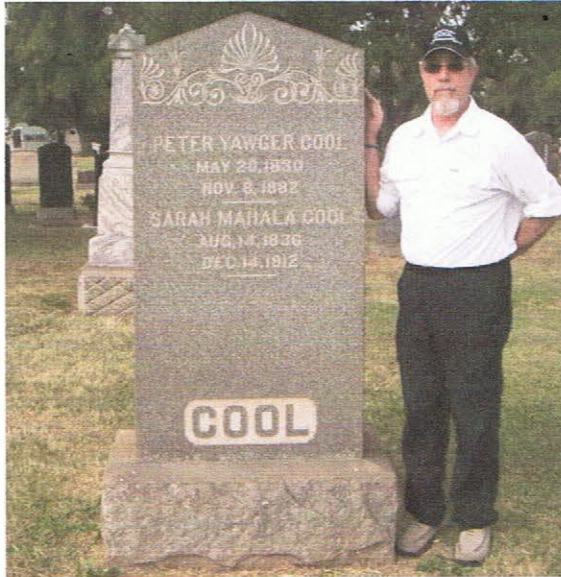


Miscellanea

Goodness, Gold, and God

Jerry L. Pozo



Past and present Rev. Cool.

In January 2010, when I became a docent for Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park in Coloma, I wanted to take on a character relevant to the Gold Rush era and area. I live in Cool, so I researched the town's name and found that the actual historic data contradicted the local story of the namesake.

Working with the Chief Archivist of the Pacific School of Religion, CALPAC Archives, and the Southern California Methodist Church, I was able to locate and visit the final resting place of Reverend Peter Yawger Cool at Evergreen Cemetery, East Los Angeles in May 2011.

Here is a paraphrased version of his life from the Committee of Memoirs, taken from the minutes of the 8th Session of the Southern California Conference in 1883:

Brother P.Y. Cool was born in Cayuga County, New York, May 20, 1830. He experienced a clear conversion by the power of the Holy Spirit when about 19 years of age, and this event gave tone to his character and direction to the whole future of his life.

In 1850 young Cool came to California and met Father Owens, the premier Methodist missionary. After an 18-month stint in gold mining and time spent as an itinerate preacher in El Dorado and Amador counties, Brother Cool received a license to exhort from Father Owens in 1853. This scrap of paper was preserved to the day of his death as one of his precious treasures.

In 1855, he married Sarah Mahala Aram of San Jose. The companionship and loving care of his devoted wife must always be taken into the account as an important factor in this unusually successful ministry of nearly 30 years.

P.Y. Cool first appeared in the minutes of the California Conference during 1854. He filled appointments in Volcano, Santa Cruz, San Jose, Centerville, Watsonville, Placerville, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Nevada City, San Diego, Compton, and finally Florence. He was successful in all his charges, and in some of them his ministry was attended with extensive revivals of religion, and other marked evidences of prosperity in the Church.

Reverend Cool was a man of strong conviction, and thoroughly conscientious. How modest was his estimate of himself, how careful and well-chosen his statements of religious experience. His nature was so sensitive that it sometimes amounted to timidity. His great sensitiveness of his nature was due largely to his physical condition. He received an injury to one knee as a boy which made him a cripple much of the time, and a sufferer all the balance of his life, and this finally caused his death. His counsel was always wise, carefully weighted before given, true, earnest and helpful.

At 8 p.m. of November 6, 1882, his head supported in the arms of his devoted and loving wife, and surrounded by friends, this earnest Christian minister and pure, noble man, without a struggle, ceased to breathe, and was not, for God took him.

It is with great respect and admiration that I continue to portray our beloved Reverend Peter Y. Cool and let people know about this gentle, honorable Christian man and itinerate preacher from the Gold Rush era.