



UNITED STATES

1864 \$20 NGC PROOF 64 CAMEO LM



The Civil War in the United States began in 1861, after decades of simmering tensions between northern and southern states over slavery, states' rights and westward expansion. The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 caused seven southern states to secede and form the Confederate States of America; four more states soon joined them. The War Between the States, as the Civil War was also known, ended in the Confederate surrender in 1865. The conflict was the costliest and deadliest war ever fought on American soil, with some 620,000 of 2.4 million soldiers killed, millions more injured and much of the South left in ruin. In the North, manufacturing and industry were well established, and agriculture was mostly limited to small-scale farms, while the

South's economy was based on a system of large-scale farming that depended on the labor of Black enslaved people to grow certain crops, especially cotton and tobacco.

Although the proofs are immeasurably rarer, even the business strike 1864 double eagles are seldom seen; formerly they were quite rare, until the recovery of the *S.S. Republic* coins. As a Gem Ultra Cameo proof example of the Type One double eagle, the present coin is of immense historic and numismatic appeal. The original mintage figure of 50 coins is meaningless today, as likely only 12 to 15 specimens survive--a total that includes at least three presumably off the market forever, two in the Smithsonian and one in the American Numismatic Society holdings. The Walter Breen *Proof Encyclopedia* calls the 1864 double eagle the "rarest gold denomination" of the year. The proof sets of 1864--some of them, anyway--contained several rare first-year issues, including the Large Motto (but probably not the Small Motto) proof two cent piece and the bronze no L and copper-nickel 1864 Indian cents.

Proof, Cameo. Civil War Date. Only 50 Minted! With other Civil War Proofs selling for as much as \$1.8mn this is an easy buy!

