

The Fort Dodge *Messenger* of August 17 spoke of this effort as follows :

On Tuesday Hon. Robert L. Berner, accompanied by his secretary, Mr. T. E. Fletcher, and his stenographer, Mr. A. M. Speer, arrived in this city and registered at the Duncombe House. Mr. Berner is the special commissioner appointed by Hon. Hoke Smith, Secretary of the Interior, to investigate the claims of the *bona fide* settlers on what is known as the Des Moines River Land Grant. At the last session of Congress a bill was passed providing for this investigation, the object being to ascertain the sum or sums paid by the holders of certificates or patents to said land, their heirs or assigns, to purchase the paramount title as settled by the decisions of the courts ; and also the value of such paramount title in cases where the purchase has not been made by any of the holders of such certificates or patents, and to ascertain such other facts as are necessary to enable the United States to properly and equitably adjust the claims of persons who entered upon such lands, receiving from the proper officers written evidence of entry or settlement upon any of said lands. The inquiry will cover the original holders of certificates and patents, and also the present owners holding under such original certificates and patents. Parties will facilitate the inquiry by presenting with their titles an abstract of the same.

Mr. Berner's report will contain a full history of the claims against the Government by the settlers, so that the Government can make an appropriation to repay the settlers the amounts originally paid to the Government for the land, averaging about \$1.50 per acre. He also wants information concerning the improvements made and all transfers. The report is to be submitted at the next regular session of Congress. Mr. Berner desires that all parties in this county who are interested should call on him during his stay in Fort Dodge this week and next. His headquarters will be at the Duncombe House, but his work will be carried on in the office of the County Recorder in the court house.

Mr. Berner has a list of about two hundred claims in this county against the Government, on land to which the United States Government gave the settlers a title. He is not authorized to investigate any other cases. Mr. Berner states, however, that he will hear any claims in which he considers there is any considerable amount of equity and present them to Congress.

Mr. Berner expects to remain in Fort Dodge until Friday, August 25, and hopes to hear from every settler who has a claim against the Government during that time. He stopped at Stratford yesterday and investigated several cases but found he could make no progress without the county records. The commission was in session at Boone for a week and in that time heard all but two cases scheduled there.

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### AN INTERESTING SPECIMEN OF COPPER.

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Col. Warren S. Dungan, of Chariton, has sent to the Historical Department a specimen of Iowa copper, which has attracted considerable attention. It was on exhibition at the

New Orleans Exposition of 1883-4, and for some time in the museum of the State University. It was found by Mr. John Clowser, while digging a well on the divide between the waters of the White Breast and Cedar creeks, in Lucas county, at the depth of 32 feet. It weighs 36 pounds. It is what is known as a "drift specimen"—having been carried far from its original resting place.

Native copper has been found in the drift at a number of places in our State. It usually occurs in small irregular masses, varying from a few ounces to thirty or more pounds in weight. These masses are more or less flattened and rounded, and frequently covered on one or more sides with small parallel striations like the glacial scratches of the granite boulders which are associated with them. At Des Moines, Chariton and elsewhere, fragments of this description have been found from time to time, awakening considerable interest. Frequently, time and money have been expended in digging and prospecting for this mineral in places where these masses have been obtained. Careful examinations show that these pieces of native copper found in the drift are merely erratics of northern origin, like the boulders of granite and other igneous rocks whose native place is also far to the northward, beyond the borders of Iowa. These erratics have been transported southward by the glaciers, which once spread out over the upper Mississippi valley and brought down from the north mixed masses of clay, gravel, sand and boulders, which collectively are called drift. In seeking the origin of this copper it must, therefore, be looked for somewhere near the northern boundary of the United States. At the present time it is believed that most, if not all of the native copper which has been found in the drift of this region has come from the well-known copper district of Lake Superior. The party who found this specimen tried to chop it in two with an ax, and it bears a deep indentation on one of its sides. Both sides are flattened and smoothed, and these planed surfaces bear deep striations or glacial scratches, showing how it

was compressed under the great ice-plow. Altogether, it is a very interesting specimen.

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### NOTABLE DEATHS.

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EX-GOVERNOR WILLIAM M. STONE died at his home in Oklahoma on the 18th day of July last, at the age of 66. He was a native of Ohio, and came to Iowa in 1854, settling at Knoxville, where he entered upon the practice of the law. In October, 1855, he established the Knoxville *Journal*, and became its editor. He was a delegate from Marion county to the convention which assembled at Iowa City (then the capital of the State), on the 22d of February, 1856, and organized the Republican party in Iowa. He was nominated by that convention for Presidential Elector, and was elected in November following. In 1857 he was chosen District Judge, and under the new constitution which took effect the next year was elected Judge of the new Sixth District. When the Rebellion broke out in 1861, he raised a company which went into the Third Iowa Infantry, of which regiment Captain Stone was appointed Major. He was taken prisoner by the Confederates at the battle of Shiloh, and was held at Richmond several months. Soon after he was released by exchange, Governor Kirkwood appointed him Colonel of the 22d Infantry. He was slightly wounded at one of the battles before Vicksburg, in 1863, and came home on furlough. He attended the Republican State Convention, made an eloquent war speech (with his arm in a sling), the night before the ballot was taken for a candidate for Governor, where most of the delegates were present. A warm contest had been going on for months between the supporters of General Fitz Henry Warren and Elijah Sells. But the thrilling eloquence of the wounded soldier in blue, captured a majority of the delegates, and Colonel William M. Stone was nominated for Governor. He was elected over General J. M. Tuttle, the Democratic candidate, by a majority of nearly 30,000. He was re-elected in 1865, over Colonel Thomas H. Benton by a majority of about 17,000.

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