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**DOWN TO EARTH**

By **CARLTON MORRIS**  
Editor, The Index  
Gatesville, N. C.



**BAD HABITS FLY OUT THE WINDOW**

A friend of mine once told me that he liked his bad habits and never intended parting with a single one of them. At the time he made the remark, I thought it was very funny and laughed long and loud. In fact I thought my friend was quite a wit. Now I have news for him. Sooner or later he's going to part with some of his bad habits. I've parted with nearly all of mine and it couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

Back in the days of my youth, I wanted fiercely to be a big man physically. I was very small for I came from a small race of people. My dad wouldn't weigh 150 pounds soaking wet and I had an uncle who never weighed 120 pounds in his life. With this sort of a heritage, I developed a complex and when I took a job with an insurance company at the age of 25 I weighed 140 pounds. Traveling every day, I drank cokes, ate nabs, drank milk shakes and put on pounds. Right then I developed the bad habit of eating too much of the wrong kind of food, a fact that almost cost my life on May 23 of this year, when I had a heart attack brought on largely by overweight.

Back in those years folks would laughingly remark that I was getting fat and proudly I would drink more milkshakes and eat more nabs and bigger meals. I weighed on every set of scales I passed and proudly watched my weight climb from 140 to 175. Then I decided I was big enough as none of my clothes would fit, but I soon discovered something that many people learn the hard way. It is much easier to put on than to take off. Eventually my weight climbed to 200 pounds and I had at last realized my ambition. I was a BIG man.

After the heart trouble I quickly lost my bad eating habits of the past 20 years at the insistence of my doctors and am glad to report that I have also lost 14 pounds. And again none of my clothes fit.

I acquired the bad habit of smoking many years ago and in a most peculiar manner. As a kid I smoked my share of cornsilk cigarettes, rabbit tobacco and oak leaves. After a red hot corn silk cigarette, I was firmly convinced that I would never smoke. Then some years later I was thrown with a camp full of young fellows and as far as I know I was the only lad in a camp of more than 200 that didn't smoke.

During my stay there of several months a group of us developed much skill as bridge players and every night we would buy a couple of cigars to keep us company, all in fun of course. Pretty soon we got to the point where we wanted our cigars day and night, and still later I switched to a pipe which I smoked for some 20 years. Not the same pipe all that time of course, though some of my office girls in the past have claimed that my pipe was more than 20 years old.

On July 5, 1959, I suddenly decided I had smoked long enough and so I gathered up my pipes and tobacco and dumped them in my desk where they still remain to this day. So another of my bad habits has gone by the board.

Thus, when my friend says he likes his bad habits and intends to keep them, I think he is either ignorant or whistling in the dark;

**EAST LAKE PERSONALS**

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Everton of Norfolk visited his father, Roy Everton, Sr., Sunday.

Mrs. Ida Hassell and Mrs. Beulah Alexander of Nags Head visited Mrs. Sarah Cahoon.

Mrs. Annie Twiford of Manteo is visiting her son, Sylvester Twiford.

Mrs. Sina Mann has returned after visiting her children in Norfolk.

Visiting in Columbia were Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Ambrose, Lennon Twiford, Sylvester Twiford, Mrs. Thelma Smith, Theresa Creef, Mrs. Polly Ambrose, Mr. and Mrs. Turner Twiford, and Mr. and Mrs. Alvin McGowan.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Sarvis and children, Hazel and Chuck motored to Hertford.

Mrs. Ben Cain of Elizabeth City visited friends here.

From Norfolk were: Miller Cahoon, Richard Twiddy, Charlie Bateman, Amos Bateman, Wiley Smith and Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Midgette.

Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Ambrose, Mrs. Joe Spruill and Bertie Ambrose visited in Spot Sunday, Mrs. Minnie Mae Spruill accompanied them home.

Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Holmes, Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Holmes, Mrs. Nettie Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Talmadge Basnight and daughter, Darlene of Elizabeth City visited Mr. and Mrs. Chester Holmes who were recently married.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Mann of Manteo visited his mother, Mrs. Sina Mann.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Creef and children of Portlock, visited Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Twiford.

Mrs. Thelma Smith, Roy Everton Sr., Lonnie Ambrose and Lennon Twiford visited Manteo.

**THE EIGHTH BIRTHDAY OF JOHN WILSON THE FOURTH**

John Wilson IV celebrated his eighth birthday July 15, at a weiner roast at the home of his parents near Manteo.

The cake was decorated in green and yellow with his name and the figure 8 on it. Balloons and coloring books were given to the following children who attended:

Roxie Farrow, Robert Midgett, Nancy Midgett, Jane, Lynn, and Karen Cuthrell, Thomas Daniels, Karl Daniels, Dock Sawyer, Delnoy Burrus, Nevin and Johnny Wescott, Ray Evans, Nelva Capps, Ephey Priest, Buddy and Christine Midgett, Fondie Mangum, Sheila Creef, Dean Fearing, Bobby Wise, Ralph Hines, Ray Gray, Jr., Lois Midgett, Jay Burrus, Mike Cox, Steve Daniels, Susan Meekins, David Etheridge, David Creef, Mary, Steve, and Hilda Swain, Woody Wise, and Sally Ann Wise. Adults attending were: Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Cuthrell, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Lennon, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Sawyer, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Louis Midgett, Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Ephey Priest, Mr. and Mrs. Delton Dowdy, Mrs. Thomas Daniels, Mrs. Edward Wescott, and Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Wise of Elizabeth City.

for no matter how bad your habits or how much you like them, sooner or later you will lose the worst of them.

Then there is the old, old joke about the father who tells his son to go ahead with the girls and save his drinking until he gets old, as he can always drink. I recall climbing high up in one of the big oaks in our yard when I was a child. High up with the wind blowing and nothing but the sky above me, I thought I must be close to God and I promised Him I would never take a drink of liquor. Now I'm real glad that I made that promise, for that is one habit I will not have to break, even if I am getting old enough to take a father's advice.

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