

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 6, 1965

### **Mt. Whitney or Mt. Churchill**

A news item relates that the Board of Geographic Names of the Department of the Interior proposed that the name of Mt. Whitney be changed to Mt. Churchill.

This should be a good opportunity to review the life and work of the man for whom this tallest mountain in Tulare County was named. A Yale trained geologist, chemist and mineralogist. Josiah Dwight Whitney surveyed mineral lands of northern Michigan, worked on the geological survey of Iowa, lead resources of Wisconsin. He became State Geologist of California in 1860 and retained that position until 1874. He instituted the topographic mapping of the state and issued a number of notable reports, some of which were printed at his own expense.

I would regret to see the name of Mt. Whitney changed to any other name. As a native daughter of Tulare I will always remember the view we enjoyed of Mt. Whitney, just as I today and every day look with pride upon Mt. Toro—sometimes covered with snow, then with sunshine and every sometimes in the clouds and fog.

Much as we would like to see Churchill honored, I do not believe Whitney should be displaced.

Please, those who have the final say, don't replace the Christmas angels with rented tinsel just like all other communities between Los Angeles and San Francisco and throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Monterey has always been different with all our beautiful scenery and wonderful historical heritage. The angels are an unusual art work painted by a real artist and they have become a tradition and should remain a tradition, as should large colorful plaques which hang from the middle of the streets. This is my plea: let these Christmas angels hang again this year, store them away carefully and bring them forth again in 1966 to bring joy to all of us.

On Saturday, Sept 18, the State of California History Commission will dedicate an official registered California Landmark plaque at the San Francisco Presidio.

This plaque will be placed on the historic Old Station Hospital now known as the Post Dispensary. This building was completed in 1857 and was the first permanent building built by the American forces after their arrival at the Presidio. The program under the

chairmanship of D. Albert Shumate, will include the unveiling of the plaque and addresses by Mr. Thomas Hammer, president of the History Commission, and James L. Richardson, the new Sixth Army Commander. The Sixth Army band and the Color Guard will be present. All interested person are invited to attend, which starts at 11:30 a.m.

The Pajaro Valley Historical Association formally dedicated the William H. Volch Memorial Museum at 261 East Third Street, Watsonville, on July 5, with an open house. Mrs. Thelma Piersen Kirkland, whose grandfather built the house, cut the ribbon officially opening the door. The house was a gift from Mrs. Helen Volch Tucker in memory of her first husband. It will be the home of the society. Hubert Wyckoff is president of the Watsonville society.