

Bankbook

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Small booklet with green cover bearing the name of a bank and its coat of arms in gold. This is the “Banque d’Hochelaga”, with the inscription of the first transaction on April 10, 1924.

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Materials ink, paper

Measurements 10,7 x 6,7 cm

Historical context

The Bank of Hochelaga began operations in 1874 to promote the interests of French-Canadian workers in Montreal. At the turn of the 20th century, the institution took advantage of the city's industrial activities to carve out a place for itself in the French-speaking banking market, previously served by the Provincial Bank of Canada in Montreal and the National Bank in Quebec City. As a result, working-class Montrealers, often confined to their own neighborhoods, had better access to various savings vehicles.

From 1914 onwards, the bank opened some 30 new branches in Montreal, taking advantage of wartime production to facilitate access to banking services for French-speaking people. The post-war years and the Roaring Twenties brought a period of uneven growth, but French-Canadian workers increasingly turned to "their" bank.

On April 10, 1924, a customer entered the rue Saint-Jacques branch and opened an account. In return, he was given this booklet in which to record details of his financial transactions with the institution. The hardcover, bound booklet with gold lettering indicates the special attention given to each customer and its importance in the Montreal financial environment.

A few months later, the merger of the Banque Nationale de Québec and the Banque d'Hochelaga gave birth to the Canadian National Bank, headquartered in Montreal.

Finally, in 1979, the Provincial Bank of Canada merged with the Canadian National Bank to form the National Bank of Canada, headquartered on De La Gauchetière Street West in Montreal.

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Photo by Alain Vandal