accessories_Part_1.pdf](#)



[Genta's 1972 AP Royal Oak Patent](#)



[The 1966 Genta-designed C-Shaped Seamaster Cosmic](#)

ETA Made Movements, Not Cases

Imagine for a moment that it's 1981 and you are Nicolas Hayek. You've been brought into SSIH, the parent of Omega, as a consultant to help the SSIH transition to the quartz era. You start looking into merging SSIH and ASUAG. You know that ETA is designing a waterproof, plastic, monohull quartz watch with a welded-on crystal and it seems very promising. But you also know that ETA does not design watches: they design movements.

You're worried. You look through the archive of case designs at Omega and you discover an unused design for a monocoque Seamaster Cosmic circa 1966 designed by Gérald Genta. You love the design. It's perfect for plastic. The only problem is the Swatch case design has to be patented, and the patent and marketing will be stronger if its origins at Omega are kept secret.

ETA 2783 movement and branded dial in an unbranded case.



Note the powerful lugs, probably unbreakable even in plastic!
But at what cost aesthetically, and also not patentable!

Nicolas Hayek's North Star

If the GG existed and I was Nicolas Hayek I would take it to ETA and ask Ernst Thomke (then head of ETA) to use it as a reference for ETA's waterproof plastic watch case. I would ask Mr. Genta if he was okay with keeping that a secret and I would offer him a contract for whatever he felt was fair to design a new Omega as compensation.

Is that what happened? I don't know. But Omega did contract Gérald Genta to design the Omega Seamaster Polaris in 1982 at SSIH under Nicolas Hayek's management while the Swatch was also being designed at ASUAG's ETA.

Whatever the GG is it's not a Swatch and it's not a fake. Counterfeits are designed to fit existing backstories not to invent new ones. Physical artifacts, patents, documents, and photographs all tell their own stories if we are open to them.



Nicolas Hayek wearing
The Omega Seamaster Polaris
(The "North Star")
designed by Gérald Genta

Why always the Polaris?

How Did the GG Get Out of ETA?

According to the book "Mister Swatch" by Jürg Wegelin, a Swatch prototype with a "Rado dial" was listed as being for sale in an auction catalogue in Zurich a year after Ernst Thomke resigned as CEO of Swatch AG's parent company, SMH. Thomke had commissioned the prototype in the early days of the Swatch, was known to take prototypes home, and was believed to have taken it. Hayek pursued the watch through the courts, taking "person or persons unknown" (but not Thomke) to trial. *Persons unknown?*

Did the GG take the same path? Since Thomke was known to have taken the "Rado dial" Swatch prototype (according to Wegelin), it's possible that he could have done the same with the GG around that same time (early 1991). *Perhaps the GG even is the "Rado dial" prototype?* It's also possible that Thomke didn't take the GG but was suspected of having done so by Hayek.

excerpt from [MISTER SWATCH](#) by Jürg Wegelin



Two Rados with GG dial vibes

Person or Persons Unknown?

Page 1 Story in the Zuger Nachrichten August 4, 1995

A few hours after the CMP told me that the mark in the registry didn't match the GG the registrant of the mark called me in response to the letter I had sent him and told me that he had ten gold Swatch Chrono copies made for him in 1991, Swatch found out, his home was raided by the police, and a trial followed. He provided me with the articles here as evidence.

I contacted the author of the articles, Markus Baumgartner. Mr. Baumgartner is the CEO of a communications firm in Zug that specializes in corporate crisis communication. I sent him a link to a draft of this document. He replied, "You do a great work but I have nothing more to add." Then, in a follow-up email he added, "Wow, you are digging really deep. Congrats!"

Was a cover story invented for the press to hide the GG's true origins? Is the GG actually the "Rado dial" prototype in Mister Swatch? Was the registrant Wegelin's "persons unknown"?

[watch my video about this](#)

[link: high resolution full text English translation](#)

I have redacted the name of the registrant of the crab mark because he told me that he prefers not to be in the newspapers again. His name is of course in the COPMC record if you wish to find it.



"Defeat for Swatch"

Lawsuit dismissed: The mighty Swatch went after a small hobby watchmaker

In 1991, Swatch AG held the Zug hobby watchmaker ("Name", age) accountable. "Name" tried to sell a gold Swatch watch made on his behalf, which could be confused with the original Swatch model "Chrono". "Name" was invited to the Gotthard restaurant on September 18, 1991, where a Swatch employee presented himself as a prospective buyer. A week later, Swatch filed a criminal lawsuit. In addition to a house search, Swatch also demanded the confiscation of any "gold Swatch watches." On November 2, 1992, "Name" was fined CHF 3,000 by Zug police judge Alex Briner because he had violated the federal law on unfair competition. The gold watch in question was confiscated. On the other hand, "Name" raised an objection through his criminal lawyer. As the first instance, the police magistrate's office had to deal with the case. Police judge Reto Steinmann came to a different verdict: "There was no risk of confusion (...)" Steinmann acquitted "Name." The verdict is not yet final: public prosecutor Paul Kuhn is currently reviewing the verdict and is considering moving on to the next instance.

The Crab Mark Registrant's Story

On March 17, 2023 the registrant of the crab mark told me over the telephone that in 1991 he had a total of ten Gelb Gold (GG) Swatch copies made to give to friends and clients of his real estate business. He told me that he was not a watchmaker and that he did not know that the Omega reference number was engraved inside the GG watch case. He complimented me on my research and my discovery of this detail.

The registrant told me that he had originally planned to have ten watches each made in Yellow (Gelb) Gold, Rose Gold, and White Gold, and that "the Roman numeral I" on the GG signified the first in the series, but that after the police raided his house in Zug and searched for the other watches, and following the court case brought against him by Swatch, he moved to Spain and decided not to have the others made, even though he ultimately won the court case on appeal. He said that he didn't remember who he'd given the watches to, offering the example of "ex-girlfriends," apparently as forgettable past acquaintances. But when he asked me where I got mine he added, "maybe I know them?"

He told me that he was given the movements by the "director of the Omega Museum" (who was Marco Richon at the time). I didn't ask him why he spent tens of thousands of Swiss francs on solid gold cases and didn't have proper dials made for a few hundred francs. The dial on the GG is in fact a one-off, ~55 year old, amateurishly refinished, 1966 Seamaster Cosmic dial. Instead, I encouraged him to keep talking and asked him who actually made the cases. He refused to tell me. He also said that he refused to tell the police who made them. *He refused to tell the police.*

I asked him what straps he put on the watches. He told me that he fitted them with straps taken from new Swatches. But I know that leather Swatch straps don't fit through the GG's free ring and plastic Swatch straps don't fit the GG's lugs. If the GG case and buckle were made to fit Swatch straps the casemaker failed to check that they did fit. This is odd given the cost of gold and other details such as making it with Omega's threaded coaxial screw bars rather than Swatch's steel push pins. Also, as the lugs were cast it would have been normal to check their shape and depth in the mold and a test casting against actual Swatch parts before machining a single gold case. But again I chose not to challenge his story.

I knew from the COPMC that the registrant had registered the mark in 1991 and renewed it in 2011. I had also been told by the CMP that the registrant's mark didn't match the GG. It remained my opinion that he didn't make the GG: he registered the badly copied mark to *find* the GG.

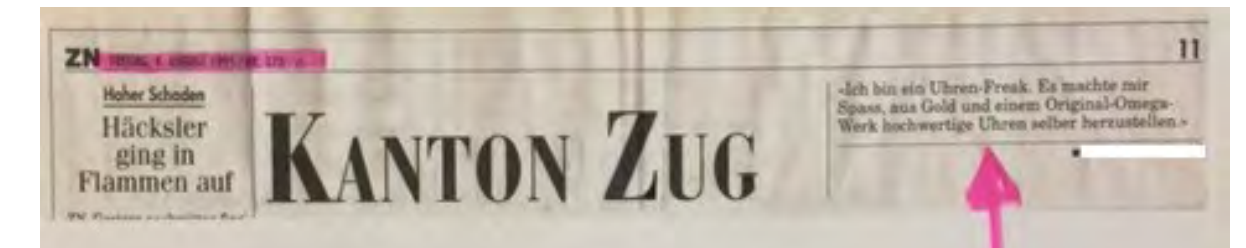
After the registrant believed that I believed that he was responsible for the GG he asked me if I needed money and if I wanted to sell it. I found that interesting given that according to him his offering it for sale had resulted in the police raid on his home and his criminal prosecution.

