

SITE #7: THE SAM DREW PROPERTY

The Sam Drew homestead functioned as a small-sized farm during the late 18th and early 19th centuries.¹ The low stone wall running south from Old West Point Road marks the entrance to this farm. The Drew house was most probably located in the southwest corner of the property, where another wall, a large rock outcropping, and a depression in the landscape provide a protected setting for a home. The rocky terrain of the surrounding area indicates that farming on this homestead was limited. Remnants of only one field, located just south of Old West Point Road, are present. The walls bordering this field suggest that although the Drews did not place a large portion of their land under cultivation, they did farm it over an extended period of time. The height of the walls and the pile of stones, which Drew most likely built-up over the years as his plow loosened rocks from the soil and he moved them to the edge of the field, also indicates long-term farming practices. A second pile of stones located just north of the “Sam Drew Bridge” suggests that the eastern portion of the property may also have been cultivated before becoming the swamp that spreads over the area today. Although much of the Drew land appears too rocky to have ever been farmed, the land to the northwest of the house site seems to have been used by the family for other purposes. Sparse tree growth in this location and numerous rotting tree trunks indicate that this area may have been formerly logged. The Drews, therefore, like most other families residing in what became Black Rock Forest, appear to have supplemented their farming with cordwood cutting.

¹ The location of the Sam Drew place is noted on Black Rock Forest Compartment VII Map, Black Rock Forest Archives, Cornwall, New York.

