Postcards

Postal savings card

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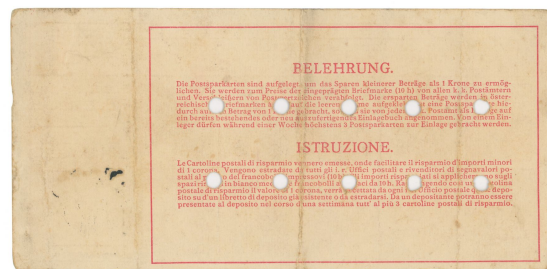
Austrian postal savings card in German and Italian. Ten red stamps are affixed.

Accession Number 2020.02.2223

Period 1st quarter of the 20th century

Measurements 8,5 x 18,1 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 Austria, the first savings bank was founded in 1819. These institutions soon grouped together in 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.

These cards were common in the various regions of the Austrian Empire. They are often multilingual. Although the system was also used by a number of savings banks, the postal services were the main users. Like the savings institutions, the postal service banks were pioneers in promoting popular savings.

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