A Possible Cover Story Timeline

According to Wegelin's book an *early Swatch prototype* appeared in an auction catalogue a year after Thomke's exit from SMH and Hayek immediately brought a charge *against someone else*.

If you were Hayek and you believed that the GG had disappeared with Thomke's exit from SMH, but you didn't have proof, what would you have done? Would you arrange for a "person unknown" to proactively discredit the true provenance of the GG and disseminate that story to the press so that if the watch did eventually appear on the secondary market it would be misidentified? As unlikely as that may sound, that is what appears to have happened, and if true it may connect the story of the "Rado dial" prototype to the GG.

In 1991 the internet as we know it didn't exist. Newspapers, TV and radio were how companies communicated with the public. The newspaper stories about the GG, including those by Baumgartner, appear to have been coordinated.* On June 30, 1991, four weeks after Thomke's last day as CEO of SMH, the international crab trademark was registered by the registrant. Three weeks later the precious metal responsibility mark was registered. The press wrote that nine weeks later, on September 18, the registrant was alleged by Swatch to have offered to sell a counterfeit gold Swatch to an employee in Zug. A week later Swatch filed a criminal complaint against the registrant with the Zug police, demanding a house search and confiscation of "any gold Swatch watches." The details of the criminal charges and search request were in the public record sixteen weeks after Thomke's exit. The order to confiscate "the watch in question" was issued a year later. Three years later, after an appeal, the registrant was found not guilty of any wrongdoing. A story (true or not) had been minted by the press: the GG was a "hobby-watch."



"Defeat For Swatch"?

* The registrant sent me these two different 1995 newspaper articles with the exact same photos. The photos suggest the work of a publicist. 60

What's Shown in the Newspaper Photos?



A "re-staging" of the newspaper photos. The gold watch in the newspaper photos looks exactly like the GG - including its hand-made dial.

The strap on the gold watch appears to be from a 1990 Swatch Chrono "Black Friday": a thin plastic strap with a faux lizard texture. The blue watch is a 1989 Chrono "Skipper": one of the earliest Swatch Chronos. Both straps are thin enough to fit through the GG's free ring. The Skipper strap is the only leather Swatch strap I've found that does fit the GG's free ring.

For the "re-staging" photos on this page the GG can be seen floating slightly above the surface it is on because Swatch plastic straps don't fit the GG's lug pockets. I had to trim the tops of the lug areas of the strap in the photos on this page just to get the screw pins in and the watch still wouldn't lie flat. The registrant would surely have experienced the same issue with every Swatch plastic strap he tried if his watch was the same design as the GG.

The press articles were published in 1995 but the photos in them could have been taken as far back as 1989. Who gave the photos to the press in 1995? If it was Swatch, why did Swatch want the public to know that it had lost its court case against the "hobby-watch"?



The plastic Black Friday lizard strap pattern.



The plastic strap doesn't fit the GG's lugs correctly.

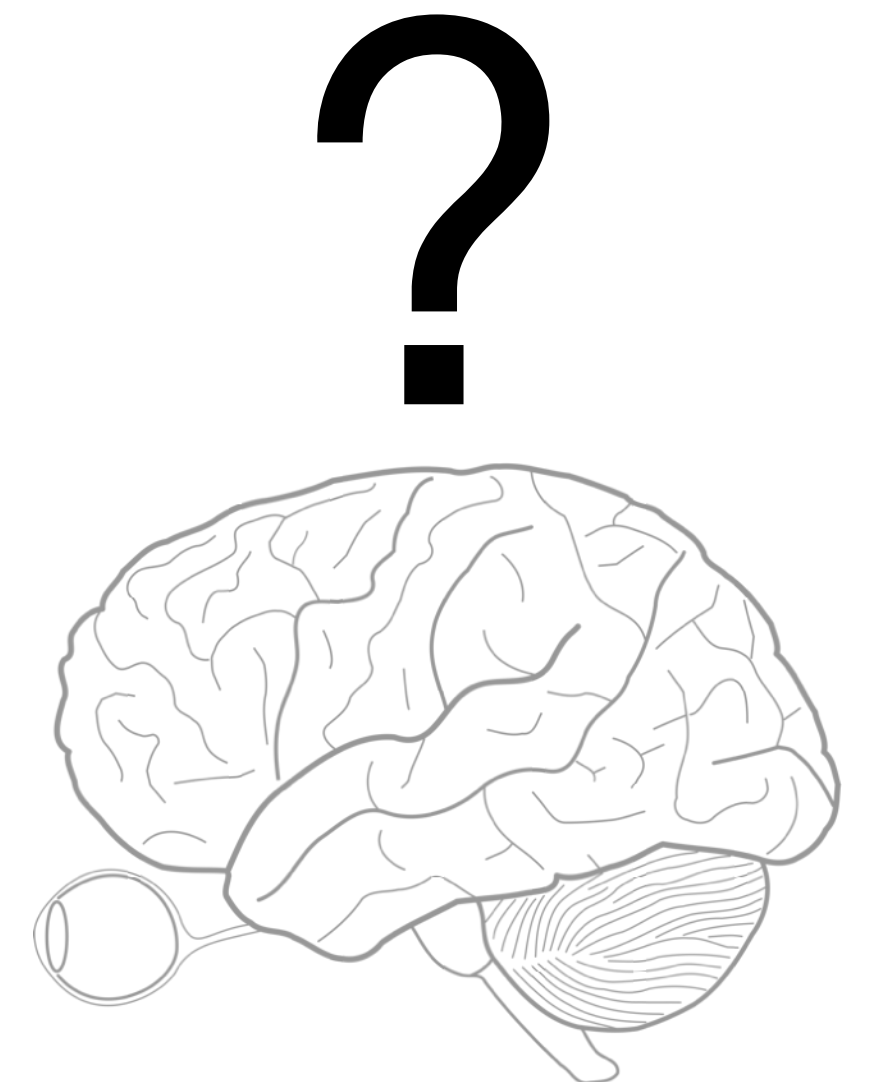


The Swatch Skipper Chrono dial is dated 1989.

Is it Possible that the Registrant's Story is True?

Of course! The registrant could easily have hired a precious metal casemaker to make ten solid gold counterfeit Swatches in 1991. The few companies with the ability to do so would likely have had no qualms about committing contributory patent infringement and engaging in counterfeiting, especially if offered the opportunity to counterfeit the most successful product of the largest watch company in Switzerland for whom most if not all were regular contractors. Precious metal case makers are notorious for taking risks. Counterfeiting is a favorite and a close second to leaving the doors to their factories unlocked at night. They would likely also have been eager to get their hands on the [responsibility mark](#) to stamp it on the cases and the buckles so that the registrant could easily be caught and questioned by the police. The thrill of not knowing if he would provide evidence to the police of their having actually made the counterfeits for him would have been so exciting that it would have been almost visceral for them. After tediously investing millions of Swiss francs in factories and machinery casemakers are known to do almost anything for the adrenaline rush of putting their whole company at risk. They are also known for their unyielding support of true, independent, "real-estate-salesman-hobby-watchmakers," a subset of hobby-watchmakers that have never seen the inside of a watch case, including those of "hobby-watches" made on their behalf.

[watch my video about this](#)



Brain

NOUN

1. Anatomy & Zoology the part of the central nervous system enclosed in the cranium of humans and other vertebrates, consisting of a soft, convoluted mass of gray and white matter and serving to control and coordinate the mental and physical actions

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com>

So What Did Happen?

My hypothesis is that around the time that Thomke exited SMH so did the GG. After that the GG passed from the hands of whoever took it from SMH to me. It couldn't have been photographed by Swatch after June 1, 1991 and it couldn't have appeared in court as evidence. *But it did appear in court, right? And then it was returned to the registrant.* So why do I have the GG now and why doesn't the registrant have it?

