

# Slipper's Soliloquies

By Fred Slipper

Recently I filled two columns with a story of Mortimer Cook's life in various parts of the country, including his stay in our area, and ending in his departure for the Phillipines, where he died. For that information I am indebted to Walter Tompkins, of Santa Barbara.

Now I have much more information on Mortimer Cook, this time from a direct descendant, Mrs. J. W. (Barbara) Taggart. Mrs. Taggart's mother was Mortimer's daughter, Nina, who married here in Sedro-Woolley. Her husband was Standish Budlong. Therefore Barbara Taggart is the granddaughter of Mortimer Cook.

As has been told many times over the years, Mr. Cook was the first postmaster of the area. However, he wasn't the type to settle down and be a postal employee the rest of his life, as there were too many exciting (and profitable) things to do in a new territory. So after he got the post office established he decided to resign and turn the duties over to some one else.

However, he found out resigning wasn't as simple as he had thought it would be. This was back in the 1890s, and apparently the red tape in Washington, D.C., was as thick then as it is now. The following is from the memorabilia Barbara Taggart has sent to me:

## POSTOFFICE RESIGNATION MEMORABLE

Cook's final letter of resignation from the Post Office is memorable. In the early ninety's he wanted to be relieved of the position. He sent in his resignation but received no response. He sent it in again with the same result. At last he sat down and wrote this:

*Fourth assistant Postmaster General  
Washington, D.C.*

*Dear Sir:*

*I served my country faithfully through the war of the Rebellion. I have served her faithfully as postmaster at Sedro since 1886. I have sent in my resignation twice and you have paid no attention to it. Unless I am relieved within ten days I'll throw the ----- post office into the slough.*

As soon as that letter reached Washington it brought a telegram authorizing him to turn the position over to his successor.

Barbara Taggart has supplied me with much more material and I plan to run parts of it from time to time, as many people seem to still be interested in the early times of our area.

If anyone else has any interesting history of the early days, bring it in and we'll share it with our readers.