

Intersecting Landscapes in Northeastern Colorado: A Case Study from the Donovan Site

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THE STUDY OF LANDSCAPE incorporates holistic approaches for looking at the relationships among people, environments, and resources (Anschuetz, Wilshusen, and Scheick 2001; Layton and Ucko 1999). In my research, invoking a landscape perspective means considering multiple scales in space and time. I have been particularly inspired by the theoretical work of Barbara Bender, Tim Ingold, and Keith Basso and also by the firm methodological commitment to spatial analysis by High Plains archaeologists such as Lawrence Todd, David Rapson, and Charles Reher. In this chapter, I discuss how an emphasis on landscape shapes interpretations at one case study in northeastern Colorado.

The Donovan site (5LO204) is a prehistoric bison-processing locality located on a small terrace on the west side of a side canyon of Lewis Canyon, Logan County, Colorado (Scheiber and Reher 2007) (Figure 2.1). Lewis

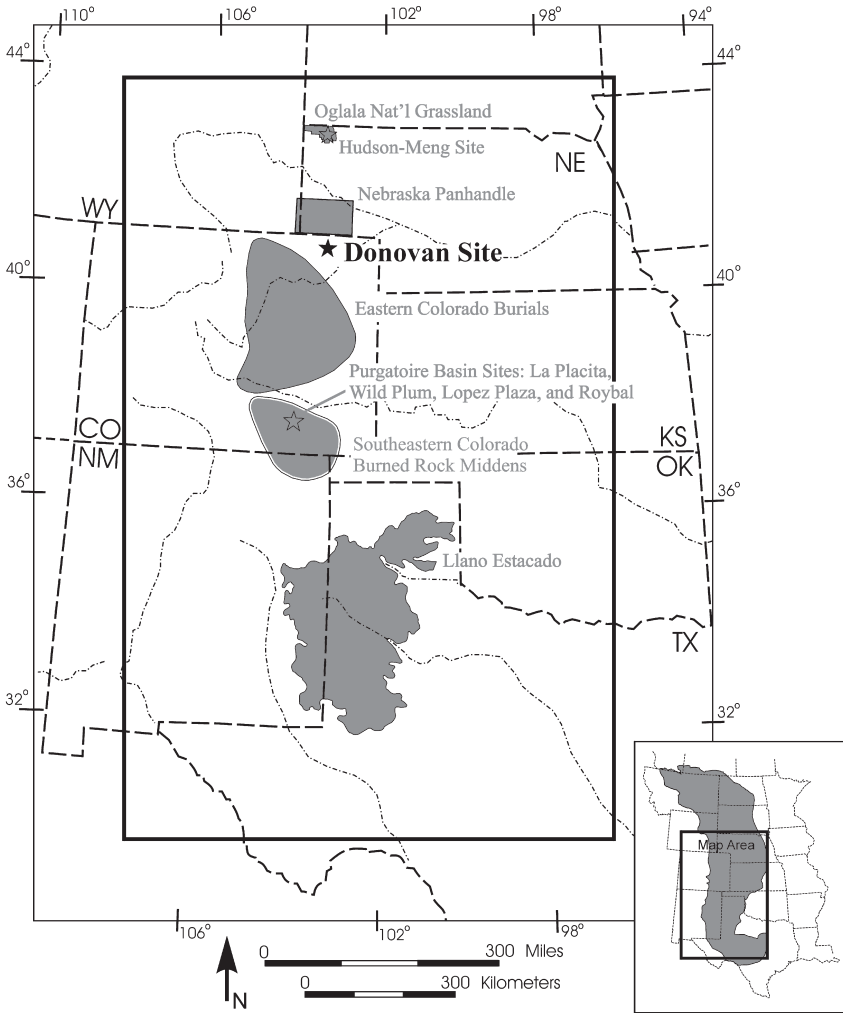


FIGURE 2.1.
*Map of the High Plains, highlighting
Donovan site study area. Illustration by
Kevin Gilmore.*

Canyon is composed of a series of canyons adjacent to a plateau upland known as the Peetz Table, approximately thirty-two km (twenty miles) north of the South Platte River (Conklin 1928:175). For thousands of years, people and animals have been attracted to this unique topography and to several freshwater springs still present in the area today.

The Donovan archaeological site was first occupied approximately 1,000 years ago by mobile people who carried distinctive pottery more commonly associated with the Central Plains tradition to the east, known as the Upper Republican phase or High Plains Upper Republican (Roper 1995, in press; Scheiber 2007). What is remarkable about this site is that it was revisited by what appear to be the same group of people over the course of several hundred years between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1300, in a deposit that has one of the best-preserved late Holocene geoarchaeological signatures on the High Plains. During nine field seasons from 1992 through 2003, crews from the University of Wyoming's High Plains Archaeology Project documented at least eleven Upper Republican occupations (Scheiber 2001; Scheiber and Reher 2007). Because of the detailed recording methodologies employed at the site and the complex micro-stratigraphic sequences, which in some areas are more than two m deep, a total of only twenty square m has been excavated.

