1873 Robert Cook, an Irishman and former railroad worker, purchased a store on the east side of the Foster’s Crossing Bridge (next to the river) from George Cochran. Prior to the purchase, he had worked for Isaac Stubbs at his farm and mill for over 10 years. After 7 years of operation, he entered into a co-partnership with John Bernard Rolhing. Together, they built a large and lucrative retail business (Cook & Rolhing) that included dealers in coal. Robert Cook would continue to purchase additional property on the east side of the river, including a 16 ft. right-of-way (alley) at the rear of his store to the railroad in 1882 and property from the Beech Creek Distilling Company in 1889.

1875 This was a map published in the 1875 Warren County Atlas. One noticeable addition from the 1867 map is Greely’s new residence. Also, the first Post Office location, on the eastside of the river, is now a store.

1875 In June, Joseph Foster’s residence was visited by a tramp requesting something to eat. The manner in which he disposed of the meal, his politeness and intelligence attracted the family’s attention. While
he never gave an account of himself, only the name of John, the family took him in. He proved to be trustworthy, honest and gentle with the children. On Monday, July 19, he was attending a small child when it pulled at his recently mended coat. He became violently angered and before he could injure the child, Foster shot him in the head. In a matter of minutes, John was dead.

1876 H. P. Dove, of Butler County, Ohio, became government store-keeper of the Foster’s Crossing Distillery. The distillery was a U.S. bonded warehouse by the Treasury Department, Office of Internal Revenue. He was employed in this position for over 12 years. Dove was also a civil war veteran.

1877 On July 12 it was reported, a marine monster had taken up residence in the Little Miami River, near Foster’s Crossing. It was stated the creature was most active around 10 o’clock at night, when a great deal of splashing would be heard in the river. Witnesses included several prominent citizens including Robert Cook (a store owner). Bathing and fishing in the river almost came to a stand-still, until it was discovered the monster was an alligator. Citizens then made arrangements to capture the reptile and possibly put it on display at the Cincinnati Zoo.

1878 On February 15, Foster’s Crossing Distiller, J. H. Delfendahl and several of his employees, were arrested for defrauding the US Government of lawful taxes on whiskey. Also, Mathias Pieffer of Fillmore Street, Cincinnati was arrested for concealing the untaxed liquors. Only Delfendahl and Pieffer posted bail. The illicit whiskey coming by wagon into Cincinnati had been known about for several weeks and the Internal Revenue Department had sent agents to investigate. After being caught in the act, Delfendahl and his employees made threats prior to and after their arraignment in Federal Court. The witnesses included the Foster’s Crossing Postmaster, George Fouche. The defendant and another employee were arrested for their intimidation of witnesses. All were brought to trial on May 10 of the same year and while the court’s disposition is unknown, federal agents were also witnesses.

1878 A. W. Pittinger of Cincinnati started Fishwick & Pittinger Merchants Merchandising Store. Mr. Fishwick was Pittinger’s father-in-law. Pittinger was educated in Cincinnati and completed a full commercial course at Bartlett’s College. This level of education was rare in rural areas at this period of time. Their business not only became competitive in Foster’s Crossing, but also in the surrounding communities. They carried a large variety of common merchandise and hard to locate items.

1879 Archaeologist Fredrick Putnam, professor and curator of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University, investigated the earth works discovered at Foster’s Crossing. Located above the river valley on the west side, it was known locally as The Fort. His research stated the earth
works were rectangular in shape measuring approximately 2,640 ft. in length and 55 ft. wide. The north wall was 9-12 ft. high, south and east walls only 3-6 ft. high and west wall barely visible. He reported the structure was built by the Hopewell Culture after the Fort Ancient construction. While never stating what its use was, he never believed fully it was for defensive purposes. Today, the site is not accessible as it is on private property. Dr. Putnam also investigated the famous Serpent Mound in Ohio.

1882 On July 23, the east bound Freight Train, No. 15, failed to stop at the end of the side-track at Foster’s Crossing. With the engine and several cars extending on to the main track and before corrective action could be taken, the west bound Express Train, No. 6, collided with the front of the freight train. The passenger train (No. 6) experienced little damage to the train and minor injuries to the passengers. However, the freight train engine was extensively damaged and several freight cars rolled over the bank and into the river. The engineer of the freight train, Mr. Lyons, was severely injured. The No. 6 passengers were delayed about two hours and a wrecking car was sent to the site to clear the tracks and recover the damaged engine and freight cars.

1883 St. Paul’s Church was built by Ben Kroener of Maineville, on land donated by the Butterworth Family. It was located facing Foster Maineville Road, with the Little Miami Railroad to its rear. The German congregation had been meeting for a number of years in the one room Foster School House. Their services were conducted in German, with English lessons taught on weekends. The 1913 flood severely damaged the structure and pushed it off its foundation. Members salvaged and repaired the building, to continue its use. In 1921 the services would be conducted entirely in English. It would later be called “The Church by the side of the road” and its picture displayed Sunday mornings by the local
WLW Television Station. In 1957 the lower part of the church was added on to for the growing Sunday school. The congregation today is located at Lakeview United Church of Christ on Columbia Road.

