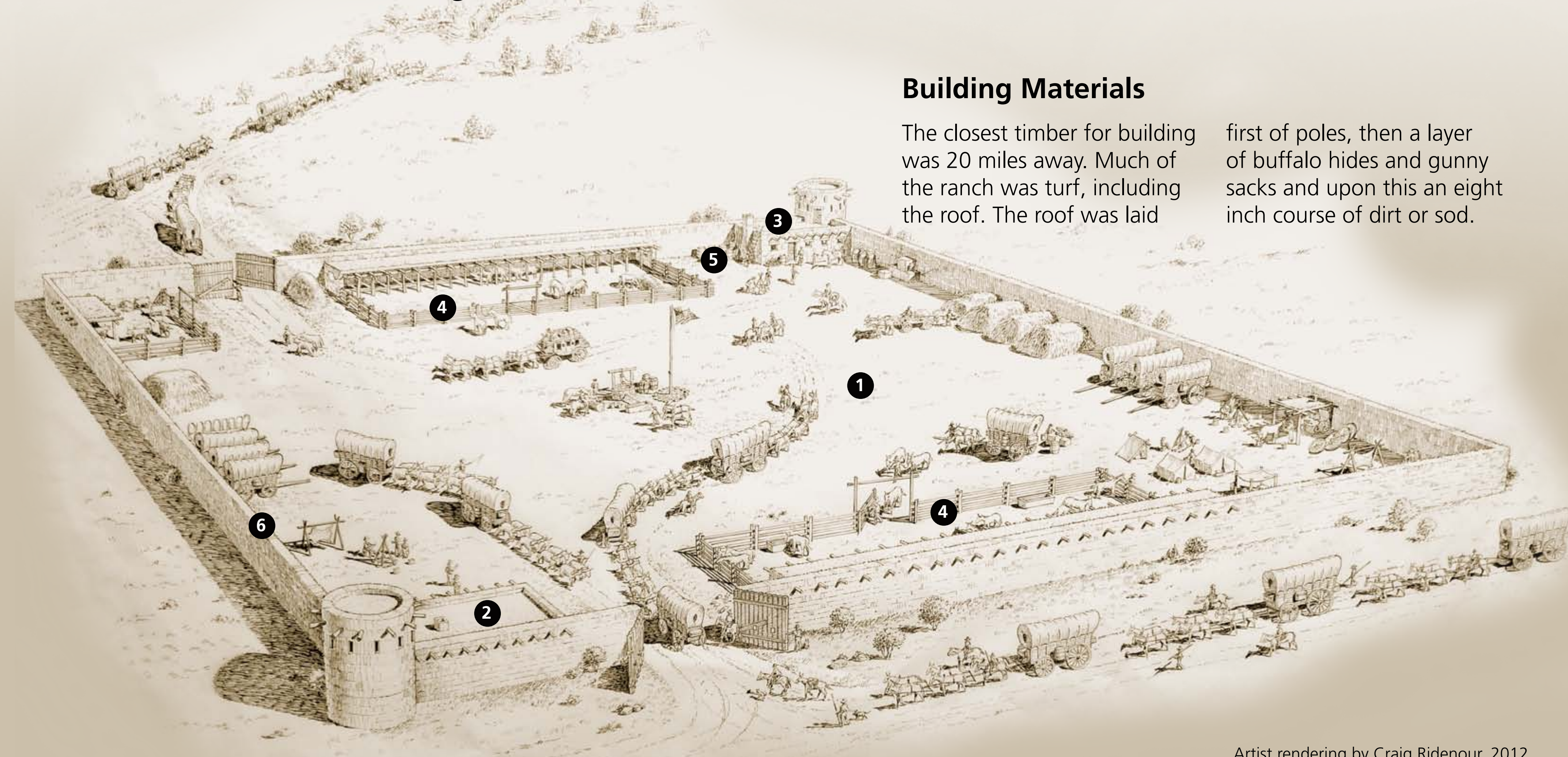


# The Ranch at Cimarron Crossing

The Santa Fe Trail passed by here bringing people and goods along the trading route. Just to the south, the river formed the border with Mexico. Traders and travelers required accommodations, supplies, and protection. This ranch was established in 1866-1868 to meet those needs. At full force there were 12 armed men at the Cimarron Crossing station.