Although every occupation level slightly differs, they share similar characteristics: (1) cultural deposits often cluster around a hearth or group of hearth features; (2) highly fractured bison bones dominate the assemblage along with abundant quantities of lithic debitage; (3) the majority of the lithic material is from the nearby Flattop quarry; and (4) numerous expedient flake tools, end-scrapers, projectile points, some formal tools, ceramic sherds, and worked bone implements are usually present. People probably spent the majority of their time there butchering animals, cracking open bison bones to obtain fat-rich marrow, preparing food and hides, and sharpening and finishing tools. The site is a processing site, not a kill site, and probably represents secondary butchering and pemmican production after opportunistic bison hunting by small groups of related individuals. Given the similarity in organization of space and redundant patterning of butchering and secondary processing, we can expect that people participated in repetitive tasks while at the site, tasks that were reinforced through these daily activities and probably taught to successive generations (Scheiber 2005). We can envision small groups of families continually returning to the same favored place for several centuries. I began considering landscapes and people's possible perception of them when considering this multigenerational phenomenon. My own interests revolve around how and in what ways group and individual identities were shaped by practices of animal hunting, carcass processing, and food preparation (Scheiber 2001).

Much of our research has focused on excavation of the stratified deposits. However, we have also identified other nearby sites, isolated artifacts, and features in the wider canyon locale. For example, High Plains Archaeology crews located and mapped thirty separate bone scatters that aid in interpretation of

bison taphonomy in the canyons (Reher, Liebe-Harkort, and Telldahl 2001). Some of the bones identified throughout the canyon probably represent the remains of kill sites associated with the main processing area where animals were processed for meat, marrow, hides, and bone tools.

LANDSCAPE APPROACHES AT THE DONOVAN SITE

The landscape concepts I find particularly useful in my research at the Donovan site include a sense of place and life history of place. I spent ten summers excavating the Donovan site, considering prehistoric residents' return within the context of my own physical return. I share Brenda Bowser's sentiments that understanding "multiple perspectives on archaeological places is critical to the practice of archaeology today" (Bowser 2004:1). Some researchers may expect an archaeological landscape study to include large-scale settlement patterns, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and geophysical survey. I support the use of these methods, although in this study I hope to broaden the relational dimension between land and people. I see these approaches as complementary interpretive methodologies at multiple scales that lead to different ways of perceiving landscape.

Archaeologists often investigate a site for years. Fieldwork alone can entail spending months at a time, year after year, at a particular location. Archaeologists also leave material traces. But rarely do researchers explicitly write about how these experiences shape their interpretations or about the field experiences themselves. This sense of self-reflection is well established in cultural anthropology (Royce 2002). Aside from thanking local landowners and dozens of crew in acknowledgments often published years after the work has been completed, little is said of the experience of fieldwork, especially the feeling of returning to the same site year after year on what feels like an annual pilgrimage or migration cycle. In discussing landscape, I find it essential to include the author's voice, my voice, and to add some self-reflexivity. An interest in reflexive methodology is growing in archaeology, although my work here addresses later interpretations after leaving the field as opposed to what Ian Hodder (2003) calls interpretation at the trowel's edge. In the following sections, I discuss several ways landscape perspectives can be used to address the past in this case study: as landscapes on the move, as daily practice, as sense of place, as contested places, and as narrative. This approach is meant to demonstrate how an emphasis on landscape can assume many forms even at one particular place, and all of the examples presented here are but brief glimpses into larger studies.

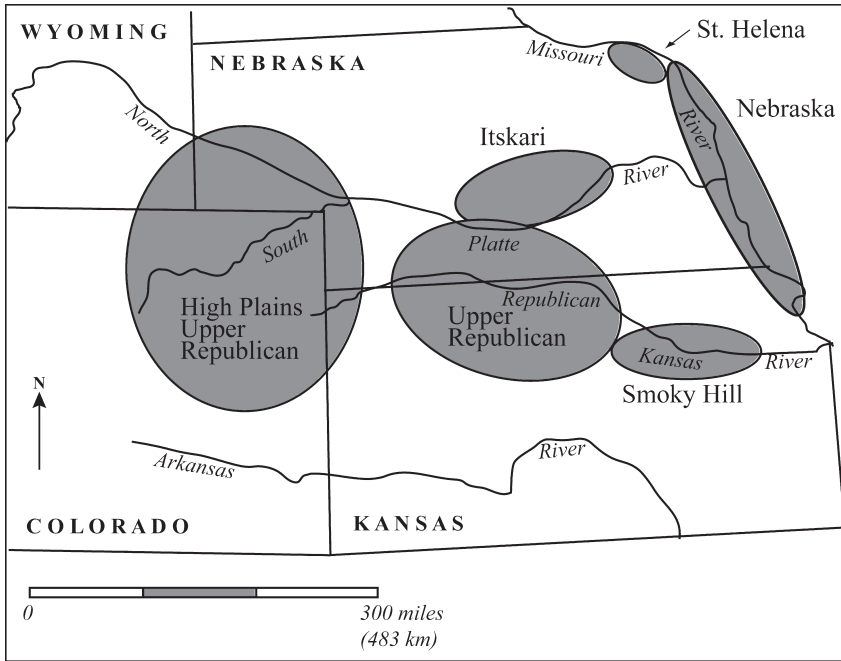


FIGURE 2.2.
Map of the Central and High Plains, showing locations of the five phases of the Central Plains tradition and High Plains Upper Republican.

