

... FROM CHAPTER 18 GETTING STARTED



The Grass Garden

... During those first few years Shanti Bithi often sent more than 25 of our workers to the Steinhardts.' With both our boys now away at college, my husband and I were un-

mindful of how much the scope of this job was consuming our time and energy. Without noticing it, we were becoming addicted to designing and developing this exciting garden.

One morning in the spring of 1991, the Steinhardts' longtime housekeeper, Gertrude, told Jerome that she wanted to see me. Gertrude was my favorite "Steinhardt." The sight of her in the kitchen used to take away my exhaustion on a hot summer day. She reminded me of our housekeeper, Sylvia (whom I called "Swilly"), back in Kings Point. Swilly filled my teen years with extra affection, along with stories of her life, and hilarious imitations of some of the guests my dad used to bring home for dinner.

When I went up to the house, Gertrude happened to be outside. She greeted me, as always, with tremendous affection, and then got right to the point.

"Are ya takin' video, darlin'?" she asked in her almost incomprehensible Jamaican accent.

"Yes, Gertrude, I'm taking pictures." I answered.

"No, darlin', I mean, are ya takin' video?"

I didn't understand, for a moment, what she was saying. Seeing that I was perplexed, she continued, "Yas workin' sa hard, you 'n him. Yas shed be takin' video. Them not gon' rememba what yas did."

Now I understood where she was going. I took Gertrude's admonition to heart, as I would have taken anything Swilly had said to me. From that day forward I began documenting the development of all the gardens with much greater care.



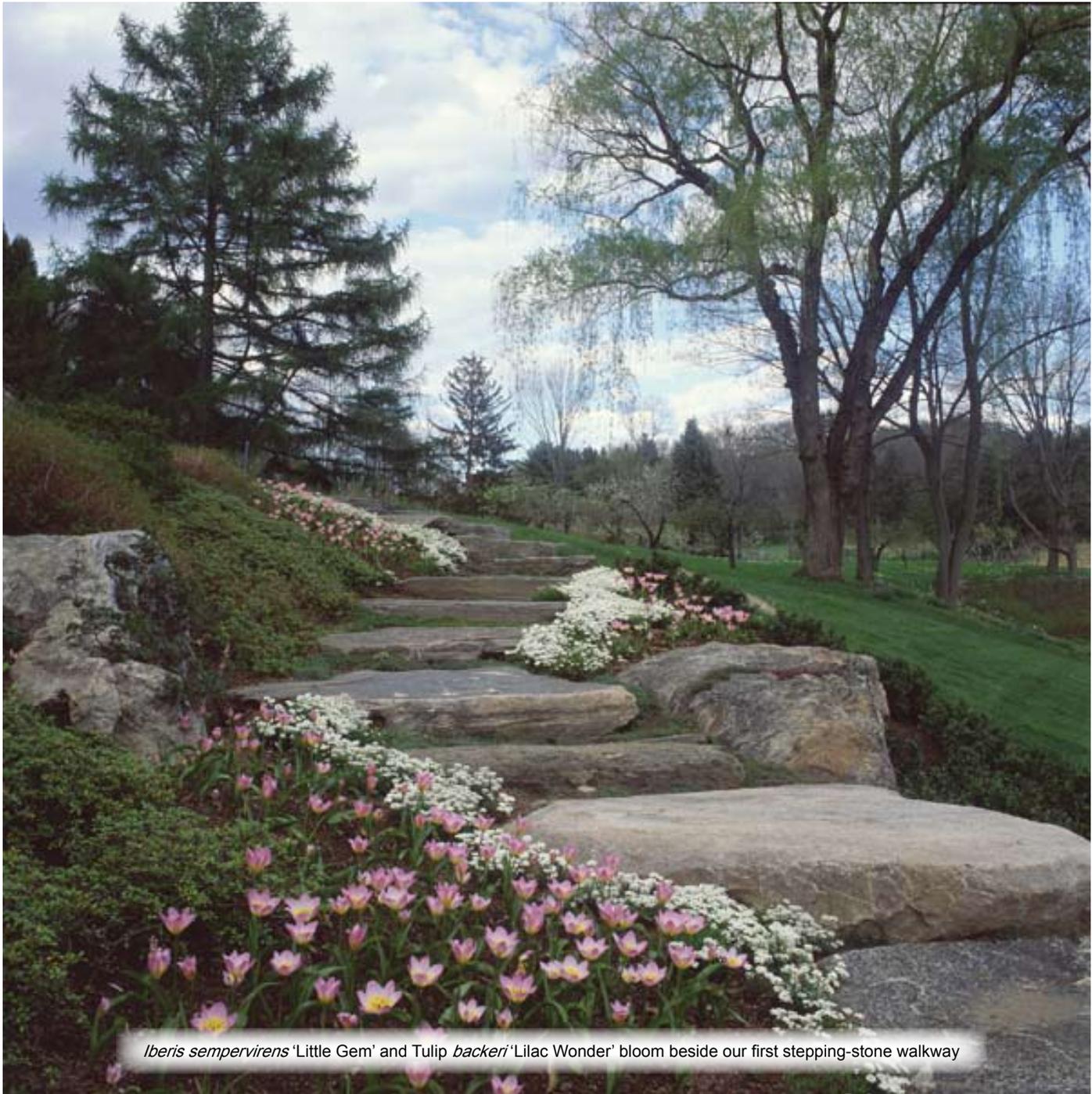
Above and right:
The Main Pond during and after redesign



The Moss Bridge, which has a view of the Main Pond.
Hydrangea anomala ssp. *petiolaris* climbs the trunks of two large Tulip trees in the foreground.



Martha, a Crowded Crane, takes a stroll in the Woodland Garden



Iberis sempervirens 'Little Gem' and *Tulip bakeri* 'Lilac Wonder' bloom beside our first stepping-stone walkway