1883 St. John’s Catholic Church was built on Mason Pike (Foster Socialville Road). The land, donated by member Edward Daily, was at the foot of a hill overlooking a creek. The name was St. John Mission Church. That same year, it became a Parish. The Priest served both the St. John Church and the St. Malachy Church, located in Morrow. Built in 1854, St. Malachy was the first Catholic Church in Warren County. Prior to St. John’s construction, the congregation often traveled to Morrow by rail. Foster had visiting Priests who conducted weddings, death rites and even held a Mass in a private residence. (Masses were normally held once a month.) After construction, the church grew and was improved. (The old foundation is visible today.) By 1943 the Grail, a Catholic supported Monastery, was established at the top of the river valley (next to the viaduct’s southwest side). Supervised by Nuns, this was a farming commune and woman’s spirituality center.

In 1944, when the church was no longer able to accommodate the members, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati purchased the old Foster school building which had been closed in 1942. The original old school house, located to the rear of the main building, was renovated into a chapel. (Windows from the old church were used.) In 1965 St. John and St. Malachy churches merged to form St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church in Zoar, Ohio.
1886 John Bernard Rolhing (partner to store owner Robert Cook) would purchase the fashionable brick hotel and restaurant next to the store, from the Daniel Gordon Family. (This had been James Foster’s hotel.) The hotel would be operated by Theresa (Maag) Englert from 1892 to 1907. It would be named Mosher Hotel, Foster Hotel, and in 1934, Eugene Diss would name it the Blue Danube. Renamed the Train Stop in 1975, it is still in business today and is called the Monkey Bar & Grill. In 1911, Rolhing would purchase Robert Cook’s store (next to the river) from his family. Unfortunately, it would be washed away in the 1913 flood, smashing into the Loveland Bridge.

1887 Augustus Hoppe (a miller for Jeremiah Morrow) and his brother Ernest purchased Seth Greely’s Mills and property. While Ernest purchased the hillside residence, both brothers would together purchase the grist mill on the upper side of the mill race and the saw mill, with three residential homes on the lower side or island. The business continued to prosper and provide milling of corn, wheat, rye, barley and other grains for animal feed. In addition, cornmeal and pancake flour was produced. Their cake flour was of such a high quality, they became suppliers to bakeries in Lebanon and Cincinnati. Their top brand was called Pride of Miami. After the death of Augustus (1912), his son Edward Augustus Hoppe, assumed the business and in 1913 was also elected Township Trustee. At some point, the saw mill was no longer profitable and its use discontinued. The Hoppe family continued to contribute to the growth of the community for many years.
1888 On October 1, Passenger train, No. 9, was in route to Cincinnati when it struck a 15 inch diameter sycamore tree, which had been blown across the tracks in a recent storm, near the Butterworth Station. The train continued on for about a quarter mile, when it was stopped by the conductor putting on the air brakes. The Engineer, Patrick Golden, was found injured and unconscious. He was removed to Laurel, Ohio, for medical treatment. Fireman Mull was found along the tracks a distance back, where he had been thrown from the engine and soon recovered. The tree was cut in two by the engine, while the cow catcher, smoke stack and side of the cab were damaged. Also, the mail car had holes punched in it. Passengers were never aware of the accident, until the train stopped. An engine was sent from Cincinnati to pull the wrecked train in.

1892 On September 10, two railroad cars were destroyed by arsonists at Fosters. Investigation revealed, four cars containing rags shipped from the cholera-infested city of Hamburg, Germany had first been staged on a side track at Terrace Park and then moved when they became in danger. When the citizens of Foster became aware of the contents, railroad officials set a watch over the cars with employees. Around 10 o’clock at night, two of the cars were set on fire and destroyed. The remaining two cars were moved south and staged between Butterworth Station and Loveland. During the clean-up of one burnt car, the body of a child and a valise containing 3 suits of clothes were found. An investigation was initiated to determine the circumstances and cause of death.

1893 On November 5, Henry Thomas Butterworth passed away at the age of 85. Born in Virginia, he was among the children Benjamin Butterworth brought to Ohio, when he purchased property in the Virginia Military District. As an adult, he became known as “Uncle Tom” Butterworth in the community and lived on the family farm. He not only physically assisted with the construction of the Little Miami Railroad, but also served as a conductor on the Underground Railroad. Being a frugal man, he had built his own plain coffin 15 years prior to his death and stored it in a shed, telling no one but his wife Nancy. Per his requests, his grave was dug by employee Richard Tucker (an Afro-American) and his coffin lined simply by his daughters. He was buried next to 3 of his children, in the family cemetery on the farm.
1895 Ernest Hoppe would purchase the onetime Foster Family Store and the Post Office from Benjamin True. He became Post Master from 1897 to 1910 when his nephew Louise Hoppe served as Postmaster from 1910 to 1915. In 1923, another nephew, Herbert Hoppe purchased the business. The Hoppe family would successfully operate the business until 1948 when it would be sold to Dillard & Ethel Goose.