UPPER REPUBLICAN FRONTIERS: LANDSCAPES ON THE MOVE

The people who returned to the Donovan site nearly 1,000 years ago participated in a wider phenomenon that extended throughout much of the High Plains, in southeastern Wyoming, northeastern Colorado, western Nebraska, and western Kansas (Reher 1973; Scheiber 2006) (Figure 2.2). Although western High Plains people used materials diagnostic of small farming hamlets in the Central Plains province of central and eastern Kansas and Nebraska, that is, distinctive pots and projectile points, we have no evidence that they practiced agriculture or lived in earthlodge houses, characteristics of the Upper Republican phase as traditionally defined (Steinacher and Carlson 1998). Archaeologists have proposed several models for considering the relationships between these two areas: that eastern farmers left their villages during certain times of the year to hunt buffalo on the western Plains (Bell and Cape 1936; Strong 1935; Wood 1969), that indigenous western nomads received their

materials through trade with farmers or copied their manufacturing techniques (Reher, Liebe-Harkort, and Teldahl 2001; Roper 1990; Wedel 1970; Wood 1971, 1990), or that mobile farmer-foragers seasonally moved across the landscape and gradually formed separate communities, maintaining contact with their cousins and perhaps sometimes traveling back and forth between regions (Roper 2002; Scheiber 2001; Scheiber and Reher 2007). I favor the last possibility because the western sites are relatively common, because of stylistic similarities between artifacts in both areas, because of broad seasonal use of the High Plains, and because of evidence for continued contact between areas in the form of ceramic and lithic sources. Additionally, despite a 200-year or more separation between the first and last occupations at the Donovan site, the levels look remarkably similar to one another and to regional site assemblages—more than one would expect from either summer hunts or indigenous emulators. This kind of shifting land use strategy is not unknown on the Plains. For instance, the historically recognized Crow migrated west into Montana from Hidatsa villages in North Dakota ca. A.D. 1500 (Frison 1967; Sutton 2002; Wood and Downer 1977).

Inspired by new research in frontiers, I see interactions with both new people and new places to be fundamental actions in forming and maintaining identity and in shaping cultural change and continuity. I consider a frontier as not just a place but also a process of establishing new identities (Klein 1997; Moore 1985). Studies of frontiers and landscapes intersect because both highlight the ways people encounter new places and spaces and the ways they construct and reconstruct new identities from these experiences. Barbara Bender (2001, 2002) uses the term “landscapes on the move” to refer to the process through which people adjust to new unfamiliar places that are often far from home. People living on peripheries can also be considered active participants in culture change, not just passive recipients of neighboring materials (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995).

The Donovan residents were people on the move, mobile residents of the High Plains. The first occupants in particular were far from home when they established a new place to which they would then return for many years. These people and sites are not peripheral to Central Plains tradition activities but are now seen as integral for interpreting the better-known farming communities (Roper 2002, in press; Scheiber 2001). Dates from Donovan confirm that people were there at least as early as the first farming hamlets were established. This transition to more settled horticultural life may best be understood by including the wider variety of daily lived experiences, which include so-called hunter-gatherer sites on the High Plains.

DAILY LIVES: LANDSCAPE AS PRACTICE

Whether small-scale or large-scale, a focus on landscape is inherently a focus on space, place, and the relationships between them. A more fine-grained spatial analysis may consider landscapes as locations of daily practices. Material culture found in archaeological contexts is generated from the performance of daily tasks. The organization of daily life is studied archaeologically through redundancies in spatial distributions, the structure of events related to domestic tasks, and discard practices (Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998:216–217). Because of detailed excavation methodologies at the Donovan site, we have a rich understanding of spatial patterning and site structure, which allows for a more complete discussion of everyday activities such as stone tool production and maintenance, bone tool and ornament manufacture, hide working, meat drying, intensive bone grease extraction, cooking, and hearth maintenance.

The organization of space is culturally variable (Kent 1984; Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998; Marciniak 1999), and thus spatial patterning of discard is an important component of such an analysis. The material culture at the site represents both the structures of everyday life (*habitus*) and the efficiencies involved in doing repetitive tasks (Leroi-Gourhan 1993). The Donovan site is the embodiment of both of these guiding forces, thus demonstrating entrenched patterns of redundancy and the efficiency of skilled individuals, drawn together within a set of cognitive approaches to tasks (the cultural context). I am interested in demonstrating continuity and change through time in people's activities at the site. By studying the variability and distribution of material discard, especially faunal remains, I hope to consider the structured nature of daily activities at Donovan. My interpretations are derived from evidence using traditional data in the form of spatial distributions, bone counts, and bone surface modification.

For example, the distribution and kinds of materials from the first occupation at the Donovan site closely resemble hunter-gatherer campsites, multiple activity sites, and terminal processing loci (Bartram and Marean 1999; Binford 1978; Sivertsen 1980) (Figure 2.3). The occupants made choices as to what parts of the animals to bring back with them, and these choices were reflected in the way the animals were segmented into butchery units. Once these items were brought to the site, people further subdivided the portions, stripped and dried the meat, prepared the hides, and broke the bones into smaller pieces. They extracted the marrow, smashing the bones even more so the fragments could be placed in ceramic vessels that were set in fires to boil and skim the bone grease. When the pot was full and the grease was extracted, the contents were dumped out and the process was repeated.