The ranch sat in the midst of a vast open plain, covered only with cactus on the higher ground and with grass in the river bottoms as high as a man on horseback. Buffalo could be seen in any direction, and for an hour at a time the river might be heard roaring in the night from the crossing of great herds. Wolves could be heard from darkness until dawn.



## Building Materials

The closest timber for building was 20 miles away. Much of the ranch was turf, including the roof. The roof was laid

first of poles, then a layer of buffalo hides and gunny sacks and upon this an eight inch course of dirt or sod.

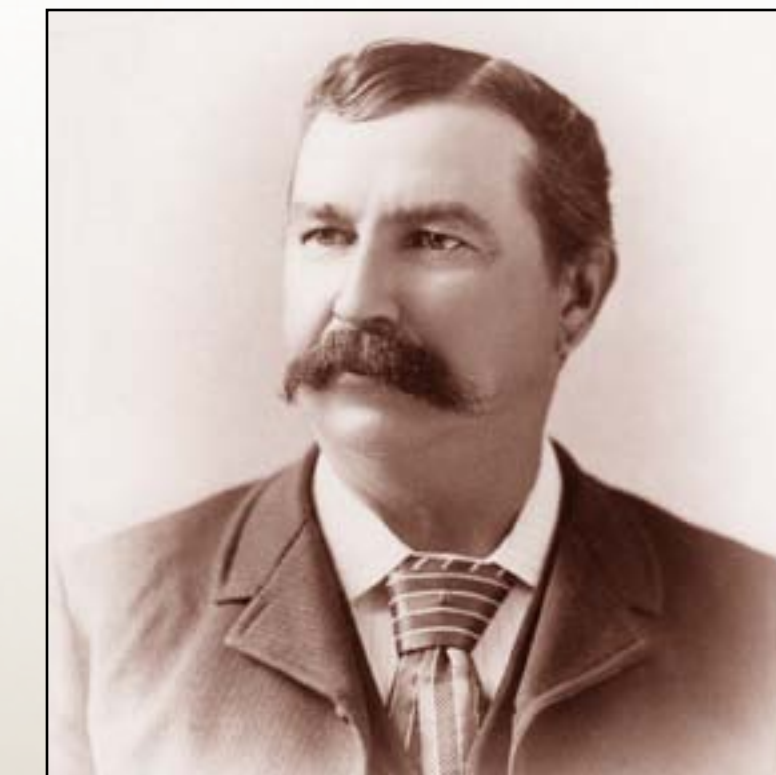
## The Ranch Complex

Every part of the building was not only secure against fire and weather, but also proof against bullets. It included:

- 1 the kaavl (corral) was 100 steps square
- 2 the main building was 40 by 16 feet and joined a two-story round tower
- 3 the corner of the kaavl was a stage driver's lobby and similar tower
- 4 the remainder of this enclosure furnished stables for 40 mules
- 5 enough water in barrels to withstand a siege
- 6 walls that were two feet thick

Artist rendering by Craig Ridenour, 2012.

## More to Explore



Kansas Heritage Center, Dodge City

### Robert M. Wright

Robert Wright owned this ranch from 1866-1868 along with two others on the Santa Fe Trail. He was one of the founders of Dodge City and had several businesses in the area. Wright Park, in Dodge City, is named for him.



Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma Libraries

### American Indians

American Indians viewed settlements such as the ranch as intrusions onto their homelands. Tension between settlers, traders, and the military increased, including an attack on a wagon train crossing here in June 1867.



Cimarron Crossing Park

### Changed Environment

The Arkansas River played an important role in the history of the Santa Fe Trail. From water source to borderland, it has changed as much as the land around it. Today the riverbed is dry, but during the trail era, it was a difficult crossing.



Boot Hill Museum

### Local Tour Route

Take advantage of these local tour options to retrace the Santa Fe Trail in the greater Dodge City area:

**Audio Tour**  
(cell phone):  
505-428-6429

**Media Tour**  
(smartphone):



oncell.mobi

Learn more at [www.nps.gov/safe](http://www.nps.gov/safe) and [santafetrail.org](http://santafetrail.org)