After the GG was discovered as missing there were two parallel stories. Both may be true. Think of it this way: in a big company with secrets (take Apple for example, but it could be any company) obviously not everyone knows every secret. The registrant's story is mostly if not entirely true: at least one solid gold watch that looked like a Swatch but had an Omega movement inside of it was made. A casemaker made the case and buckle and someone at Omega put a movement in it. Who made that case and buckle and even *in what decade* was kept a secret from others in the same company. A few people in the company would know. Most of the company would not. One or more additional gold watches may have also been made by someone else at Swatch in a later decade, also without others knowing, and provided to the registrant. The registrant offered one of those *later* watches for sale to someone at Swatch and a complaint was made to the police. *The GG was not one of those later watches. It was made decades earlier and was missing the whole time. That's why I have it and the registrant doesn't.*

No one including the registrant lied or did anything wrong. They just kept secrets! Even from each other.

What Watch *Did* the Court in Zug See?

According to Baumgartner a gold watch was confiscated from the registrant by the police on December 13, 1991 and again on November 2, 1992. The Zug judges and prosecutor would have known that under the Precious Metals Control Act it was illegal for the registrant to sell a new gold watch that was not hallmarked. If they didn't know Swatch's lawyers surely would have told them. The offense is punishable by imprisonment and a fine of up to 100,000 Chf. If found guilty the registrant would have also lost his responsibility mark. The registrant did not lose his responsibility mark and in fact he renewed it for no apparent reason in 2011.

It's possible that the police confiscated a watch that was hallmarked by the CMP that *looked* like the GG. However, if that watch bore a hallmark it was not the GG — because the GG is not hallmarked.




It's also possible that a watch was confiscated and the registrant's lawyer asked for the evidence to be sealed. If both Swatch and the registrant agreed to all of the important facts of the case: *the registrant had it made, it was a copy of a Swatch, he offered to sell it to Swatch, and it was made of gold*, perhaps there was no reason to unseal it and examine it?

Either way I don't believe that the Zug court ever examined the actual GG. I think that if they had they would have referred the registrant for violating the Precious Metals Control Act, especially if he had refused to tell the police and the court who had made it "on his behalf."



First Federal Act of 1880

Federal Act on the Control and Guarantee of the fineness of articles made of gold and silver

- Common standards of fineness for gold and silver 
- Official marks became mandatory for gold and silver
- Running Assay Offices was in cantonal sovereignty
- Sworn assayers were in charge of assaying and marking articles and bars 
- Charges without fiscal character (only cost-covering)
- Creation of a federal Office in charge of assayers training and supervising the assay offices' work (office was part the Polytechnikum in Zurich, today ETH) 

Federal Department of Finance FDP
Federal Customs Administration FCA

The LBMA Assaying & Refining Conference
London 2017

Precious Metals Control Act

941.31

Art. 46⁷⁵

c. Improper use of stamps

¹ Any person who intentionally makes improper use of official Swiss, foreign or international stamps shall be liable to a term of imprisonment or to a fine not exceeding CHF 100,000.

² If offender acts through negligence, he or she shall be liable to a fine not exceeding CHF 50,000.

Art. 47⁷⁶

d. Stamp requirements, violation; Misuse of marks and symbols; Alteration of hallmarks

¹ Any person who places on the market precious metal articles without a fineness mark or without a responsibility mark, melt products without a fineness mark or without a melter's or assayer's mark, or watch-cases without a hallmark,

Any person who issues or places on the market articles as multi-metal articles or plated articles without the required mark or without a responsibility mark,

Any person who, without authorisation, imitates or uses a responsibility mark or a melter's or assayer's mark that is not their own,

Any person who places on the market precious metal articles or melt products on which the fineness mark or the imprint of a hallmark has been altered or removed,

shall, if acting with intent, be liable to a term of imprisonment or to a fine not exceeding CHF 100,000.

Is the GG *The "Rado Dial" Prototype?*

Prototypes from the early days of Swatch regularly change hands on the secondary market. It's difficult to imagine one resulting in legal action against a seller unless it revealed a secret or had a unique and significant historical value. A Swatch with a Rado dial would be odd, but it wouldn't mean anything because dials are interchangeable. However, a prototype case with markings that potentially revealed that Gérald Genta designed the reference Swatch case: that would be very important!

If the "Rado dial" prototype wasn't related to the GG I would be very interested to know why it was so important to Nicolas Hayek. Regardless, its story demonstrates the degree to which Mr. Hayek was willing to go to protect whatever secret or value it did represent to him and how he went about doing that. In doing so it adds to the plausibility of my theory that he may have similarly sought to regain control of the GG and any secrets that it held through the same means: the courts and the press.

I asked Jürg Wegelin, the journalist and author of *Mister Swatch*, if he thought that the "Rado dial" prototype could be related to the GG. He kindly replied that he did not have enough information from his sources to know if they are related or not.

Other Swatch Prototypes -



A 1981 Swatch Zaugg prototype fitted (by me) with an Omega dial.



A 1990s Swatch prototype - note the absence of any case markings.

The Origin of the Rado Dial Prototype Story

On September 21, 1995 a story by Stefan Barmettler about the "Rado dial" prototype was published in the Swiss national weekly newsmagazine *Facts*. It had been just six weeks since Markus Baumgartner's August 4, 1995 story about the "hobby-watch" was published in the Zug and Lucerne dailies.

The dates that Barmettler cited for the court case regarding the Rado dial prototype align closely with the events in Zug, however, the details differ: it specifically targeted "unknown persons in Solothurn" (whom Barmettler identifies as *Thomke*). Hayek confidants Pierre Arnold and Hanspeter Rentsch were both allegedly questioned by the *Solothurn* examining magistrate (not the Zug court?) And the watch was a plastic Swatch prototype, not a gold "hobby-watch." In fact it was an *early* Swatch prototype.

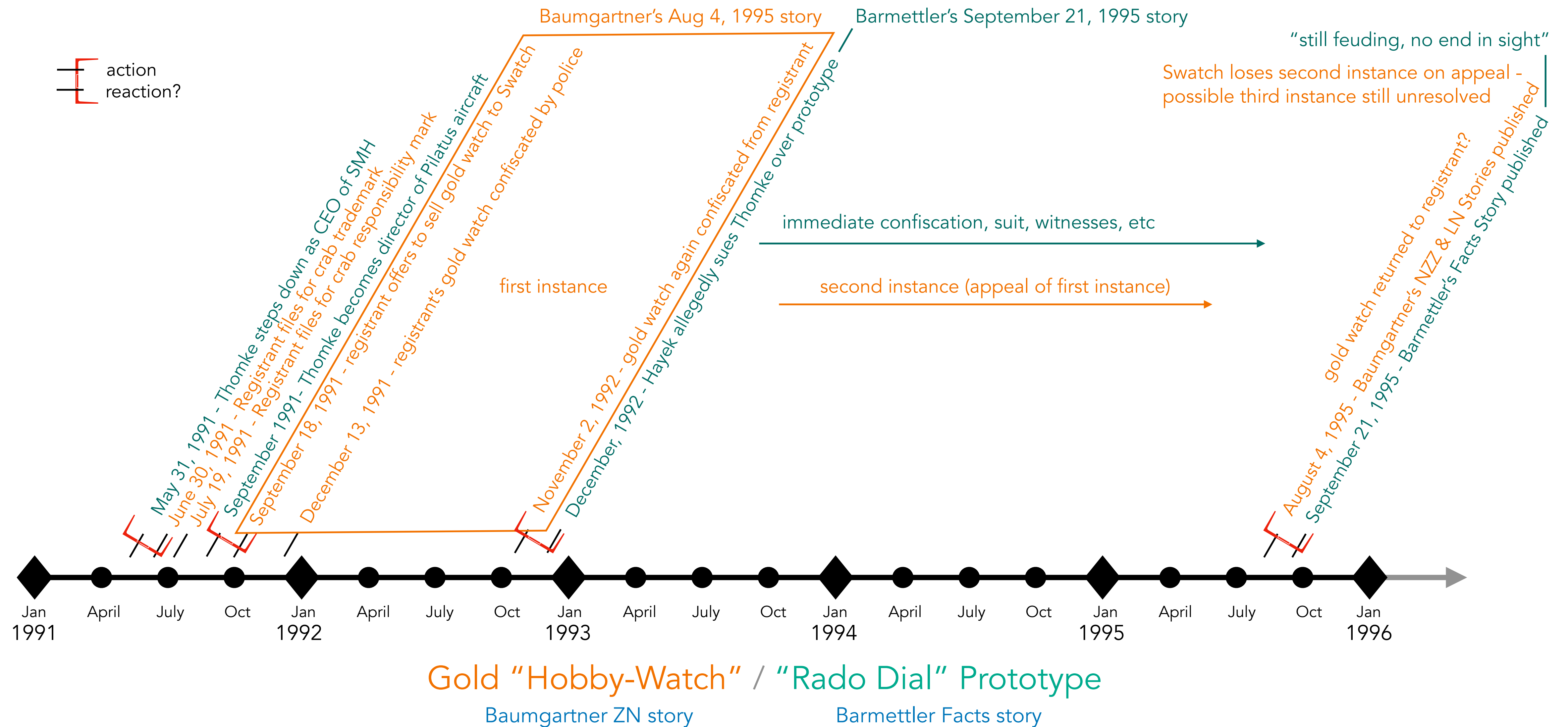
Why are these two stories so similar and yet so different? Is one true and the other false? Are they both true? Or are they both false? Was Barmettler's source a friend of Thomke? And true or not, was the timing of the *Facts* story a warning shot at Hayek that Thomke was aware of the case in Zug and that Hayek should be careful? Or are the parallels in the timing and the timelines of the two stories just a coincidence?