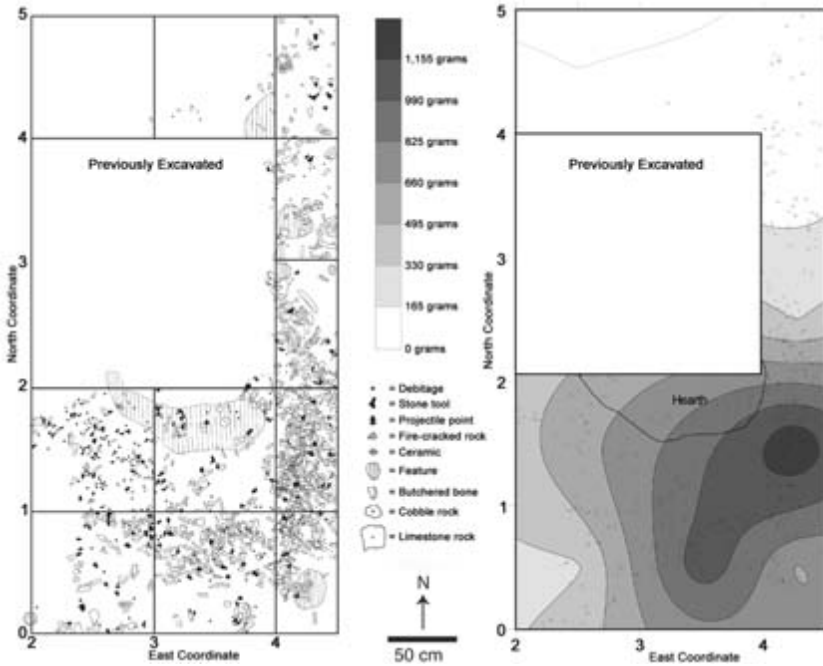


FIGURE 2.3.
Donovan first occupation plan view (left) and density contour of bone weight for bones less than 3 cm (right) (+ indicates bone fragments; contours represent smallest bone fragments indicating processing and discard areas).

The discard areas are not clearly demarcated from the smashing or secondary butchery areas. From the evidence in the excavated part of the Donovan site, the material manifestations of all these activities are concentrated in one area, with a gradual decline in the number of bone fragments radiating from it. The technique or process of marrow and bone grease extraction was well designed and patterned. Through time, people would return to work within and around distinctive processing areas, even using the same location for placement of their hearths. The combined evidence of numerous features, relatively high cutmarks, and burned bone indicates culinary processing and meat drying in addition to intensive bone grease extraction. These families probably occupied the site during the summer, after the buffalo had calved but before the rutting season.

The structural duality of procurement and processing on the North American Plains both reflects and creates economic behaviors and symbols of human action (Duke 1992). The process of butchering and secondary processing and cooking is a landscape in and of itself, a landscape that is constructed through social experience and is based on factors such as gender, age, and status (Perry and Potter 2002; Potter 2004). Tim Ingold (1993) has called these suites of activities “taskscape.” Animal carcasses themselves can be viewed as landscapes or places of spiritual and practical meanings (Potter 2004; Whitridge 2004). The repeated tasks of bending and twisting the body to obtain animal products embed themselves in the butchering process. People move across the landscape and interact and identify with natural resources they encounter but also with a sense of place or cultural landscapes. Animal processing is an activity that probably occurred every day and is a daily task that involves natural resources in animal acquisition, but it also represents food practices, which are inherently social phenomena.

SENSE OF PLACE: LANDSCAPE AND TIME

Continued reuse of a particular site during several years of one’s life may be a means of reckoning time, age, and social memory (Bender 2002; Gosden 1994), as a symbolic and material marker of the physical life cycle (Gilchrist 2000). The continued use of the same place on the landscape by the same group of people is “a critical element in their encounter with time” (Myers 1986:25), which both produces and in turn reproduces cultural identity. Each return in turn “rewrites” the landscape with new memories and a sense of identity (Parcero Oubiña, Criado Boado, and Santos Estévez 1998). As individuals move across the landscape, they create their own unique relationships with the land (Bender 2001; Knapp and Ashmore 1999). Passed on through years and generations, this multilayered connection with specific places becomes part of the social memory of individuals and the group as a whole. Multiple-occupation archaeological sites such as Donovan can therefore be conceived as a series of stories about past occupants (McBryde 2000).

A combination of seasonal variation, water drainage, sedimentation, and repeated human modification to the land caused the Donovan landscape to change over time. We can consider each new occupation as an opportunity to consider and remember the activities that occurred in the past and to re-create and reinterpret the processing locale. The hearths and hearth areas at the Donovan site served as focal points and were used repeatedly for several visits. High Plains peoples chose to use the same features on the landscape, whether

visible or not, each time they arrived. These activities may have involved ritual or spiritual significance, but they were also important components in their everyday subsistence acquisition tasks. They are embodied landscapes in these occupants' memories (Bender 2002). Julian Thomas (1996:90) has stated that "while people often move in cyclical patterns in the course of routine activities, returning to the same location again and again . . . the places . . . are themselves continuously being physically altered and decaying, as well as continuously being re-evaluated and re-interpreted." Each subsequent return also means an appropriation of the past and of past landscapes (Gosden and Lock 1998). The very fact that Donovan residents returned to the exact same location shows that the past was used to legitimate the present (Bender 1998) and to create and re-create a sense of identity.

People at the Donovan site repeatedly returned to the fire hearths the first residents constructed. The successive generations of individuals returned to the same terrace in the same small side canyon to process buffalo meat and hides, to gather other important resources, possibly to re-create or reaffirm their places in their families and in their world. When the last Upper Republican occupants came to the site, they were separated from the first visitors by several hundred years and perhaps by several generations. They structured their practices much the same way their ancestors had, even while limiting their range of activities (Scheiber 2001). Upper Republican people disappeared from the High Plains at the same time their eastern cousins left the Central Plains, as they presumably traveled north in search of new homes and new spaces (Roper 2006).