1897 Obergefell’s Liberty House and property was sold to Sebastian Maag. The name was changed to Maag’s Hall. The business would continue to provide dining and dancing. Music was played by German type bands and the dancing was mainly Quadrilles. After the passing of Sebastian Maag Sr., his family maintained ownership and continued to operate Maag’s Hall until after 1930. In 1942, Sebastian Maag Jr. sold the property to Hillard and Edna Profitt.

1900 Due to the economic and convenient train transportation from populated areas, the town had become a popular recreational area. While the majority of the surrounding communities were dry, Foster’s German/Irish culture had always maintained taverns. This was often over the objections of
many of its citizens. Local large employers, such as Kings Great Western Powder Company and the Peters Cartridge Company often provided patrons to the businesses.

While the main road through the community was still un-surfaced and was used mainly by local travelers, inns and boarding houses found their clients to be more and more people on holiday or vacation from the urban areas who used the train for transportation.

By the turn of the century, Foster had several ice houses. Ice boxes for both commercial and residential use had been introduced in the mid 1800’s and by the turn of the century, over half of the homes and nearly all the business (requiring product cooling) had ice boxes. The ice was harvested above the dam when at least 6” thick, it was scored into squares, cut by hand and stored in the ice houses. Saw dust insulation was used in the thick walls of the ice house and between layers of stored ice. The work would continue, until the ice houses were full. Ice was also sold to surrounding communities. One ice house was located behind the Miami Inn (Herb’s), which was at the west end of the bridge and next to what is todays Kings Mills road. Also, Cincinnati Ice Company owned property on the east side of the river, near the railroad.
Many of the old established businesses had been passed on to family members while others had been sold to locals or interested parties. However, they still provided services to the local communities and farmers. Foster would continue to grow both economically and in popularity.

1901 On September 10 it was reported, Morris Osborne had made an attempt to fly at Foster. After observing guinea hens fly over a barn at his residence in South Lebanon, he constructed a set of wings similar to those of the fowl. His first attempt was stopped by the Village Marshall at the South Lebanon Bridge. Not discouraged, he selected the covered bridge at Foster for his experiment. He soon appeared on the roof of the bridge in pink tights, sleeveless undershirt and his wings. With an audience on both banks of the river, he was launched into the air. Instead of soaring, he turned a somersault and plunged into the river with a big splash. Only bubbles and a tip of one wing remained at the surface. A boat was launched from the bank of the river and he was rescued. The inventor then loaded his wings and family onto his wagon and returned to his home.

1903 This is a portion of the Foster Map published in the Warren County 1903 Atlas. As the town continued to evolve, changes in property ownership is apparent. Some of which are, the Robert Cook store and (John) Ben Rohling Hotel are shown on the east side of the river next to the bridge. Next, James Foster’s Store, now belongs to Ernst Hoppe and his Inn, Sebastian Maag. Augustus and Ernest Hoppe are now shown as the owners of the Seth Greely mill and residence.
**1909** On August 15, Miss Clara Friedhoff of Glendale and Louis Fox of Langland St., Cincinnati, drowned in the Little Miami River at Foster. Witnesses stated, the two were boating with friends when Fox rowed their boat too close to the dam. Ignoring warnings (the river was high that day), their boat became caught in the current and washed over the dam. Though the boat was still upright, Miss Friedhoff panicked, stood up losing her balance and upset the boat in the water. Fox’s body was recovered down river near Remington 2 days later, while Miss Friedhoff’s body was recovered at Branch Hill 3 days later.

**1910** On December 16, it was reported Andrew Rohmer, a local farmer, was awarded $4,000.00 in damages from a suit filed against the railroad. On October 10, 1905, he was at the Foster Crossing with his wagon and team. At that time, the train engineer caused the engine to blow steam off. This frightened the horses and caused them to bolt. Rohmer was thrown from the wagon and suffered a broken jaw. He sued the railway company for $8,500.00. The case finally came to trial before Judge Gorman and the jury returned a verdict in Rohmer’s favor.
In March the area would experience 8-11 inches of rain in 3 days. Called the 1913 Easter Flood, on March 26 the river would be observed to rise over the 33 foot mark at Kings Mills. The little community would suffer the worst disaster of its history.

The rail road and many roads along the river were cut-off and damaged. Some roads reportedly had 4 foot deep pot holes from the flood's currents. This effected travel and shipment of needed supplies both in and out of the community.

Foster would suffer the loss of its bridge across the river and extensive damage to many of its buildings (some would be razed). A temporary swinging cable bridge was constructed for pedestrian use. Josiah Morrow (Jeremiah Morrow’s grandson) who was a Lebanon attorney and author of local history for The Western Star, wrote it was the most disastrous flood on record in the area.