

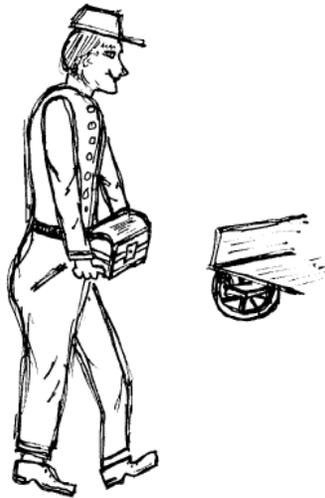
## **Where Uncle Nabe Got His Wealth**

**By J. W. Henson**

Many stories still linger in the recesses of the old timers mind's in the north Georgia area. While I was researching the local Webb family I talked with Andy Joe Ware. The Wares were related to the Webbs through Didima Webb-Ware, and have a latent memory of things that happened many years ago. The story was that a Mr. Webb lived in the Liberty Hill area of Catoosa County. He was said to have been Didima's brother and a son of Robert Webb. He had 500 to 600 Negro slaves before the Civil War. Some say that he was a dealer who traded in slavery, and did not just have them for work. As talk came up about freeing the slaves Mr. Webb sold his about 1858. The young slaves, and those in poor health would only bring \$100 to \$200 dollars, while others who were good workers and healthy would bring from \$500 to \$1,000 each.

The war was nearing the south when Mr. Webb approached a Barric Watkins and said, "I know that I can trust you. I have something I would like for you to see." Watkins was one of the men who founded the Mt. Vernon Baptist Church. He was the grandfather of Isaac Watkins who was one of the first preachers at Mt. Vernon Church. Isaac was the grandfather of Andy Joe Ware. Mr. Webb opened a chest that was full of gold and silver coins, the money that he had gotten from the sale of his slaves.

Times were difficult during the Civil War and Mr. Webb buried the chest of coins. Due to circumstances during the war the cache was forgotten and the owners died without ever reclaiming it. About 1890 some of the Watkins in the community were searching for the loot and found a soft place in the ground and thought it might be the treasure. However, they decided that it could be the grave of one of the slaves and fear caused them to abandon the search. In time they moved to Oklahoma and lived there until the topsoil all blew away, and then they returned to Georgia. They went into the field to find the place where the soft spot had been found some 45 years earlier. There were four trees that they were going to use as landmarks, but lo the trees had been cleared and the stumps rotted away, so they were forced to stop the search.



Did Nabe Find The Treasure?

This story ran through the community for a couple of generations, and many were the people who dug and searched for the lost fortune. About 1935 John Allen (Nabe) Edgmon became interested in the story and rented the property in the guise of farming it. Now this is speculation that was rampant in the little community, for Nabe like a clam had nothing to say about it. He ran his plow up and down the grade so that when it rained great gullies washed down the hillside. The neighbors in the community believe that Nabe got the chest out of the ground.

There are a couple of supporting bits of circumstantial evidence. One is that in 1936 Nabe retired, and never worked again. Another was that when he died in 1979 his children said that he left behind \$250,000.! Its a great story and I am sure we shall never learn more than this about what really happened, if anything. One of Nabe's children has since denied that their dad ever had such a large sum of money.