[Barmettler's Sept. 21, 1995 Facts article](#)



Is Thomke wearing an Omega
Seamaster Polaris !!?

The "Hobby-Watch" "Rado Dial" Timeline



The Relationship of the Press and the Courts

Markus Baumgartner's front page story in the Zuger Nachrichten on August 4, 1995 states that the registrant offered to sell a gold watch to a Swatch employee on September 18, 1991. It doesn't say if Swatch bought it. Apparently they didn't because the article also says that the police didn't arrest the registrant and confiscate the watch until they *happened to see it on his wrist* three months later. Swatch are not amateurs. Hanspeter Rentsch would have known that they needed evidence. *Why didn't they buy the watch?* It also says that the order to confiscate "the watch in question" (singular) from the registrant was given a year later on November 2, 1992 after the guilty verdict. Did the police confiscate "the watch in question" and then return it and then confiscate it again and then return it again? Why? And what about the Judges and the Precious Metals Control Act? Did they ever even see the watch?

The courts in Switzerland afford a high degree of privacy protection to the accused: so much so that the press can make mistakes or even publish outright falsehoods and the courts have little ability to correct them. This is even more true if no one is libeled or brings a new suit. If the trial is in fact a non-adversarial public relations stunt then there are even fewer constraints on the press post-trial. The story of the gold watch that was on the front page of the Zug newspaper was written by a talented journalist that became Switzerland's leading corporate crisis PR consultant. You can decide for yourself if you think it was written before, during, or after his transition. Either way it does provide additional context and visual evidence.

[Baumgartner Zuger Nachrichten story](#)

[Video: Baumgartner's PR work](#)

What Do the Zug Newspaper Photos Tell Us?

On May 15, 2023 I received high quality scans of the newspaper photos of the watches from the Zug public library.

The gold watch appears to have a slightly larger crystal opening than the GG and even more amateurishly placed index dots.

The photos appear to have been taken under a uniquely colorful lighting set-up typical of 1990s editorial and PR photography.

