1784 Part of the southwest Ohio Territory was designated to be used for the Virginian Military District, which consisted of land between the Little Miami River and east to the Scioto River. This land was to be used as compensation to Virginia War Veterans of the Continental Army.

1788 Judge John Symmes of New Jersey, with a group of investors, formed the Miami Company. They petitioned the Continental Congress to purchase a track of land between the Great Miami and Little Miami rivers. In 1794 President George Washington approved the land patent for the Miami Company, which became known as the Symmes Purchase. The same year, President Washington appointed General Anthony Wayne to solve the hostile Indian problems in the area. By 1795 the Treaty of Greenville was signed with the Indians surrendering land in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. This provided more safety for settlers in the territory and encouraged migration.

1796 Jeremiah Morrow, James Parkhill and Thomas Epsy traveled from the mouth of the Little Miami River (Columbia, Ohio) into the territory. Their first night was spent on an island in the Little Miami River, near what would later be named Foster’s Crossing. The island would later be called Creek Island. (A sizable natural island still exists in the river, at the southern end of the community.) Their land was
part of the Symmes Purchase on the west side of the river. Later part of this area would be called Twenty Mile Stand. In 1799 Jeremiah Morrow returned home to the Gettysburg, Pennsylvania area and married James Parkhill’s sister Mary. A short time after returning, their house was consumed by fire and they lost the home and all their household goods. On a predetermined day, his neighbors from miles around built them a new home in one day. In 1802 Morrow was elected a Territorial Representative to Congress. When Ohio became a state in 1803, Jeremiah Morrow was elected as the first representative to the U.S. Congress from the state.

By 1813 Morrow built a grist mill and saw mill, located on what is today Davis Road. In 1822, after serving in the Washington Congress many years, he was elected governor of Ohio. As the state had no governor’s mansion, he worked out of his home by the river and often visited the Twenty Mile House at Twenty Mile Stand. There he established one of the first libraries in Warren County with his own books.

1806 Brazilla Clark (a cabinet maker) built the first grist mill in the area, later to be called Foster’s Crossing. Located on the west side of the river, it aided early settlers who were forced to travel long distances to mills. He sold the mill to co-owner Moses Kitchel (one of the earliest pioneers in the area), who later passed it to his son Percy Kitchel. In 1844 the mill burned and in 1890, Harvard University would research and explore a site at the dead end of today’s Kings Mills Road (the old mill race is still visible). Clark, the builder of this mill, later served in a voluntary Ohio Militia Unit in the War of 1812. He was taken as a prisoner of war near Detroit and remained until its end. After the war, he remained in northern Ohio.
1814 Benjamin Butterworth, a Quaker from Virginia, moved his family to the area. He bought property in the Virginia Military District that would extend from Fosters Crossing to the Loveland area. Their home was located close to Jeremiah Morrow’s house and mill on the opposite side of the river. While the first residence was built of logs, a second was constructed of stone and still stands today. The Butterworth family played a major role in the construction of the Little Miami Railroad and the Underground Railroad. His son William Butterworth was a farmer and teacher for 40 years. William’s son Benjamin (named after his grandfather) became an attorney and later served in the US Congress.

Congressman Benjamin’s son William (named after his grandfather William) married Katherine Deere of the John Deere family and aided in the development of the tractor. In 1930 and childless, William and Katherine donated his inherited 150 acres for the establishment of Camp Katherine (it would later be known as Camp Butterworth), a Girl Scout Camp located on Butterworth Road. The Butterworth family made significant contributions to both the local community and the nation.
1840 A macadamized (packed broken stone) State Road was completed from Cincinnati through the Twenty Mile Stand settlement and to Foster’s Crossing. Laid out in 1804 to run from Cincinnati to Chillicothe and a chartered pike by the State of Ohio in 1834, it was called locally the Cincinnati Hopkinsville Turnpike.

1842 James Foster moved from the Twenty Mile Stand area where he had worked for his father, Henry Foster, as a store clerk. He purchased land from William Butterworth, where he built a store and inn on the east side of the river. First known as the Twenty Two Mile Stand, the area later was called Foster’s Crossing, as the main road crossed the river on the west side of his business and the new railroad tracks on the eastside of the business. Foster sold the hotel property to Adam Leever in 1865. James Foster’s daughter Hanna married Jeremiah Morrow’s son who was also named James. His sons, William and Joseph G. would both serve in the Ohio 146th Regiment during the Civil War and Joseph G. would later become a store owner on the west side of the river.

