

Theories abound on gold treasure's origins

By Samantha Schaefer, Los Angeles Times

The news of a Northern California couple's discovery of more than 1,400 gold coins hidden on their property has experts, history buffs and regular folks speculating on the treasure's origin.

Though officials said it is unlikely the coins were stolen in a turn-of-the-century theft at the U.S. Mint in San Francisco, some wonder if the cache could be one of many believed buried by the Knights of the Golden Circle.

The secretive, subversive Confederate group is thought to have hidden millions in ill-gotten gold across a dozen states to finance a second Civil War.

The coins very well could be a fortune buried by a wealthy businessman, but the time period, markers near the cache and manner in which the coins were buried fit the mold of the KGC, said Warren Getler, a former Wall Street Journal reporter who coauthored "Rebel Gold," a book about the group.

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