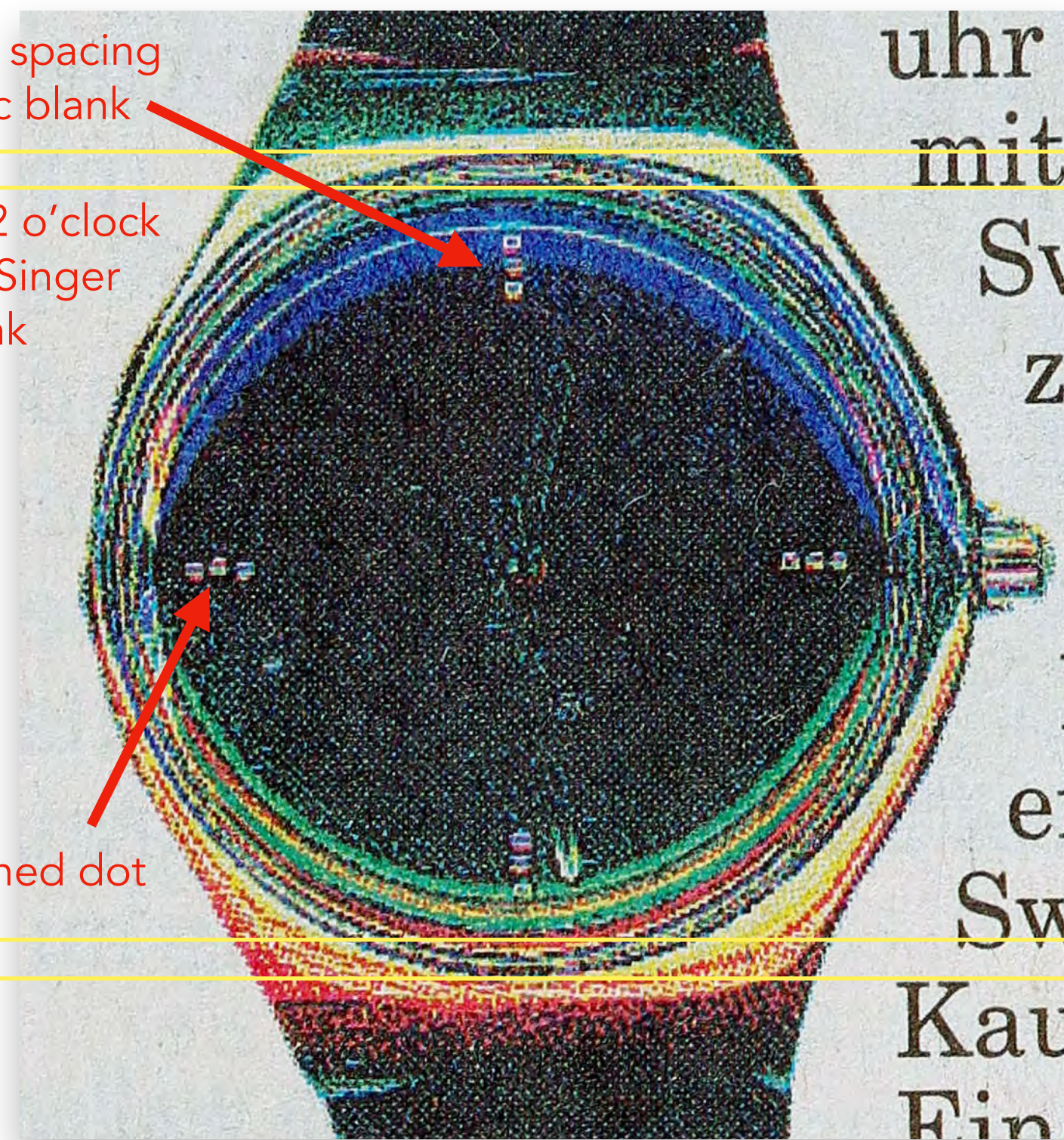


The GG

wrong 12 o'clock spacing for Singer Cosmic blank

reference 12 o'clock spacing for Singer Cosmic blank

badly misaligned dot



The gold "Zug" Swatch

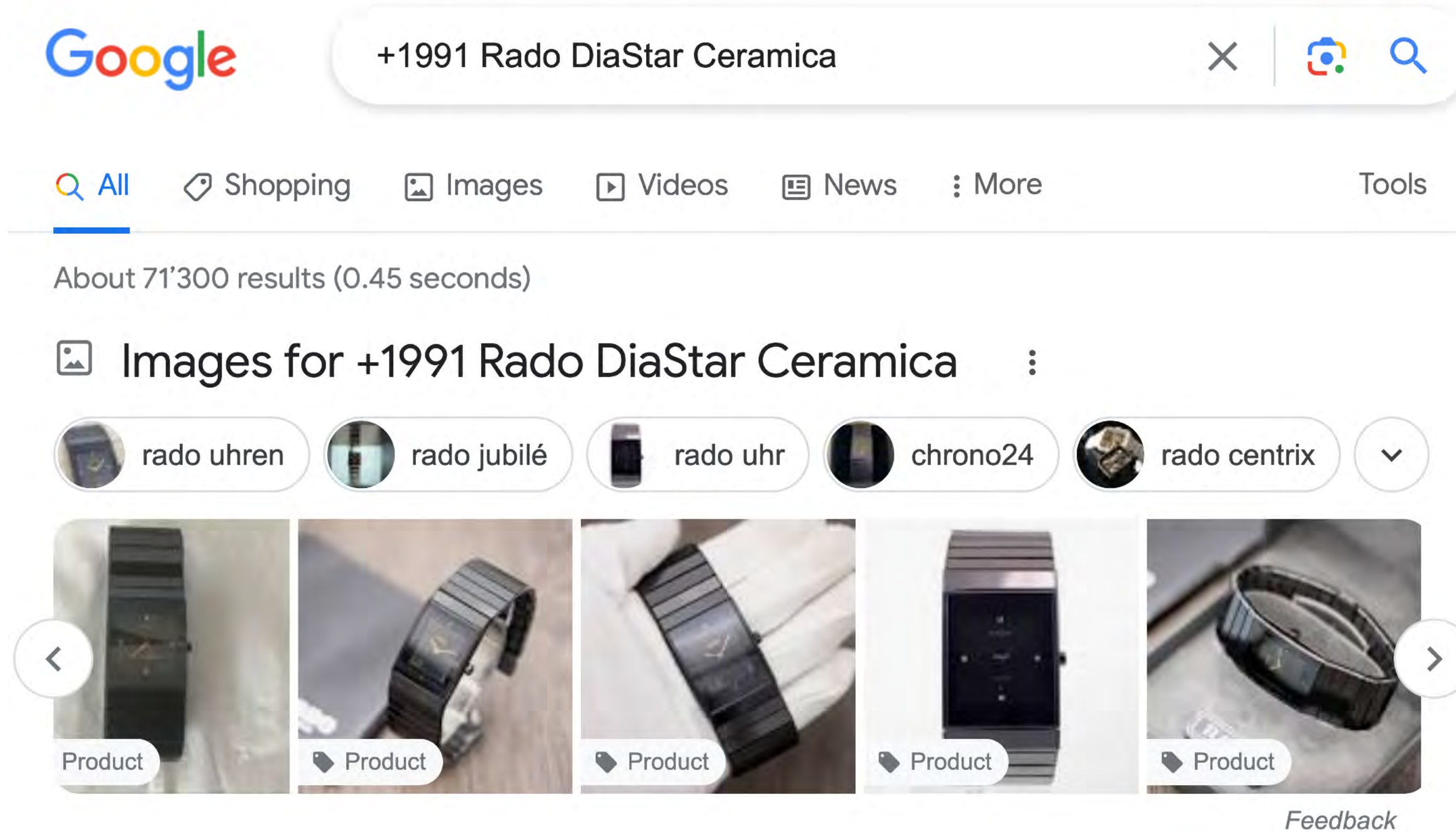
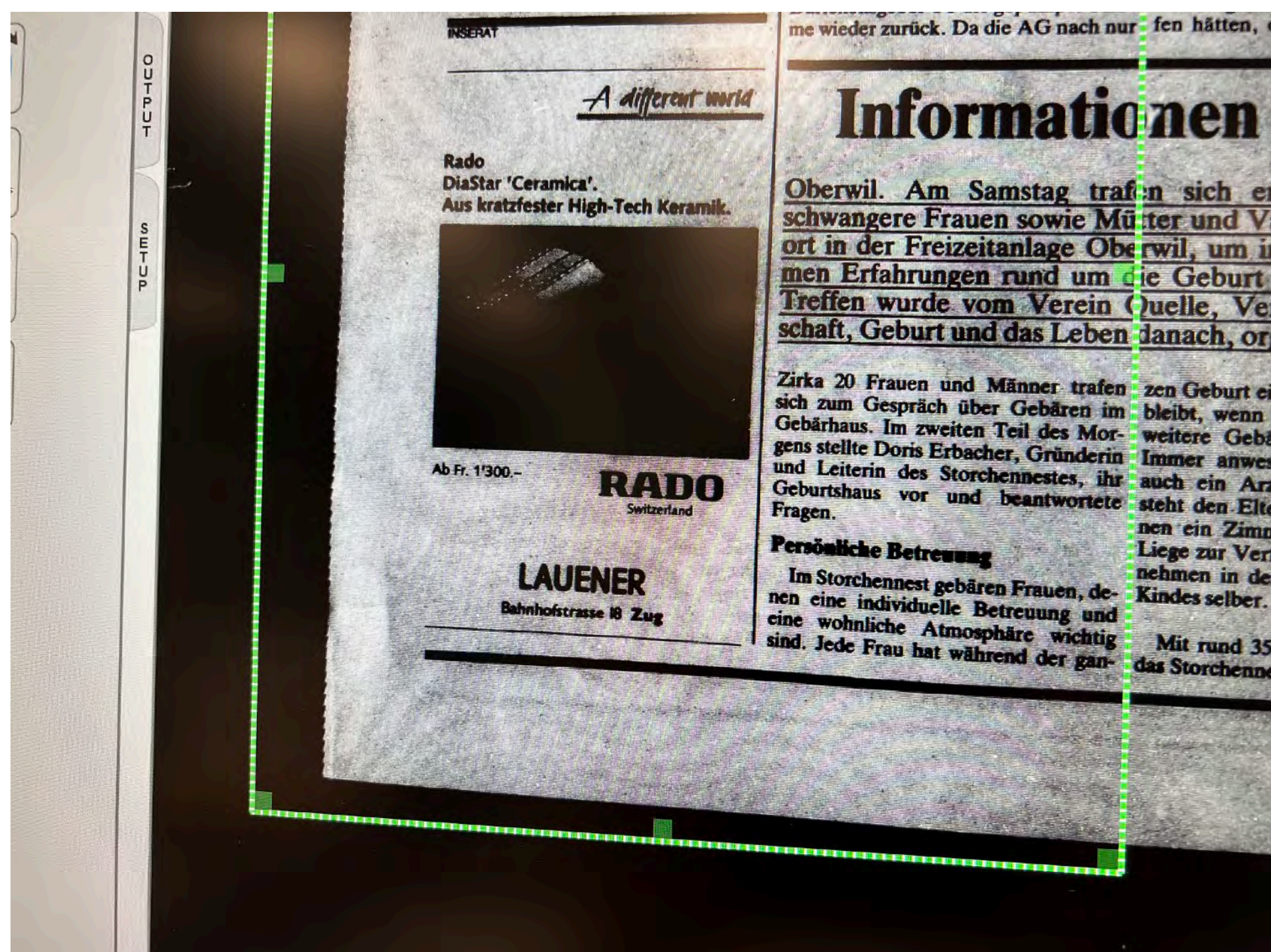


The Skipper Chrono

Something Else I Found in the Zug Newspaper...

While researching 1991 newspaper articles on microfilm at the Zug Public Library on May 19, 2023 I noticed this advertisement for a Rado DiaStar "Ceramica" for sale at Lauener Watches and Jewelry in Zug in 1991.

Curious if it would confirm what would have been considered a "Rado dial" look at the time I googled it...

