

Piggy bank automatic cash register

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Automatic money box from the British Midland Bank. The chrome-plated case is cylindrical in shape. It has several different deposit slots with graduations. The bank's name is engraved on the top. A lock is located in the center.

Accession Number 2020.02.442

Fabricant / Éditeur Automatic Recording Safe Co. Ltd.

Date 1911 c

Materials metal, chrome

Historical context

At the turn of the 20th century, the American system of home piggy banks became one of the preferred means of promotion for banking institutions. The boxes remain the property of the bank, and are rented out to depositors so that they can fill them up and deposit their savings in the bank.

In Great Britain, piggy banks were first adopted by banks and savings banks, then by other major financial institutions such as Midland Bank: the promise of diversifying the customer base was as attractive, if not more so, than the social philosophy of savings. All these financial institutions turned to the many manufacturers on the market, the vast majority of whom offered similar models.

As early as 1902, a new model appeared on the scene: the cash register (automatic and mechanical). The idea came from the fact that savers wanted to know exactly how much money they had accumulated before their piggy banks were full. For automatic models like this one, the coin deposit slots are distributed along the sides of the piggy bank, and openings allow the amount saved to be ascertained and calculated. Initially, these piggy banks were rectangular in shape. However, oval, lightweight and smaller versions were introduced in 1909. These automatic models were a great success and made the fortune of their creator, Robert J. Thomson.

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On display