

Postal Authorities Knew All Along About Stolen Safe

A large safe which was taken in a burglary of the Aromas post office about six months ago was dug up in the Santa Cruz mountains by a crew of

newsmen Friday night. The discovery didn't surprise postal authorities, who declared they knew it was there all along.

A tipster led a team to the location where the safe was uncovered. Then Santa Cruz county sheriff's deputies and postal authorities were notified. When the safe was taken, it supposedly held between 500 and 700 postal money orders which could have been forged to bring up to \$100 each.

Sheriff's deputies said they contacted the postal authorities and offered to help recover the safe. They expressed surprise when the postal men seemed little concerned and said they would come down later to get the safe. This they did, telling the deputies they needn't bother to help.

Donald E. Thompson, San Jose postal inspector, explained it this way: "The investigation, we felt, was pretty much completed and none of the evidence pertinent to the case was in the safe. Digging the safe up and bringing it back to San Jose wasn't solving the case."

He said the safe had been forced open and the postal money orders had been removed. He also indicated that some 60 of the money orders had been forged and cashed. He further stated that these forged money orders had lead to at least six suspects, some of whom are in jail at the present time on other charges. He said the other suspects are known.

"The matter and identification of the suspects have been previously given to the U. S. attorney. It's up to him to authorize prosecution," Thompson said. He indicated the matter has been in the hands of the U. S. attorneys at San Francisco for "several weeks."



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