

Piggy bank mobile

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Portable piggy bank from The Edinburgh Savings Bank. The chrome-plated case is oval-shaped. It has a handle on the top. On the front, there's a slot and a yellow and red plaque with the institution's lettering.

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Fabricant / Éditeur Automatic Recording Safe Co. Ltd.

Date 1919 c

Materials metal, chrome

Measurements 6,4 x 9,6 x 4,5 cm

Historical context

Founded in 1836, the Edinburgh Savings Bank served as a model for future savings banks. It was inspired by the Ruthwell Savings Bank, a Scottish savings bank founded in 1810.

At the beginning of the 19th century in Great Britain, commercial banks focused solely on their business and government clientele: they were not an option for private individuals wishing to deposit funds for savings purposes. Mutual aid societies and certain elites, convinced of the importance of bank savings, founded the first savings banks. They quickly became a model throughout Europe.

The American piggy bank system was introduced in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. These promotional tools for savings, owned by banks, were rented out to depositors so that they could fill them up and deposit their savings in banks. Institutions are supplied almost exclusively by American manufacturers such as Automatic Recording Safe Co.

This was one of several companies to enter the piggy bank market,

following the success of American inventor Charles Owen Burns' invention, which was quickly adopted by banking institutions. Piggy bank shapes and patents are similar, and some parts and mechanisms are even passed down between manufacturers.

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On display