NEW ARRIVALS: CONTESTED LANDSCAPES

Several hundred years after the Upper Republican people at Donovan first traveled to the site, their descendants hunted, butchered animals, cooked and ate food, and told stories there for the last time. Archaeologists do not know where they went or why they no longer returned. The saga of the Upper Republican people probably continued in the eastern portion of the Plains as they migrated north. But that is not the end of the story at Donovan. Several hundred years later, probably about A.D. 1700, another group of people who may be Protohistoric Plains Apache (assigned to the Dismal River aspect) (Gunnerson 1960) found the small terrace on the small side canyon and surrounding area, again hunting and processing buffalo. Ceramics and projectile points found in the main site area as well as the wider vicinity bear further witness to this new occupation at the Donovan site, a new group of people to inscribe meaning onto the landscape.

Does the story end here, then, at the twilight of prehistory? Not so, if we acknowledge the many historically recognized Native American groups who traveled through the canyons at least until the 1870s in what became a contested landscape between indigenous and non-indigenous occupants. Early American pioneers describe Indian presence in the canyons, today evidenced by occasional trade beads and historical artifact scatters. The Arapaho, Cheyenne, Pawnee, Lakota, and Ute passed through Logan County at least until the 1860s and 1870s (Conklin 1928). The historic battle of Summit Springs was fought between Cheyenne Dog Soldiers and the Fifth U.S. Cavalry in 1869, only forty-eight km (thirty miles) southeast of the Donovan site (Reher, Weathermon, and Finnell 2006; Werner 1991). Several years after most Indian tribes had been forcibly relocated, thousands of Lakota camped along the South Platte River, just south of the Donovan site (Wells 1976). As late as the summer of 1874, a group of Lakota Sioux left the Red Cloud Agency in Nebraska to hunt buffalo in Logan County (cited in Conklin 1928:68).

Settlers occasionally mention Lewis Canyon by name in their recollections of early pioneer life (Conklin 1928:71, 316, 337). W. L. Henderson stated that early Logan County residents often thought Indians hid in Lewis Canyon or went there to obtain water. Mr. McConley found Indian beads in the bushes near the springs at Lewis Canyon. Mrs. Susan Powell Deveau recalled that “one morning in the spring of [18]76 . . . he [Mr. E. Cole], with three of his men, started for Lewis Canon [sic] to pick up some stray cattle. They stopped in the canon at noon and were attacked by a bunch of Indians, begrimed and bedecked. Three of the men were killed instantly” (Conklin 1928:337).

Lewis Canyon, and the by-then largely buried Donovan site, were part of the open range when 16-year-old Len Sherwin began taking care of the family cattle there in the early 1890s (Figure 2.4). Len lived in a sod dugout he built in the canyons, which is still visible today as a grass-covered, rectangular-shaped mound near one of the springs. In his 1899 autobiography, he wrote: “I had my dogs, my horses and traps so I did not get very lonesome. . . . I had it all my own way at the canyons. Sometimes I would not see anybody for two or three weeks” (cited in Garst ca. 1993:102). He later homesteaded the area with his wife, Hilma Anderson, and their seven children (Propst 1986). Len and his family originally moved west from Ohio and Kentucky, and he loved all things associated with the Old West. In 1918 he bought three buffalo at the Denver Stock Show and reintroduced them to the Lewis Canyon area, inspired by his sense of nostalgia for the Old West (Figure 2.5). For a short while, buffalo once again lived on the Peetz Table, and some of the buffalo bones still found eroding from the banks of the canyons may be from this small historical

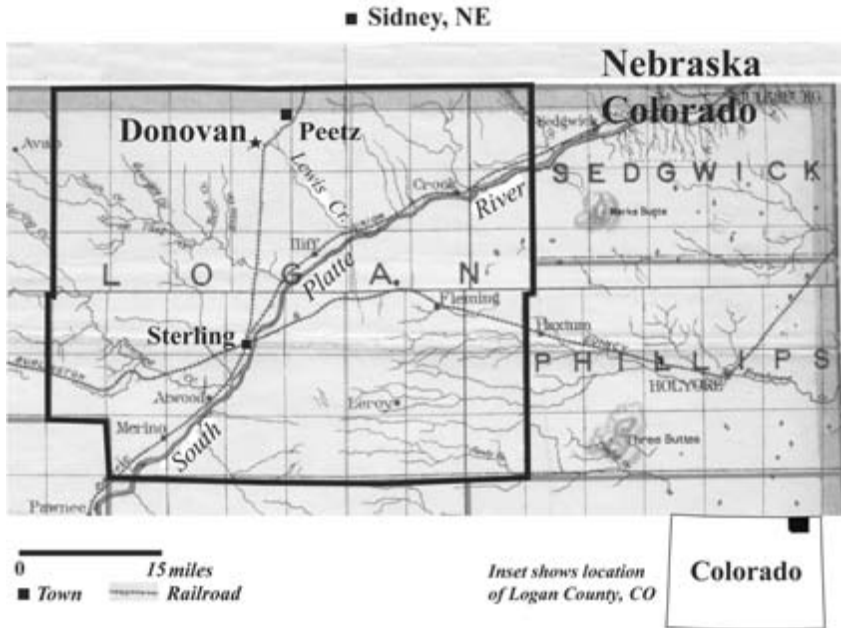


FIGURE 2.4.
Historic map of Logan County, Colorado, and vicinity (modified from Dinsmore 1905).

herd. Several years later he bought twenty more head of buffalo and moved the operation (Wells 1976). Len Sherwin died in 1929 when he was 53. Several local newspaper stories memorialized the man, his nostalgia for western history, and his efforts to reintroduce bison to the Plains long before contemporary bison conservation efforts. Not much is said, though, about Hilma, who at age 45 became a widow with seven children ranging from 6 to 18 years old. She managed the ranches, the herds, and the kids for over 30 years after her husband died. Her daughter Marguerite later married Tim Donovan, and they all ran the ranch together. It is said that their children were “no lovers of conventional employment; [they] scattered and returned to the ranch, drawn by some elementary gravity of the place” (Garst ca. 1993:139). Len’s children and grandchildren ranched in the canyon for 100 years. Although landownership has since changed, the Donovan family still considers this place an important part of their heritage.