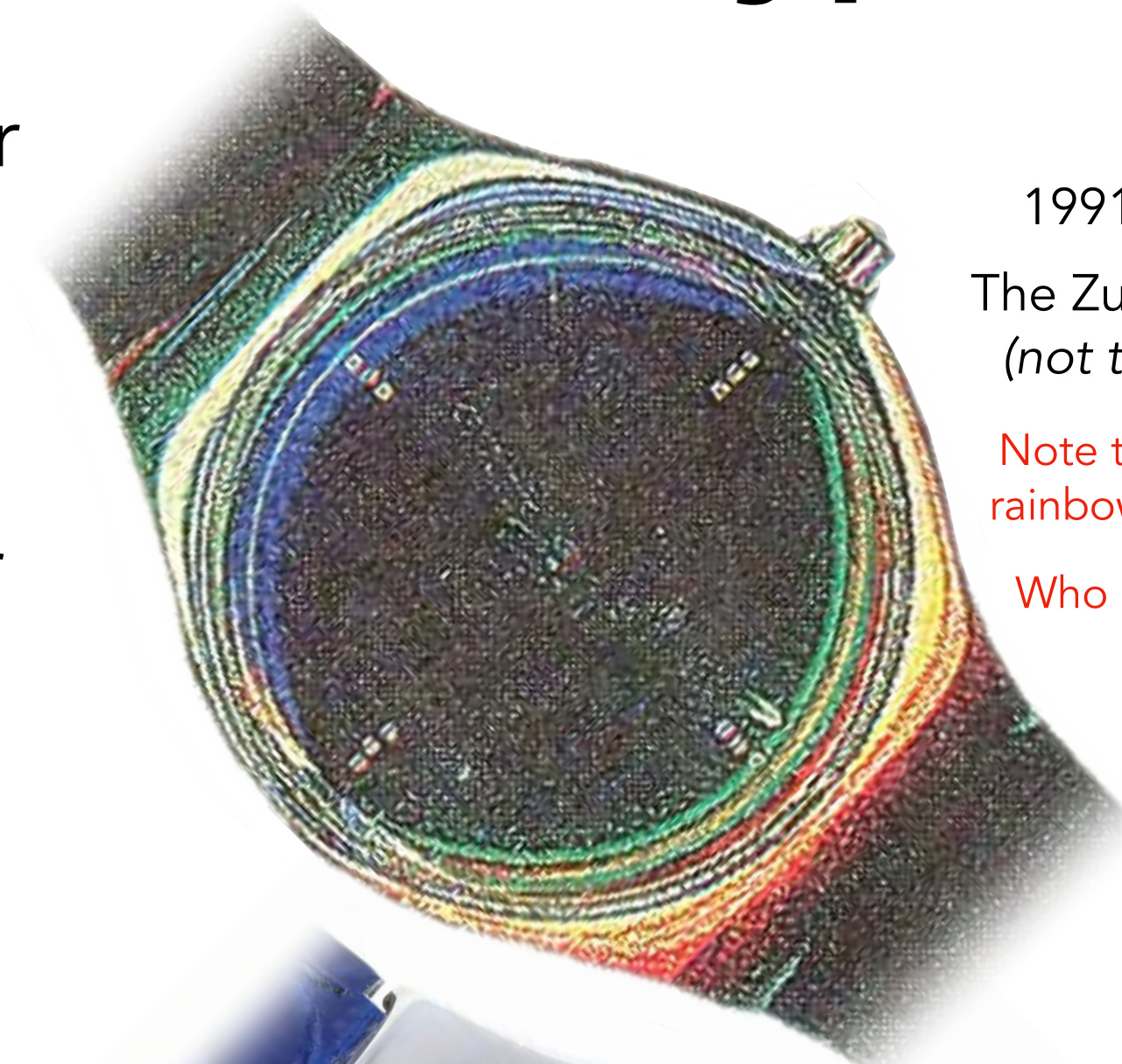


Was the Zug Watch a Trésor Magique Prototype?

The Zug watch case is closer to the Chrono design than it is to the Tresor Magique; however, a member of the Swatch design team could have ordered it internally in late 1991 or early 1992 as a test watch without raising any eyebrows. Whoever ordered it could also have specified the dimensions for the movement cutout without specifying the reference or Omega caliber that those dimensions corresponded to (i.e. 135.017 SP).

The registrant did tell me that he didn't know that his cases had Omega reference numbers engraved inside. Maybe that's because they didn't!

Swatch making several unmarked gold prototype cases for the 1993 Tresor Magique based on the Chrono case shape would *not* have been unusual. Secretly transferring them to the registrant through the Omega museum so that he could stamp them with a badly copied crab mark and try to sell one of them back to Swatch as a "hobby-watch" *would* have been. However, doing so also happens to make sense within this already highly unusual story and doesn't substantially conflict with what the registrant told me.



1991-1992
The Zug Watch
(not the GG)

Note the trendy
rainbow lighting!

Who did that!?



1993
Swatch
"Trésor
Magique"

[watch my video about this](#)

Why and How did Swatch Keep The GG a Secret?

If, as I hypothesize, Omega paid Gérald Genta for the Swatch design by *overpaying* him for the Seamaster Polaris before the merger of SSIH and ASUAG then the GG could have posed a legal and reputational risk to Hayek and Swatch. If the GG went missing, as the “Rado dial” prototype had, how could Swatch control that risk? The GG could tell its own story, as I have helped it do, simply by being released into the wild.

The Zug chief of police in the 1990s was born the same year as the registrant in the same tiny town of Walchwil where they both studied to become school teachers. Also from Walchwil and related by surname to the Zug police chief was an ex-President of Switzerland and member of the Federal Council from 1974 - 1982. The registrant today shares a multi-family chalet with a business that shares that same surname. Is it possible that the registrant was supplied with the Zug watch by Swatch or Omega and *agreed* to be arrested as a *patriot of the Swiss Confederation*? He told me that he was friends with the director of the Omega Museum. Wouldn't he naturally also consider himself a friend of Swatch and of Nicolas Hayek?

Under Swiss Criminal Procedure Code Art. 248, *seized* evidence can be sealed by the defense*. If the Criminal Justice Authority fails to file a request for the removal of the seal within twenty days the property must be returned. Collusion or not, this could explain why the Zug watch was *seized* but never inspected, why the Precious Metal Controls Act was never invoked, and why the charges were ultimately dropped.

* This may also explain why Swatch didn't *purchase* the Zug watch. If they had the court would have seen it. [Swiss CPC Art. 248](#)

Who Made the Zug Watch Case?

If the origin of the GG was purposely obfuscated by the creation of the Zug watch, the movement for which was provided by Omega, then who made the case for it? Did someone from Swatch make it?

In 1991 [Franco Bosisio](#) managed Swatch Italy including the Swatch design studio in Milan. At that time all Swatches were designed in Milan. Mr. Bosisio was therefore in the top position to order unmarked gold Swatch cases from Lascor in nearby Sesto Calende. In 1994 Bosisio was accused of accepting kickbacks for Swatch advertising from Silvio Berlusconi's media outlets. He also plead guilty to grey market sales in Italy, laundering the profits in Vaduz, Liechtenstein and tax evasion. But instead of immediately firing him Bosisio was protected by Hayek and Swatch legal affairs manager Hanspeter Rentsch. Rentsch was Hayek's enforcer at the time and was one of the alleged witnesses in the "Rado dial" prototype case.

Why was Bosisio protected by Hayek and Rentsch? Was it because Berlusconi's Mediaset had financed Nick Hayek Jr's Milan-produced feature film [Family Express](#) starring Peter Fonda in 1991? Or was it for other reasons? Regardless, Bosisio's troubles demonstrate that within Swatch there were personalities and relationships that were complicated at times. Bosisio finally left Swatch at the end of 1995 and Nick Hayek Jr. accepted his first major role at Swatch: Head of Marketing, replacing Franco Bosisio.

Two Men, Two Cities, Two Court Cases

The stories of the Zug “hobby-watch” and the Solothurn “Rado dial” prototype may have resulted from a two-pronged approach by Nicolas Hayek to protect the secret of the GG: the court case in Zug to create a public cover story and the case in Solothurn to hold Thomke responsible in the event that the GG ever reappeared.

Nicolas
Hayek and
Ernst
Thomke in
1986



As both lawsuits were allegedly brought by Hayek, Thomke may have outed himself as the target of the trial in Solothurn as a countermove. Of course either man could have told the public exactly what was going on at any time, but if I’m correct that would have required revealing the secret of the GG. The court cases appear to confirm that neither Hayek nor Thomke ever had any real intention of doing that.

Whatever the truth, Hayek and Thomke feuded privately but also appear to have protected each other’s reputations and the company that they created together throughout what may be one of the most successful business partnerships ever. Why, in the end, did the GG appear at the center of their feud?

How Did the GG Find its Way to Me?

The seller that I bought the GG from would not tell me who sold it to him. He both claimed and disclaimed* that he bought it at a watch fair in Zurich. I went to that same fair in April 2023 and showed it to several experienced watch dealers including Serkan Gez and Gio Col. Neither had previously seen it there. Gio Col, however, had seen it on Ricardo in August 2022 for 100,000 Chf.

