The following is a partial list of Kinmundy Lodge members who descended from the first families who settled Foster township.

Foster Township was named after John Hardy Foster, who was born in Georgia, but had moved to St. Clair county, Illinois in 1814. This makes Hardy Foster a true Illinois pioneer. He moved to Marion county, Illinois in 1823, and then moved to the northwest corner of the township in 1831. Hardy Foster made improvements including a stage stand about halfway between Salem and Vandalia on the road connecting the two places. He managed the stage stand for many years.

In 1833 a Post Office was established where he was made Postmaster, and held the office at the time of his death in 1863, or thirty years. He was prominent in the early affairs of Marion County; was a Justice of the Peace many terms, and a member of the new Illinois Legislature for one term. He put up the first horse mill in the township in 1833, which operated until 1850.

The eldest son of Hardy Foster was William W. Foster, who was an early member of Kinmundy Lodge #398. We have no record of his initiation, but it is likely that William Foster was among the first to receive the degrees at the newly chartered Kinmundy Lodge.

The next settler in Foster township was a widow Polly Jones in 1826. Her sons were Eli W. Jones, Joseph A. Jones, and Samuel B. Jones. Her daughter, Elizabeth, soon after moving to Foster married John F. Holt, son of Harmon Holt, the first settler of Patoka township. This was the first marriage in the two townships. There are many Jones members at Kinmundy Lodge, who I hope to mention in a later report.

Moses Garrett, another Georgian, settled at Foster in 1831. His son, Benjamin Garrett was raised in Kinmundy Lodge in 1888, his grandson James Franklin Garrett was raised in 1911, great grandson Eugene Urban Garrett was raised in 1918, great grandson Claude Benjamin Garrett was raised in 1919, great great grandson Floyd Eli Garrett was raised in 1955, and great great grandson Gregory Garrett was raised in 1999.

Isaac Nichols moved to Foster township in 1830 on what became the Caldwell place.It appears the several Nichols members of Kinmundy Lodge are not related to Isaac, at least not locally.

In 1836 Mark Cole, Jonathan Green, Jesse Doolens, and Daniel Doolens settled near the north fork. Jonathan Green’s grandsons, Lawrence Elston Green was raised in Kinmundy Lodge #398 in 1912, and Thomas Leroy Green was raised in 1946. There are three other Green families living in the area that are not related to Jonathan Green locally. The Doolen family is well represented in Kinmundy Lodge membership, and will be the subject of a later report.

John Arnold, an early settler of Foster township, was married to Elizabeth Webb and lived near the township line between Foster and Kinmundy. His son, John Wesley Arnold (married to Nancy Jones) was a member of Kinmundy Lodge whose Masonic records were likely lost in the fire; his grandson James Wesley Arnold affiliated with Kinmundy Lodge in 1890; grandson Joseph Thomas “Buzz” Arnold was a member whose records also were likely lost in the fire; great grandson Guy Garfield Arnold was raised at Kinmundy Lodge in 1907; and great grandson Ora McKinley Arnold was raised at Kinmundy Lodge in 1914. Another of John Arnold’s grandsons, Joseph William Arnold was raised at Kinmundy Lodge in 1844. A great grandson of John Arnold is also Theodore Franklin Arnold who was raised at Kinmundy Lodge in 1981, and two great great grandsons, Mark R. Arnold and Jason R. Arnold was raised at Kinmundy Lodge in 2012.

William L. Arnold, who is one of the charter members of Kinmundy Lodge #398, was a nephew of John Arnold who first settled Foster township.

There was also a Thomas Everett Arnold who was raised at Kinmundy Lodge #398 in 1909, and who was supposedly born 24 Feb 1882 at Ripley, Indiana and who died 27 Nov 1957. Our records indicate he was a highway laborer. For all the detailed records the lodge has on his vital statistics, there is not a single record for this individual in the public databases. At the very least, I would expect to have found a death record since we have his death date.

As quick as this presentation has been, it took over 15 hours to research these families and to refresh our memories of the men who ran this lodge beginning over 150 years ago.