The land continues to hold its allure and contested nature even today. For years, people from surrounding Colorado towns came to this place to

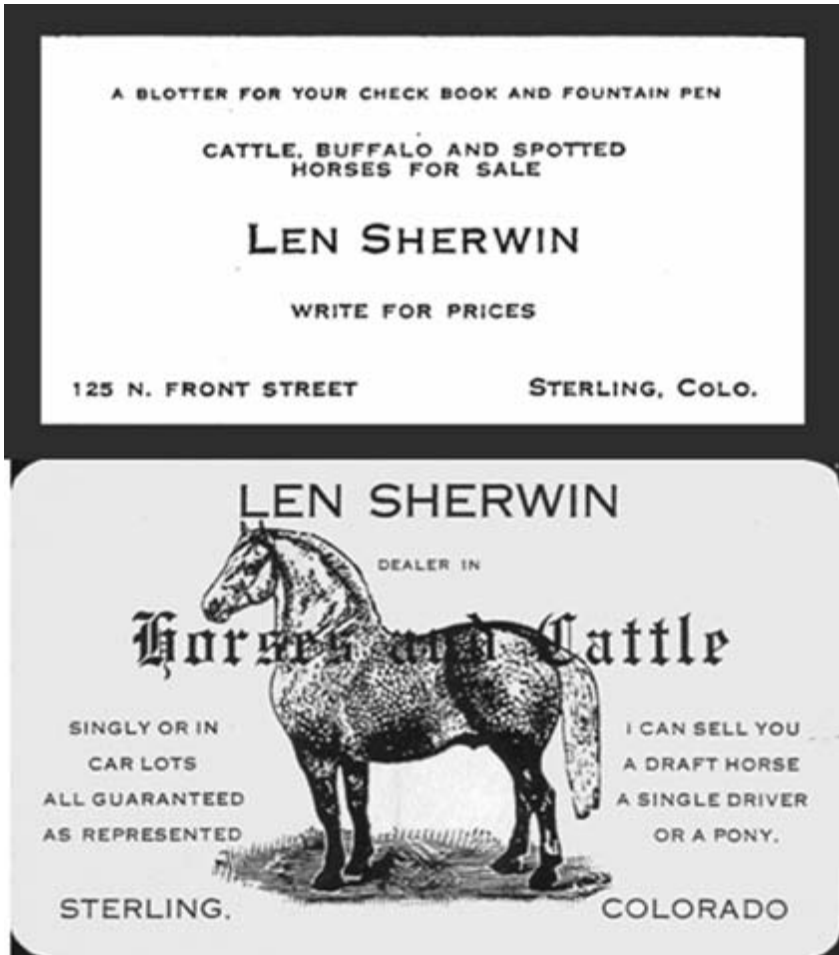


FIGURE 2.5.
Historic business card and check blotter advertising Len Sherwin's ranching operations.

camp, hike, and explore, lured by the presence of rare canyons in otherwise flat farmlands (but not always having the landowner's permission). It was during one of these excursions in the 1980s that Lloyd Hobbes, a local resident of Sterling, Colorado, discovered artifacts eroding from the bank of one of the dry sand arroyos of Lewis Canyon. Avocational archaeologists from the Colorado Archaeological Society excavated the site during several weekends between 1982 and 1985. Bill Tate wrote in the *All Points Bulletin* that "this is the chance

to work on a site quite different from others in which our group has been involved. It is a chance, too, to meet some fine, knowledgeable people” (Tate 1982:3). Because of the efforts of Mike Toft and Mike Dollard, Sterling residents who believed the Donovan site contained enormous research potential, Charles Reher, a professor at the University of Wyoming and principal investigator of the High Plains Archaeology Project, was given permission to begin a professional archaeological excavation at the site in 1990. These excavations continued as an ongoing project almost every summer throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s. To the local community, we may be seen as outsiders studying an Indian past, a fact that may not resonate with the mythology constructed by the grandparents of those living there today. Some still think we are digging up ancient Indian skulls, not butchered buffalo bones. Our continued presence at this site reminds us that the landscape is always in process and constantly redefined (Basso 1996). We “cannot disentangle time from place and landscape” or determine whether, perceived or not, the past is always contested in the present (Bender 2001, 2002:S111).