The seller has owned an art gallery in Vaduz since at least 1994. He also buys and sells watches and his shop has a “we buy gold” sign outside. Franco Bosisio was accused of laundering money through Vaduz in 1994 and, according to the press, he claimed the payments were for antiques. However, Liechtenstein has a total population of under 40,000, over 5,000 of whom live in Vaduz. Any transaction in Liechtenstein therefore has a 1 in 8 chance of being in Vaduz. If the GG wasn't purchased at the watch fair in Zurich the person who sold it to the seller may have sold it on consignment in Vaduz simply for privacy reasons.

* GG 2022 auction records



View inside the Vaduz art dealer's showroom (from google maps)



Vaduz is a small town in Liechtenstein on the Swiss border East of Zug

The GG at Swatch Group HQ

On January 16, 2023 I took the GG to Omega / Swatch HQ in Biel/Bienne. This is how I presented it for their inspection.



What Do Omega and Swatch Say?

At my meeting with Omega and Swatch in January 2023 Omega's Heritage Watchmaker, David Julmy, told me that he suspected that the timing of the GG's appearance around the 40th anniversary of Swatch may have been motivated by "bad intent." He also told me that the GG could be a "fan watch" based on the Swatch Chrono. We agreed that either was possible but in my view "bad intent" implied that the watch existed in a historical context such that a person acting in the present could exploit it by exposing its historical secrets. A "fan watch" that was not of any historical importance could not embody "bad intent" unless it was designed to deceive.

This idea of "bad intent" hung over our discussions and added to my belief that the GG was a historically important watch even as I felt that Omega and Swatch would have preferred that I had believed otherwise. Not wanting to engage in bad intent themselves may also explain why they didn't tell me about the crab mark registrant's story: if they had told me about it I likely would have felt deceived by them when I learned the truth, whereas if I discovered it myself then whatever I did with that was on me.

Neither Omega nor Swatch has ever told me that the GG is not what I think it is. They have also never told me what it is. Either they've done their honest best to keep it a secret or Swatch's institutional memory of it was lost until recently. Either way companies have the right to keep secrets. They also have the right to decide if and when to share those secrets internally or with the public. Employees of course also have a duty to protect company secrets both internally and externally if those secrets are not harmful to the public or illegal.

What Do I Think the GG Is?

I think that the GG is a Gérald Genta-designed prototype that was made in the mid-1960s by Genta, signed with his initials, stamped with a crab as a crab-inspired monocoque Seamaster, and presented to Omega as a prototype for the Omega Seamaster Cosmic. It appears to me that it was marked with the Roman numeral II (not I), perhaps as the second of five different designs each of which were prototyped in strap and bracelet versions for a total of ten pieces. The other eight pieces in the series were likely four other pairs of different Gérald Genta designs, the full set being Roman numerals I - V.

A wonderful 2009 interview with Gérald Genta

CREATING DESIGN RULES

Gérald Genta is not only the most important watch designer of all time, but also the person who has managed to impose his own unique aesthetic imprint on most of today's watches. Since he has created the most important ones among them, I had the honor of conversing with him on numerous occasions. The following conversation took place in December 2009.

CONSTANTIN STIKAS: Would you like to request for an engraving in the watchmaking sector?

GÉRALD GENTA: I was born in Geneva in 1914. I began an apprenticeship in the jewelry business at the age of 15. I completed it in 1930, a year that had already seen the onset of a recession. So I did a number of different jobs. At the age of 22 I found jewelry and I had a passion for designing jewelry. At the time, the jewelry sector was still in its early stages of development in Switzerland and most of the business proposals I received were from watchmakers. The designers were craftsmen, jewelers and everything to do with watches. Thus, within a span of several twenty years, I had designed watches and sold designs for watches.

Some readers will be interested to know that all watch designs at the time were sold for 15 Swiss francs! You can imagine the quantity one had to produce in order to manage to scrape a living out of that small business, despite that structure. I managed to create a lot of watches because I had clients everywhere in the world. I managed to create a lot of watches because I had clients everywhere in the world. I managed to create a lot of watches because I had clients everywhere in the world. I managed to create a lot of watches because I had clients everywhere in the world.

And why not write it? It is somewhat pejorative. However, though I don't like wearing watches, I do really like creating them!... Personally, my interest is more intrigued by a pair of high-quality shoes, because they offer comfort, or by an elegant piece of clothing, because elegance forms part of my personality.

I purchased the GG at auction on Nov. 13, 2022 for Chf 2,761. The other bidders dropped out well below its then scrap gold value of Chf 3,100. If I am correct about it being a Gérald Genta prototype that became the reference for the Swatch case design then saving this extraordinary watch from the dustbin of history and helping it tell its story is a dream come true for me.

Dayton Taylor
 Geneva, Switzerland, June 14, 2023
[@IMakeWatches \(YouTube\)](https://www.youtube.com/@IMakeWatches)
 dayton.taylor@digitalair.com
 tel: +41 79 309 4802




reconstructed II mark (image edited)

GG Provenance (Recent)

Purchased on the Swiss online auction website ricardo.ch November 13, 2022

Montres & Bijoux / Montres de luxe / OMEGA - PROTOTYP - ???? - Caliber 601 - 18 k Gelbgold!




OMEGA - PROTOTYP - ???? - Caliber 601 - 18 k Gelbgold!

L'offre est terminée | 13 nov. 2022 à 20:50

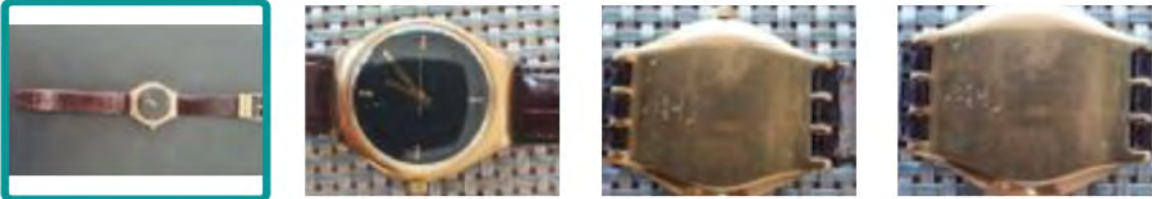
Prix de vente
2'761.00

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Livraison
Lettre courrier B, CHF 0.90
Retrait à 7019 Fidaz, Gratuit

Vendeur
M Montifino  **99.3%**

[PARTAGER](#)



Bonjour est-ce que la montre fonctionne? Quel est le diamètre hors couronne? Poids de la montre sans bracelet?

sator13 16 août 2022 à 16:06

Bonjour, La montre fonctionne! Diamètre 36 mm x 41 mm, Poids environ 90 g, Le boucle est aussi 18 k! Salutations

17 août 2022 à 09:53 Montifino

c'est le boîtier qui s'ouvre ou le verre. y a pas de pile ? on dirait une swatch sans pile...tu as d'autres images ? tu l'as trouvée où ?

evilol 20 août 2022 à 17:19

C'est le verre qui s'ouvre..... non, pas de pile, je l'ai acheté à la bourse à Zürich..... Oui je la vende, faites une offre!!!