1843 The Little Miami Railroad was completed from Cincinnati to Foster’s Crossing. Jeremiah Morrow was instrumental in the planning, financing and president for 10 years. During construction, the Butterworth family not only donated land and provided for workers, but also supplied timber cut into railroad ties at Morrow’s mill. In exchange they received both a life time passage and a train stop at their home. The railroad would be key to the development of Foster’s Crossing and other settlements in both the Symmes Purchase west of the river and Virginia Military District on the east side of the river. It operated in the area until 1870 when most of its line was leased for ninety nine years by the Pennsylvania Railroad System. Among the many famous people to pass through Foster on the Little Miami Railroad, Abraham Lincoln in route to his Presidential Inauguration in 1861 and John Morgan (Morgan’s Raiders) in his escape from the Ohio State Penitentiary in 1863.
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1843 John Sanders, who was born in Prussia in 1819 and learned the shoe trade (cobbler) in Pennsylvania, began working for James Foster as a clerk. After 3 years, he married Margaret Gruber and established his own business on the east side of the river. He kept grocery and rail road boarders. Several years later, he changed his business to a saloon and boarding house on the west side of the river. His boarding house was located between the river and turnpike, south of the old Mason Road (Foster Socialville Road). The saloon was directly across the road from the boarding house. Today, the viaduct over the river is almost over the area where his property was located. His boarding house still stands today. Mr. Sanders also served 10 years as toll-receiver on the Cincinnati Montgomery Hopkinsville Turnpike and was a member of the Catholic Church.

1844 Orson S. Murray moved from New York City to Ohio. Born in the free state of Vermont and a minister, his abolitionary views became so extreme he lost his ordainment. He then became an atheist and moved with his wife and children to New York City. There he came under more pressure for his views and was forced to leave. He and his family moved to the Butterworth farm and purchased land with several log structures. The property would be named Fruit Hills. As the Butterworths were Quakers and involved in the Under Ground Railroad, he used one two story structure for a residence and another for a print shop. Murray soon began publishing his previous abolitionist paper called the Regenerator. Hand carried down the hill and across the river at Jeremiah Morrow’s mill dam, it was mailed nationwide from the Twenty Mile Stand Post Office (established in 1819). After the death of his wife, he left Fruit Hills to his sons and bought property across the river. Orson later married into the Poor family and purchased a farm at Foster’s Crossing, next to the Little Miami Railroad. The new farm would later become the site of a corn drying facility and today, the Rivercrest community. Orson’s son Charles B. Murray would become a statistician, editor of The Cincinnati Price Current (market statistics on livestock and grains) for 41 years and Executive Secretary of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce for 20 years.

1848 The Maineville Academy (a private school) opened in Yankeetown (Maineville). It was the brain child of William Butterworth and provided college prep courses to all the surrounding area. A board walk was constructed from the Foster’s Crossing train station to the academy for attending students. The school was held in high esteem. Among its graduates were members of the Butterworth, Morrow and Murray families which distinguished themselves on local, state and national levels.
1854 Sebastian Maag, a blacksmith and a wagon maker, immigrated to the area with his wife Elizabeth (Fisk) Maag from Germany. First opening a business on the east side of the river, he later established a blacksmith and wagon shop on the west side of the river. It would be located to the north of John Sanders’ Boarding House, next to the mouth of a creek (today called Simpson Creek). Maag was not only a hard worker and business man, but also a respected and popular member of the community. He passed his work ethics and practices on to his descendants who would own many of the properties and business in the town. His son Louis became a miller and worked for Augustus Hoppe. Another son, Frank would continue the blacksmith business, after Sebastian’s death in 1909. Also, Frank was elected as Township Trustee in 1915. Still another son, John Maag, would become Post Master in 1915 and later, John’s descendent, Ron Maag, would become a representative to the State Legislature.

1857 Seth Greely bought a saw mill at Foster’s Crossing from Francis Phillips. In 1817 Greely’s parents had migrated from Maine to a farm in Hamilton Township near Yankeetown (Maineville). In 1858 and with his new partner James Atkinson, they built a grist mill. A few years later (1862), Greely bought Atkinson’s share in the venture. The mills were known as Little Miami Mills. His business of providing both ground grains and lumber prospered. He built a home on the upper hillside of his property which still stands today. The family was a strong supporter of the Maineville Academy and would also own many properties in the town. By 1887, the two mills and the residence would be sold to Augustus and Ernst Hoppe.
1859 The first Post Office was established in Foster’s Crossing and built on the east side of the river near the bridge. Joseph T. Mathews was the first Postmaster. Later, it would be moved to the west side of the river next to Joseph G. Foster’s Store. In 1883 the name was changed from Foster’s Crossing to Foster and then to Fosters in 1884. In 1893 the name was changed back again to Foster and retained until its closing. After the 1959 flood, the Post Office was moved to Mrs. Leota Black’s property (the Postmaster at that time), located close to the old entrance to Hoppe’s Island (Greely’s Mills). It remained at this location until it was closed in 1961.

