

The Great Seal of the United States – On a series of Guatemalan banknotes?

While the Great Seal appears out of place on Guatemalan banknotes, a glance at the bank of issue helps explain why this could happen. With The American Bank of Guatemala establishing American influence, starting in 1892, one could expect symbols of the United States to grace at least some of their banknotes. Equally important to the Great Seal appearing is the security printer procured to print the notes – the American Bank Note Company.

ABNC is/was arguably the undisputed leader in the business practice of “recycling” vignettes. ABNC produced a large inventory of vignettes. These included allegorical figures, people (named & unknown), locations, trains (especially steam powered), animals (domestic and wild), and ships. As long as the vignette was not specific, the number of uses could include:

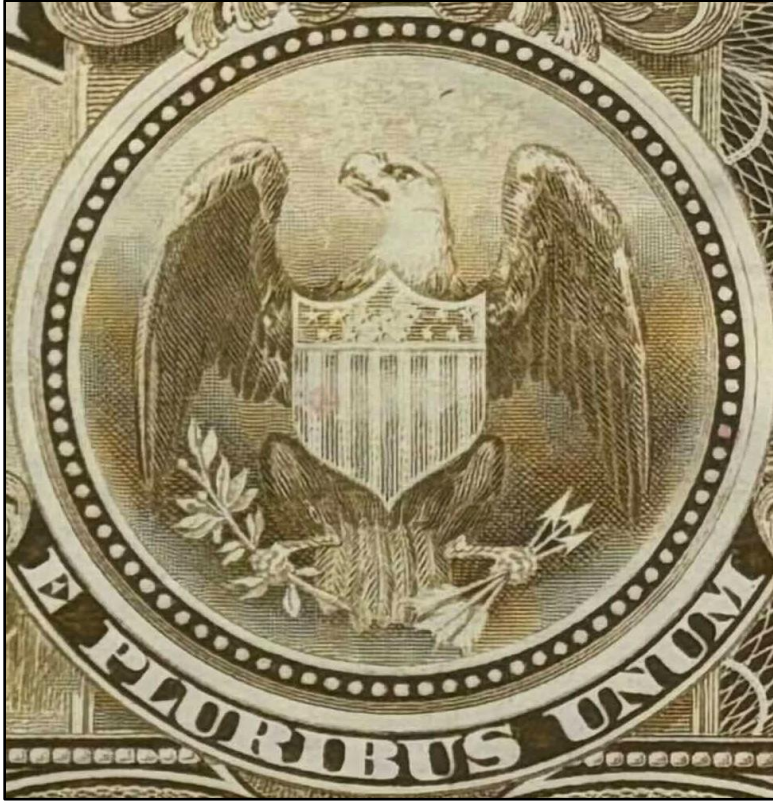
- Checks
- Stocks/Bonds
- Vignette sheets
- Souvenir Cards
- Paper Money for various issuers

Designed by Charles Thomson, William Barton, and John Prestwic, the identity of the engraver of the Great Seal is unknown, though there is conjecture it was Robert Scot. After several changes, the first seal was officially adopted by the Continental Congress in 1782.

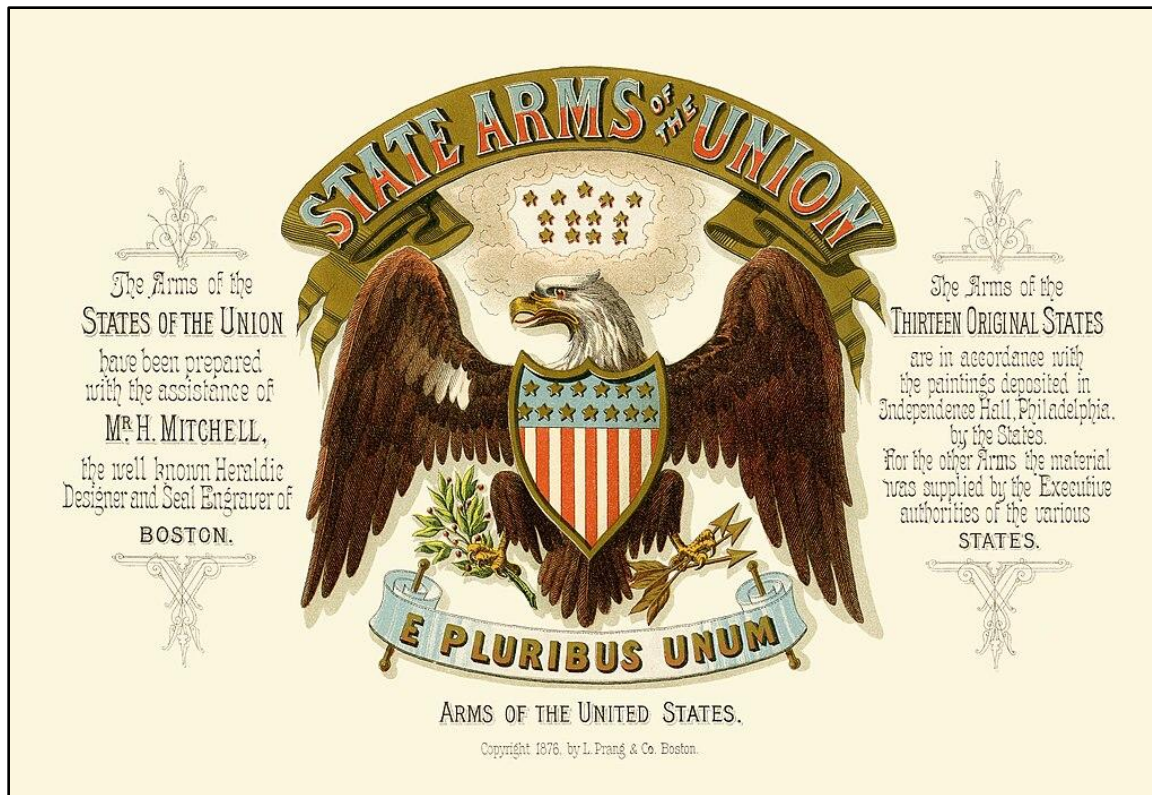
Here's The Great Seal of the United States as it appears on the U.S. dollar.



Here's the Great Seal on the El Banco Americano de Guatemala.



Notice the shield is not square on the top! Here's a poster published in 1876 which clears up this discrepancy. The shield in the poster was an earlier version. The current type as shown previously on the U.S. \$1 banknote was developed in 1884 and remains essentially the same to this day.



Let's look at one of the Guatemalan notes. One needs only view one as the entire five note series are identical. Here's a table of the specifics.

Pick Number ¹	Denomination	Number Produced ²
PS-111	1 Peso	2,800,000
PS-112	5 Pesos	1,570,000
PS-113	25 Pesos	350,000
PS-114	100 Pesos	367,000
PS-115	500 Pesos	129,000

The banknotes have print dates from 1895 to 1924, **still displaying the older seal not having a straight top on the crest!** These ABNC printed banknotes of Guatemala with eye appeal can be procured for prices from \$250 to \$750, based on recent sales. The specimen notes in better conditions are actually available at more reasonable prices than the issued but used conditions.



1. [The Standard Catalog of World Paper Money – Specialized Issues](#), George Cuhaj
2. [Latin American Bank Note Records](#), Recardo Magan