



Self-guided Garden and Grounds Tour

Installed in 1801, the grounds of Liberty Hall reflect over two centuries of Brown family and garden history. The garden has been continuously cultivated in its original four-square design ever since. Visit the stops on the diagram to trace the evolution of the grounds from food production to flower gardens.

- 1** Three catalpa trees represent 200 years of history on these grounds. The first tree is thought to have been planted by the Browns around 1800. Brown family members planted the second one in 1900, and their descendants planted the third in 2000.
- 2** When the Browns moved into Liberty Hall, growing food was more important than tending flowers. John Brown owned a book about growing vegetables, fruit, and herbs. If the Browns had an herb garden, it would have been near the kitchen.
- 3** Enslaved African Americans did most of the gardening and processed meat in this smokehouse. Photos taken around 1900 show a building beyond the smokehouse that may have been a dwelling place for enslaved, and later, paid workers.
- 4** Brown family letters mention fruit being grown here, including apples, cherries, and grapes. As an investor in a vineyard started by John James Dufour in Jessamine County, Kentucky, John Brown was given grapevine cuttings to plant on his land.
- 5** The Kentucky River created fertile ground for gardening. It was also a source of ice. Its location is not known, but the Browns had an ice house. A book in the family library tells how to build one.
- 6** The placement of flower gardens along a central path dissected by smaller paths is a signature feature of the four-square garden design, which is a popular Colonial Revival practice in early American formal gardens.
- 7** Boxwood hedges are another Colonial Revival feature. Mary Mason Scott, the last Brown family member to live in Liberty Hall, planted the site's first boxwoods around 1900 with slips from George Washington's Mount Vernon.
- 8** Roses were popular in Victorian gardens, and Mary Yoder Brown Scott planted many of them here in the late 19th century. The third owner of Liberty Hall, Mary copied information about a dozen varieties of roses into her gardening journal.
- 9** A 1908 book in the Brown family library suggests planting perennials and flowering shrubs to save time and money. Accounts of the garden around that time mention lilies, poppies, and other perennials. In recent years, Liberty Hall gardeners have added Kentucky natives to the mix.
- 10** In 1926, the Frankfort Presbyterian Church dedicated this bench to commemorate Margaretta Brown's service in a girls' Sunday school a century before. Accounts say she taught classes "under an apple tree in the garden."
- 11** The Mothers' Garden was established in 2010 for supporters to donate to the garden in honor of their mothers. It is not only the physical connection between the two houses, it also serves as a symbolic connection between familial generations.
- 12** The butterfly garden was named after two girls named Euphemia who lived on the site in the 1800s. A certified Monarch Waystation, the garden features plants that attract butterflies and other pollinators.

GARDEN KEY



- 1. Catalpa tree
- 2. Herb garden
- 3. Smokehouse
- 4. Cherry tree
- 5. Kentucky River
- 6. Allée path
- 7. Boxwood
- 8. Rose bush
- 9. Bed with shrubs and natives
- 10. Sunday School bench
- 11. Mothers' Garden
- 12. Butterfly garden