THE MAKING OF AN ARCHAEOLOGIST: LANDSCAPE AS NARRATIVE

For a final perspective on landscape, I return to a reflexive narrative. My accumulated knowledge of and experience with the Donovan site and surrounding canyons exist as a contemporary palimpsest today, undifferentiated nooks and crannies that take on meaning by my connection to them. I remember the first time we drove south from Wyoming, interlopers from another state, driving along gravel roads in the hot summer past bluffs and buttes, not yet knowing the features as we drove by. As archaeologists, we want to learn from the past, yet we are also the latest people to come to a place with the belief that we have a unique connection to the land by our interest in what is below it. And as such we bring our own ideas about the place, and the landscape becomes part of our own memories and creates our own identities. Our lives as researchers are not static. Even archaeological fieldwork is historically and socially situated (Berggren and Hodder 2003; Gero 1996). The methods and techniques used in 2003 were not the same ones we used in 1992 or the ones the amateur archaeologists used in 1985. Landscapes of the past intersect with the landscapes of the present. At least 95 archaeologists and archaeologists-in-the-making have worked at this site. That’s almost 100 people. I wonder if that is more than the total number of Indian people who stayed at the site. My students have since trained their own students, and the cycle of knowledge has

continued, as I imagine it did for the original residents who trained the next generation how to be at this place. We archaeologists have now spent more than ten years investigating the canyon, leaving our own traces and creating our own experiences of place.

Many of the features in the vicinity are embedded with meaning, and my mental map references both places and events (Figure 2.6). We camped down by the springs near the old sod dugout and later camped around the bend from the site near the historic Indian camp. We gathered water and screened dirt at the old stock tank. We tried to make the stock tank into a personal Jacuzzi. We hiked everywhere in the country. We became “plum relaxed,” content to be back at our favorite place. We watched dozens of summer lightning storms, some of which became tornadoes, roll across the Plains. We got to know every channel and butte. I personally spent days, the equivalent of six months, at the bottom of a two-meter-square hole where 1,000 years earlier, people continued their daily business (Figure 2.7). I point to the stratigraphic levels and remember personal events in my own life. The levels of the site are like a mnemonic device for me and how I experienced life in those ten years. I went from being a recently graduated college student to a field school instructor to a graduate student writing my dissertation, to bringing my own students, to being a young professor. This time shaped the archaeologist I am now: I think all artifacts should be mapped to the nearest millimeter; I think students need to camp in remote places to truly experience the past; I separate all bone into bison and non-bison categories; I see scale as particularly relevant for archaeological research; I am dogmatic about data-recording consistency; I view community outreach as a key element of good fieldwork; I believe a decent shade can make all the difference in the success of an archaeology project. The people who once lived in Lewis Canyon did not leave written records of their journeys. Their stories have become my stories, to tell and to experience. I will bring my experiences from Donovan with me, even as I work in completely different areas. Connections among memory, identity, and landscape will continue to play a prominent role in the way I conduct archaeology.

CONCLUSIONS

The title of this chapter is “Intersecting Landscapes,” and I think this intersectionality is what makes studying landscapes in general and the Donovan site more specifically interesting. Scale continues to be a critical component in this approach, linking coarse- and fine-grained narratives. For me, landscape and social memory act as a bridge between macro-scale models of frontier

