

## A POSITIVE ATTITUDE BRINGS RESULTS

### a missionary story

On the 27th of July [1840] with Brother Jones, I [Luman Shurtliff] went out again. We crossed the Illinois River east and stayed that night in Pekin.

On the 8th as we were traveling we came to the last house before we crossed a large prairie and we must stay there or lie out on the ground or travel all night. This house was a tavern. We advanced to the landlady who was sitting at the front door when Brother Jones introduced us as Mormon elders, traveling without money, to preach the gospel, and asked her if she would keep us over night. When she replied, with emphasis, "No, I will not. I . . . have kept Mormon elders all I will and I will not have another one into my house or under my roof, and you may go along as soon as you please." Brother Jones turned to me with despair on his countenance, saying, "What shall we do, Brother Shurtliff?"

At this a singular spirit came upon me, and I advanced saying, "We are strangers and would not like to lie on yonder cold prairie, and I cannot think you nearly mean what you say." When she replied, "I do, and you shall not step into my house." I told her I had a wife at home who would feel disagreeable if she knew I was lying on the cold ground among a civilized people. "Fancy to yourself your feelings if your husband was to lie out on yonder prairie this night in sight of my house. You are well situated here and well respected by your neighbors and I cannot think you wish us to sleep out of doors when you are in a comfortable bed." She hesitated a little and I said, "Your cheeks are lightened up with the flush of tender feelings, showing your heart is tender and full of sympathy for strangers and you cannot resist our entreaties." "Well," said she, "you may stay in the house and lie on the floor but I will not feed you or give you a bed for I am no friend to Mormons." We went in and found the table set and waiting for her husband.

I felt unusually cheerful and talkative. Although we had met with such powerful resistance, I still believed we should get supper and a bed to sleep on. I continued cheerful and talked interestingly upon any subject that suited them. The man had come in, the family sat down to supper; I continued conversation as interestingly as possible for I felt the need of a supper and expected to get it.

When the family was through, as I expected, the man left the room; the woman was confused, walked across the floor, went to the table as if she would clear up, took up a plate, set it down on the other side, then moved another and another without accomplishing anything. I saw she was confused and could hold out but a little longer before she would ask us to eat. I kept the conversation lively that I might get my supper. At length she turned to us saying, "I expect you would like supper. We have eaten ours and there is plenty yet on the table; if you wish to set up and eat you can and be welcome."

With an air of indifference, I turned to Brother Jones saying, "Perhaps we had better take a bite as we may get faint before we get across the prairie in the morning." Knowing that Brother Jones, as well as myself, was as hungry as wolves, we reluctantly sat up to the table, which was well furnished and we soon satisfied our craving appetites. Supper over, our next thought was a bed, as we were very tired and knew that a hard floor would rest us by little. I still thought if I could make my conversation agreeable, we would get a bed to sleep on, so I taxed in ingenuity and turned my conversation to the best possible advantage to accomplish the object. Our landlady became more settled and went to preparing the children for bed and in good time escorted us to the best bed in the house where we slept sweetly. She and her husband slept in the same room to keep us from stealing anything. I have said little of the landlord as he was a knob by the side of his wife.