



By Lori Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

Mark and Sherie Mercier of Spring Valley, Ariz., returned to Imperial for a brief visit this week to renew the connection felt for a town that Mark's great grandfather, Thomas Mercier, founded in 1885.

It was 14 years ago that they came to Imperial to be married at the courthouse on June 29, 1995, after finding out about the historic family connection to the community.

The funeral of Mark's uncle, Bob Mercier of Lincoln, brought them back to Nebraska this trip. It was Bob and Marilyn's granddaughter, Aubrey, who discovered in a genealogy search the exciting realization that a relative actually founded a town.

When Bob and Marilyn Mercier first came to the area in 1994 to search for more details, they were pleasantly surprised at the attention and help they received, according to an Oct. 13, 1994, article in *The Imperial Republican* by Jan Schultz. Anoma Hoffmeister and Edgar Hatheway were a wealth of information.

Hoffmeister had gone to school with Harry Mercier, the founder's son, and she acquired letters from the family for the Chase County Historical Society. This history hadn't been passed down through the generations and the family was thrilled with copies of the letters, as well as more information from the Chase County Museum and Imperial City Office.

Hatheway took them to Mount Hope Cemetery where the graves of the infant twins of Thomas and Mary Jane Mercier are marked.

The article indicated that Mercier was originally from Canada and spent time in Wyoming and Montana as a salesman before coming to this area to settle a town. He and M.L. Goodrich homesteaded the land.

The Merciers moved to Lincoln in 1902. Mary Jane died in 1903 and Thomas in 1906.