



JAMES SHARP INTERVIEW

There was much to be done to prepare for the long trail across the continent. It was necessary to have a good wagon to begin with, and a good deal was done to make it as comfortable as possible. There were yokes with bows for the oxen. These yokes were mostly made from wood called Linn [*Lindenwood*], which was somewhat like cottonwood, light but strong. The bows were made of hickory, very strong and enduring. Indeed the yokes, together with the bows, were used many years after we lived in Oregon. There were also substantial chains, each long enough to connect from the rear yoke of oxen to the next in front. There was a tent and bedding, together with limited supplies of clothing and food, and sundry other needful articles. It will be readily seen that when, in addition to the necessary supplies indicated, the living part of the outfit was loaded in the wagon, room was at a premium. As a matter of fact a vast amount of walking was done by members of the family.

We started with six yoke of oxen, each having his personal name in this order, Bill and Berry, leaders; Broad and Darby, Buck and Bright, Joe and Lion, Sam and Pomp, Jack and Charley. We also had a few cows and young cattle, one or two mares and two dogs.

Interview with James Merkle Sharp, Who at the Age of Eight, Crossed the Plains with his Father and Mother, 1852. "Overland Trail Lore and Early Life."

Person Interviewed: James Merkle Sharp

Interviewer: Sara B. Wren

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American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940.

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