20 août 2022 à 17:40 Montifino

How do you know it has an Omega Cal 601 inside? If the movement can only come out the front how do you release the stem to get the movement out? Does the dial fall out when the crystal is removed? Does the case have Omega markings? What year did you acquire it? What is "bourse a Zurich"?

dvtaylor 7 nov. 2022 à 12:19

My Omega dealer (Huber, Vaduz) opened the watch professionally and changed at the same time the strap. Yes the case has Omega markings. No, not at the bourse at Zurich. Regards

7 nov. 2022 à 12:30 Montifino

Hallo , könnten Sie noch Bilder einstellen vom Werk mit dem Omega Zeichen ? Hat es eine Nr welche mit 00 beginnt ? Beste Grüsse

Dersempacher 9 nov. 2022 à 19:06

Hallo, Ich hatte die Uhr bei Omega-Händler Huber in Vaduz, welcher mir die Angaben des Werkes vermittelte. Leider keine Fotos gemacht...., gerne kann die Uhr vor Ort besichtigt werden.... Gruss

9 nov. 2022 à 19:12 Montifino

Online Auction Photographs



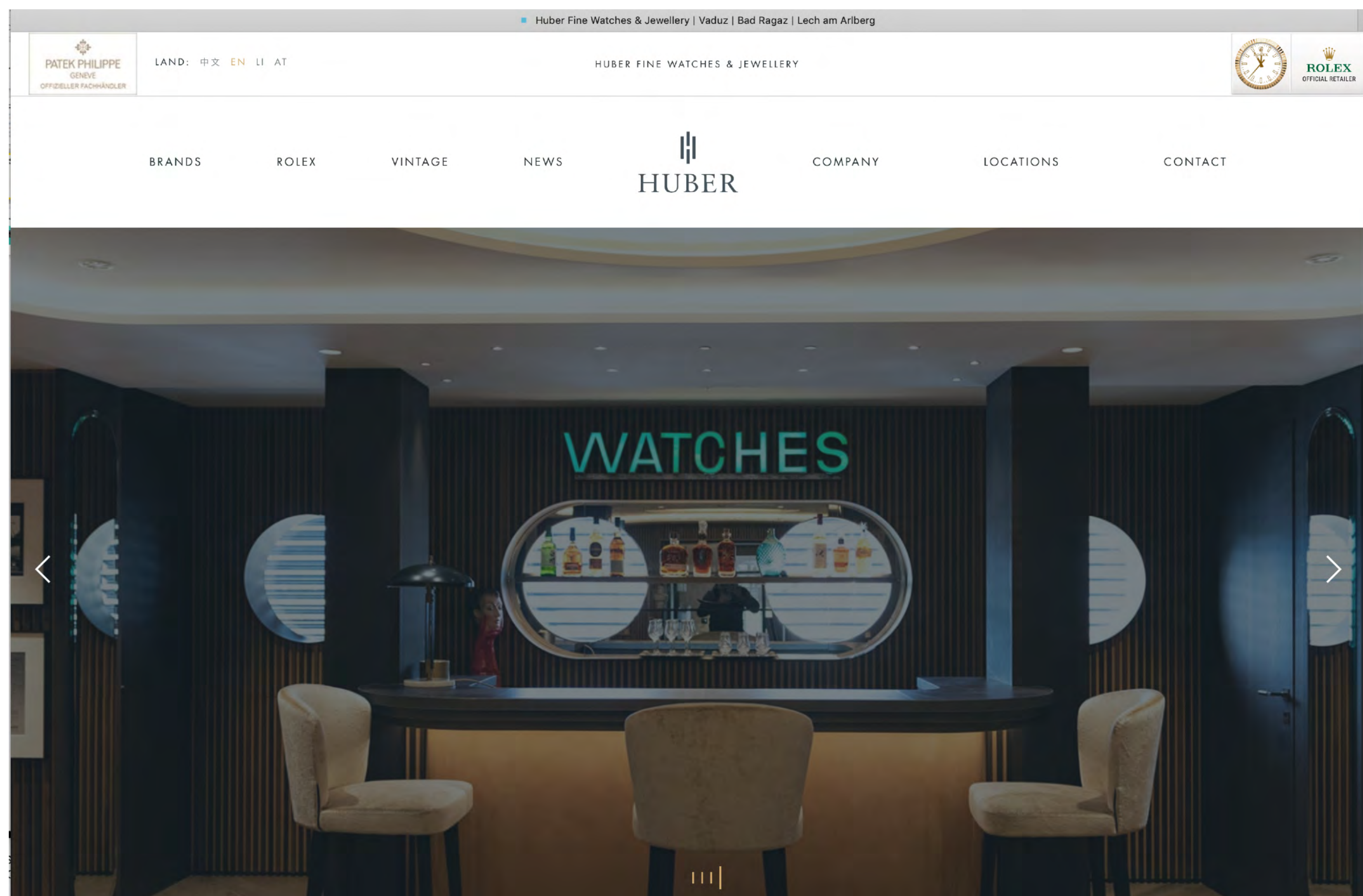
Box as Provided by Seller

very fragile disintegrating soft leatherette box with white stitching



Communication with Huber (Vaduz, LI)

Huber replaced a used 1991 Swatch Chrono "Goldfinger" SCM100 strap on the GG with a new Swatch leather strap in Sept., 2022. The new Swatch strap fits the double-bridged lugs of the GG case and its accompanying 19mm wide gold buckle but not the buckle's free ring.



Michael Heim  November 23, 2022 at 4:26 PM 
AW: Omega prototype service question
To: DAYTON TAYLOR

Dear Mr. Taylor

Thank you very much for your message.

We replaced a strap from a watch from [REDACTED] in September 2022 at his request. Installed on the watch was a no-name bracelet that was heavily used and no longer held up. We always give the "old" straps to the customer or dispose this at their request.

Beste Grüsse | Kindest regards | Meilleures salutations
Michael Heim | Leiter Atelier

Huber Uhren Schmuck Anstalt
Städtle 34 | 9490 Vaduz | Liechtenstein
(tel) +423 237 14 14 | (direct) +423 237 14 23
(email) michael.heim@huber.li | (internet) www.huber.li



Von: Dayton Taylor <dayton.taylor@digitalair.com>
Gesendet: Mittwoch, 23. November 2022 15:20
An: Huber Uhren und Schmuck <welcome@huber.li>
Betreff: Omega prototype service question

Dear Huber Jewelers,

I purchased an Omega prototype from [REDACTED] in Switzerland. According to [REDACTED] the strap on the watch was changed by your watchmaker to a Swatch strap.

As I am a collector I am interested in the original strap. Do you still have it by chance, or does your watchmaker happen to have any photographs or memory of it that he or she could share with me?

A photo of the watch as it is now is attached.

If you need me to prove that I'm now the owner of the watch I can do so, or you can confirm with [REDACTED]. Mostly I'm interested in how long ago the strap was changed and any information about the "original" strap (if indeed it had one).

Thanks so much!
Dayton Taylor

Acknowledgements and Links

The following individuals have all helped me in my search for information about the GG. Several of them have also shared their personal opinions about the likelihood of my various hypotheses. The fact that they've helped me in no way indicates that they agree with any particular hypothesis. Their names appearing here should not be interpreted as endorsements of my methods, opinions, conjectures, or conclusions.

Loïc Voumard, Head of Brand Heritage, Omega [omegawatches.com](https://www.omegawatches.com)

David Julmy, Heritage Watchmaker, Omega [omegawatches.com](https://www.omegawatches.com)

Philippe Marti, Archive Manager and Historian, Swatch [swatch.com](https://www.swatch.com)

Andreas Wiethoff, Creator and Maintainer of stay-tuned-to-sw.de/swatch.html

Gio Col, Creator and Maintainer of swatchprototypes.com and omegaprototypes.com

David Boettcher, Creator and Maintainer of vintagewatchstraps.com

Marc André Deschoux and Patrick Wehrli, of the YouTube channel [@WATCHESTVcom](https://www.youtube.com/@WATCHESTVcom)

Jean-Claude Eggen, CEO, La Joux-Perret lajouxperret.ch

Michael Heim, Studio Manager | Watchmaker, Huber Watches and Jewelry, Vaduz, huber.li

Markus Baumgartner, CEO, b-public, Zug, b-public.ch

The Registrant of the international crab trademark and Swiss responsibility mark

Jürg Wegelin, Journalist and Author, [Mister Swatch](https://www.misterswatch.com), Nicolas Hayek and the Secret of His Success

Hirox Microscopes Europe, Emilien, Hervé and Claire hirox-europe.com

For videos supporting this document visit my YouTube channel: [@IMakeWatches](https://www.youtube.com/@IMakeWatches)

Dayton Taylor, Geneva, Switzerland, June 14, 2023, dayton.taylor@digitalair.com, tel: +41 79 309 4802



Nicolas G. Hayek with Swatch Group's Crown Jewels: a Gérald Genta designed Seamaster Polaris on his left wrist and an original Swatch under his right cuff.



“Today, even within Omega itself they do not know all that I have done for them, but no matter!”

- Gérald Genta, December 2009

GG



videos and digital version

imakewatches.com/gg

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