

Postal savings card

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Swiss postal savings card from the Caisse d'Épargne de Neuchâtel. Bank information is printed on the front cover. Inside are ten green stamps. On the back are the saver's details.

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Period 1st quarter of the 20th century

Measurements 16 x 10,3 cm

Historical context

In the early 19th century, banks and savings banks were founded in Great Britain by fraternal benefit societies. Subsequently, similar institutions were created in Europe and elsewhere in the world. In Switzerland, the Caisse d'Épargne de Neuchâtel was founded in 1812. These institutions soon formed associations to, among other things, coordinate the promotion of savings, notably through piggy banks. At the same time, another group of institutions was also concerned with popular savings: banking services linked to post offices. Very early on, postal service banks introduced ways of promoting small savings, such as postal savings cards. Savers affixed stamps purchased in post offices, then deposited their savings card in their bank account.

This system was first adopted in 1880 by the British Post Office Savings Bank. The system is also used by a number of savings banks, such as the Caisse d'Épargne de Neuchâtel. Postal services, however, are the main users.

The use of stamps, however, limits the possibilities of saving larger sums. As a result, piggy banks were gradually adopted by financial institutions.

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