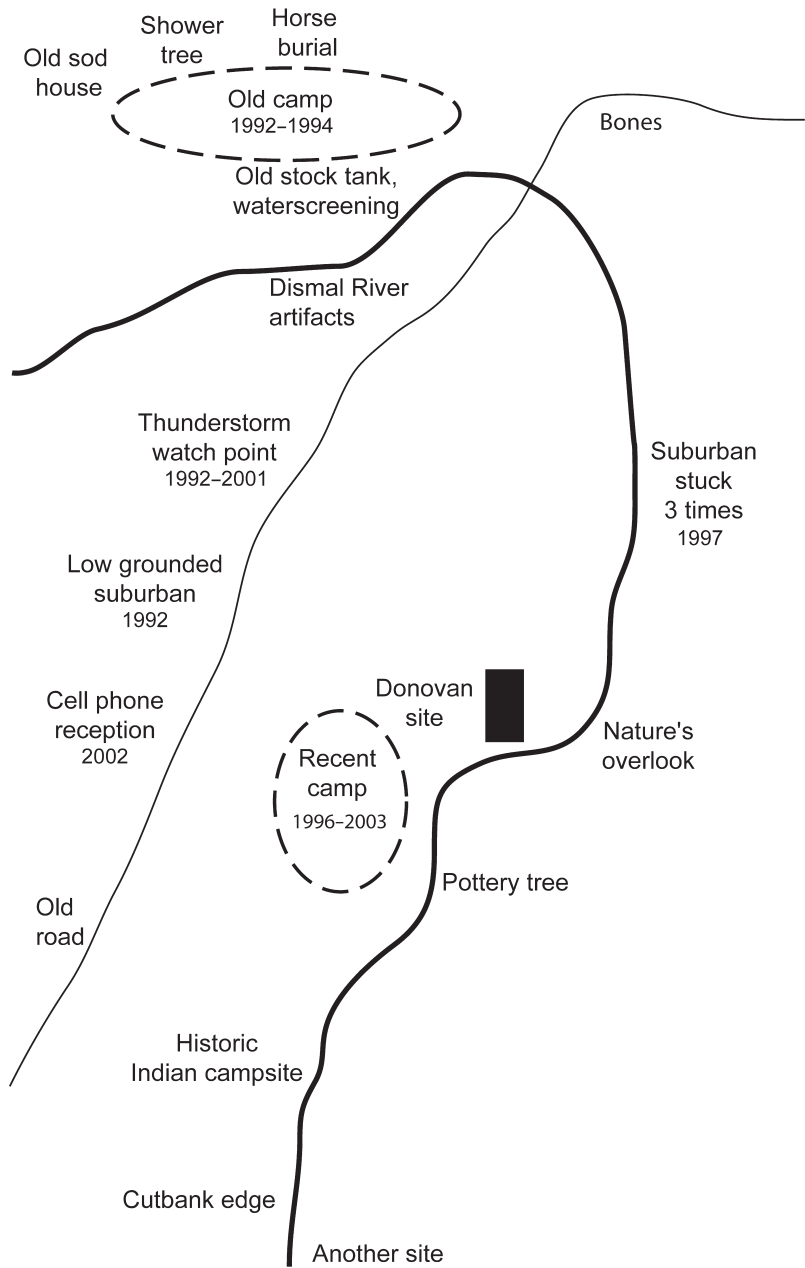


FIGURE 2.6.
*Laura Scheiber's mental map of the
 Donovan site and Lewis Canyon.*

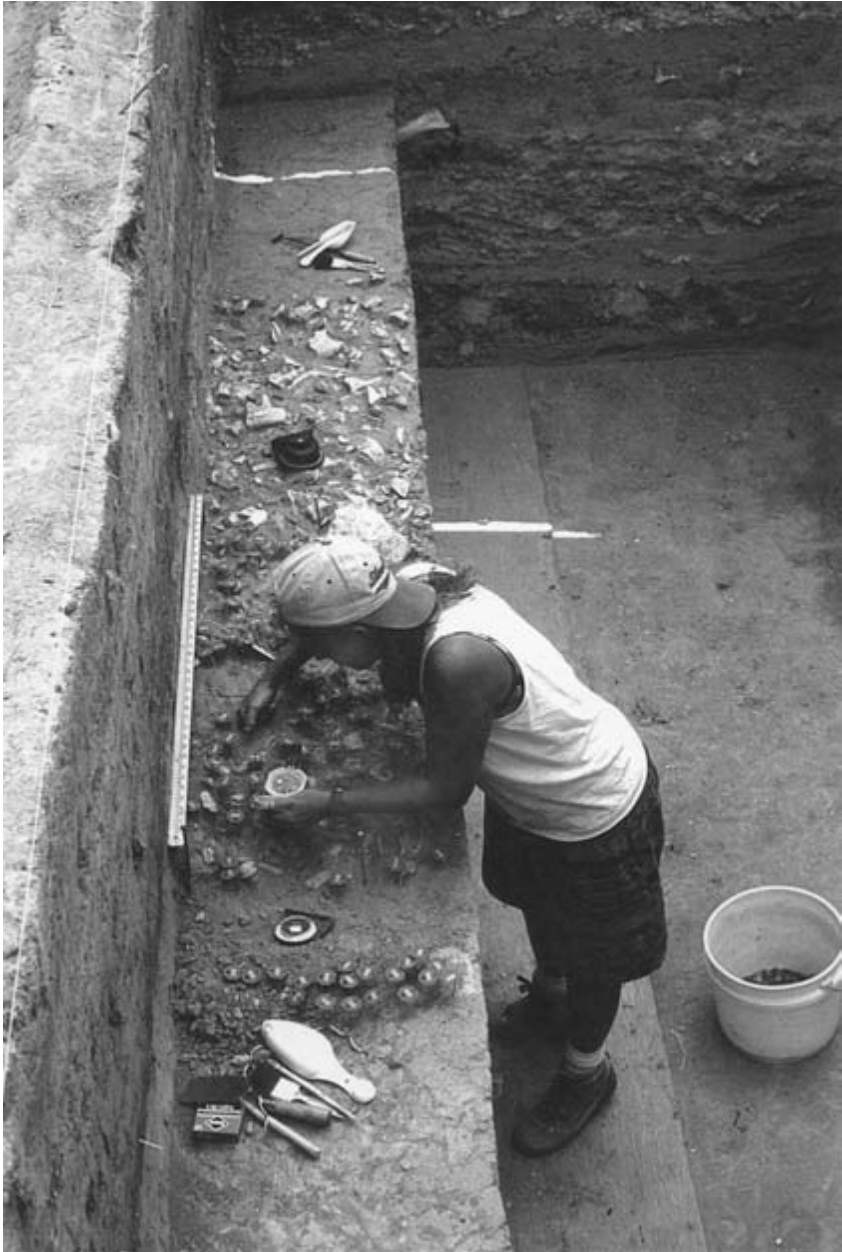


FIGURE 2.7.
Donovan site excavation units, July 1997.
Photograph by Charles A. Reher.

process and forager-farmer interaction on the one hand and micro-scale daily activities at a site with multiple occupations spanning several generations on the other. At the same time, I am fascinated by a grounded sense of place and the contested nature of past and present occupations of the Old West. Wendy Ashmore advocates studying the use of a place throughout its existence (Ashmore 2002:1178), and I have attempted to do this here.

In the final analysis, does having knowledge about the possible Lakota or Cheyenne campsites and the Sherwin ranching activities change or strengthen interpretations about ancient buffalo processing? Do my memories of staring at dirt profiles in the bottom of an excavation unit help explain the archaeological record? I think they provide a broader context for interpreting the results by reminding us of connections between time and space, and for helping us to thus people (and humanize) the past. The study of the land and our knowledge of it connect us to those who came before us. Perhaps it is because many of us have lost a connection to the land in which we live that we think it is profound. Landscape exists as a physical reality but also as a metaphor, for place and for time. The combined outcome is a more holistic view of the Donovan site. I think this is a critical dimension of research for all archaeologists, including those working on the High Plains, with its characteristic landscape.

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