

SITE #6: THE ISAAC ODELL PROPERTY

Of the two Odell properties located in Black Rock Forest, Isaac Odell developed his land less intensely.¹ The foundation to his home, which rests against a large boulder that served as the cabin's back wall, illustrate a modest dwelling for a small-sized family. The stone walls and rock-pile uphill and to the west of the cabin, while suggestive of agriculture, are less than extensive and indicate that such cultivation was limited.² The Scenic Trail, which was constructed by Black Rock directly through the Isaac Odell property may have obscured or destroyed the remains of more intensively farmed lands. This seems unlikely, however, since the steep terrain on the other side of the trail is not conducive to cultivation. The pit to the west of the cabin indicates that Odell also manufactured charcoal. Although little of the surrounding forest appears to have been cleared for logging, the swamp to the south of the cabin could have been a woodlot. Odell, however, was not the only occupant to leave his mark upon this landscape. After purchasing the land from Odell, Stillman allowed an elderly writer from New York City to use the property. It was this man, named Martinique, who built the tar-paper shack to the south of Odell's cabin.³ Martinique visited the area only on weekends during the warmer months. He does not seem to have maintained either Odell's agricultural or charcoal-making practices.

¹ The location of the Isaac Odell property is noted on Black Rock Forest Compartment XVIII Map, Black Rock Forest Archives, Cornwall, New York.

² The Issac Odell farm was mentioned by Hugh Raup, "Botanical Studies in the Black Rock Forest," *Black Rock Forest Bulletin*, No. 7 (Cornwall, New York: 1938), 69.

³ Babcock, interview with author, 20 May 1995.

Site #6: The Isaac Odell Property
 Location: South of Scenic Trail 1 & West of Ryerson Trail
 Map Created by Neil M. Maher

uphill
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 downhill



Old Cat Hollow Road

sparse tree growth &
 rock pile suggests
 limited farming area

20 ft high boulder
 serving as back wall to
 cabin foundation

thick forest growth, steep
 grade and rocky terrain
 suggest n on-farming area

probable charcoal pit

cabin approach lined with stones

spring

remains of more recently constructed tar-paper shack

thick forest growth suggests n on-farm land

Legend

- stone wall 
- trail 
- swamp 
- water 
- pile of stones 
- boulder 

North


