

**Travels with the Spirit: A Summer Travelogue Through the Book of Acts  
Travel Testimony**

**“A Short Journey a Long Time Ago”**

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**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Decorah, Iowa**

This journey took place in the Spring of 1943. Our second grade teacher announced we were going on a field trip . We didn't know what a field trip was, but suspected it would be fun.

Outside, in front of the school, our teacher sternly told us that we were to stay on the sidewalk, not dawdle, and no one was to be in front of her nor to cross the street until she said it was OK. "I expect you to follow my directions."

Now with our marching orders given and understood, we set out on a seven block walk to the Decatur County Creamery.

Twenty minutes later, having passed smiling shoppers and waving merchants, we stood in front of the Creamery. There, in the doorway, was our classmate, Nancy Larson's father, owner of the Creamery. I remember as Nancy passed him, he gently touched the back of her head; she turned to acknowledge the gesture with a sly smile. I felt good watching that little tableau as my parents had touched me in that loving way.

Once inside, we were confronted with a slightly frightening scene. A maze of pipes, kettles and electric motors filled the room. Five or six men were standing among all the machinery. Dressed in white, they wore great galoshes on their feet. Two of them were washing the floor with big garden hoses. Spraying water inside a room—whoever heard of such a thing.

Mr. Larson told us that every day farmers from miles away brought milk which those big machines made into butter. All that butter was formed into one pound bricks and packed in cardboard boxes. These boxes were then shipped by train all the way to Chicago.

For a climax he opened a door, so heavy he needed both hands. Behind that door was a room larger than any room in my house. That room was as cold as an icebox and filled to the ceiling with cardboard boxes of butter. It seemed to me that all the butter in the world must be made in our little town. I knew nothing about Chicago but those who lived there must really like butter.

Though it seemed large to us, the creamery was actually quite small and now our tour was over. But before we returned to school, Mr. Larson had one last surprise. There standing at the door were two of the burly workers handing out ice cream. Those of us in the left line received a little cup of vanilla ice cream while the lucky right line got vanilla ice cream dipped in chocolate. I had not yet learned the Christian principle of rejoicing in your portion rather than lusting after your neighbor's good fortune. Consequently, I rejoiced when a slab of chocolate slipped from one bar and dropped to the ground.

Twenty minutes later we were back in our school. Like all travelers, we were tired but basked in the glow of the experience. We had made a tiny foray into the larger world, met new and friendly people while growing in confidence and self-esteem. This trip of less than two hours, like most travel, was a memorable experience. After all, I remember it clearly, now, eighty years later, even though it was a short journey a long time ago.