

Piggy bank safe

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Money box from the River Rouge Savings Bank. The metal case is rectangular in shape. Gray in color, it features a slot on the top. A door with a lock is located on the front. The institution's name is inscribed on the door.

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Fabricant / Éditeur Bellevue Products Corp.

Period 1st half of the 20th century

Materials metal

Measurements 15,2 x 13,4 x 10,8 cm

Historical context

From the last decade of the 19th century onwards, many American financial institutions adopted the piggy bank system developed in 1890 by the American Charles Owen Burns. The boxes remain the property of the bank, and are leased to depositors so that they can fill them up and deposit their savings in the bank.

These piggy banks became one of the banking institutions' preferred means of promoting savings. They appeal to the many manufacturers on the market. As a result, a wide variety of piggy banks are becoming increasingly popular.

They are fast becoming symbolic objects beyond their primary function. Their shapes vary and can be evocative depending on the culture of the country of use or its political context. An increasing number of different models were offered to depositors, albeit with similar standards, including a number and a secure key kept by the banking institution. From the 1950s onwards, these principles were less respected, as financial institutions had to free themselves from

management constraints and costs.

Safe deposit boxes are a reference to the security they offer savers. With the exception of a few European countries where piggy banks and safes are designed directly by genuine manufacturers, these objects are, for the most part, more evocative.

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On display