1864 Sebastian Maag purchased an inn from Levi & Mary Shoemaker. The name of the establishment would be called the Maag Inn. The family would retain the property for close to 84 years, making many improvements to the property.

The business would prosper and even during the years of Prohibition, the tavern was converted into an ice cream parlor. In 1949, the property was sold to Richard & Goldie Ashburn.
1865 At the age of 39, Mathias Obergefell moved to Foster’s Crossing with his wife and their children. Born in Germany in 1826, where he became a tailor, he married Francisca Slatter in 1851. They immigrated to America in 1854 and located in Cincinnati where he worked on military uniforms for the government. Obergefell purchased John Sanders’ Boarding House and converted it into a hotel he named the Liberty House. Next to his hotel, he would later build a restaurant and tailor shop. It was said he could provide either a square meal or a suite of clothes and he was well respected for his fair dealings. After his first wife’s death, he married Katherine Rieger in 1880. By 1897, his widow Katherine sold the Liberty House to John Scheer, who sold it to Sebastian Maag the same year.

1865 The Free Turnpike Act was passed in Ohio making the majority of turnpikes toll free. However, this did not apply to bridges and tolls continued to be collected. With the new law, the roads were primarily maintained through taxes. By this time, the turnpike through Foster’s Crossing was called the Cincinnati Montgomery Turnpike.

1867 Joseph G. Foster purchased a store on the west side of the river from Halton & Eliza Fitzgerald. A new Post Office would later be built onto the side of the store when it was moved from the eastside of the river. Never recovering from his experiences in the Civil War, Joseph would tragically die at the age of 33 in 1875. His grandfather Henry had died in 1870 at 90 and his father James H. had died in 1872 at age 57. One year after Joseph’s death, his wife would also die, leaving their 4 children to be raised by family members. Not only was the Foster Family the town’s namesake but also, respected for their moral interests of the community. The family would maintain ownership of the store until 1884, when it would be sold to Benjamin True.
1867 This was an early map of Foster’s Crossing published in the 1867 Warren County Atlas. It shows the general layout of the community. The bridge over the river, railroad, mill race and roads are shown. Also shown are the locations of the post office, businesses, property owners and other structures. It further included a business diary of prominent citizens at that time.

1867 Mr. Hebble built a new covered bridge across the river with timbers cut and framed at Greely’s saw mill. The State of Ohio had authorized the construction of the first toll bridge at Foster’s Crossing in 1836. Hebble’s bridge was 26 ft. above the water, 24 ft. wide and 200 ft. long. The new bridge was a toll bridge also and stood until the 1913 flood when it was destroyed.

1868 Foster’s Crossing was aggregated to have a population of 180. This included 105 German, 50 American and 25 Irish. The town was featured in a Western Star article describing the number of
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buildings (47), types of businesses, shops and residences. It was noted there were no school houses or churches in the little village. The end of the article also gave political views. The ballots were stated to be in the Democratic hands, while the brains were stated to be in the Republican cranium.

1868 Mr. Scott, Representative of Warren County, petitioned the Deerfield Township Board of Education to create a separate school district at Foster’s Crossing. In the same year, the petition was approved and the school district established. In 1870 an attempt was made to have the act repealed. However, with the support of attorney Benjamin Butterworth (William’s son) and 42 residents, it was defeated. Prior to this, the community had two schools, German and English. The English was called a Union School and was located on what is today Foster Maineville Road, near Butterworth Road. It later would be moved to the Cincinnati Montgomery Turnpike, close to the entrance of Orson S. Murray’s property. At this location, a one room structure of brick would be constructed and later two additional rooms added on. Students attended nine months of the year as opposed to the original four months. Education was to the eight grade level. The Foster public school operated until 1942 when it was closed.

1871 Henry B. Kelley of New York (Orson S. Murray’s son-in-law) arrived in the Foster’s Crossing area. The following year he became a partner of William H. Poor and together, they discovered a new process for drying corn. (Canning foods would not be discovered until later years. It was common to dry fruits or pickle vegetables. The Indians had been drying corn by fire for a number of years to prevent the growth of organisms which cause decay.) The men developed their new process and built a corn drying facility on Orson Murray’s farm (today called Rivercrest Community). Afterwards, Kelley would join the firm of Kelley & Dunham of South Lebanon, Ohio, who were packers and dryers of sweet corn.