Letters

Los Angeles, California

Sirs:

Caltech Peak is now the official name of a lofty High Sierra mountain, according to a decision taken by the Board on Geographic Names of the Department of the Interior at its December 14 meeting in Washington, D. C. The mountain, 13,832 feet high and previously unnamed, is located near the John Muir Trail almost on the boundary between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and near Mt. Whitney, about 200 miles north of Los Angeles.

The new name is the result of an idea and a weekend climbing trip by Jim Eder ('85), Dick Jali ('55) and Ted Matthes ('55) who decided there should be a mountain named after Tech, especially since University Peak (University of California), Mt. Stanford (Stanford University), and Trojan Peak (University of Southern California) are other California mountains named after California universities. The peak chosen was selected because it was prominent, unnamed, and near the other peaks mentioned above.

The three Techmen made the third recorded ascent of the chosen peak on 25 June 1961. They left the roadhead in the Owens Valley near the town of Independence on Saturday 24 June and hiked over Shepherd Pass (12,124 feet) into the upper reaches of the Kern River Canyon. On Sunday 25 June a long hike around Diamond Mesa and up a beautiful lake-filled valley brought them to their peak, which was quickly and eagerly climbed. An awesome view of great mountain peaks and wilderness was had from the summit, where an enlarged cairn was built and a simple summit register established.

After the climb it was a matter of letterwriting. The name Caltech Peak was simultaneously proposed to the Board on Geographic Names of the Department of the Interior and to the Superintendent of Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks. Copies of the Los Angeles Times supplement on Caltech (supplied by E & S) were also sent to both parties for their information. After careful deliberations the name was approved for Federal usage by the Board and will be published in Decision List 6103.

The climb is long and arduous (about 26 miles round trip and over a high pass) but is not technically difficult and is rather pleasant.

Richard M. Jali ’55

Erwinna, Pennsylvania

From Robert Lawler, a former student at Caltech, comes this tribute to Hunter Mead, professor of philosophy and psychology, who died on July 2, 1961.

HUNTER MEAD TAUGHT ME

That I might find in works and lives of men
Absurdity, high tragedy and pen
a truer line of praise than that the head
Could shape from dreams reworked and shown again.

"Art can be seen as tapestry. Align
"Experience. Select and weave. Refine
"And order life and death. The form," said Mead
"Survives the truth. Since colors fade, design."

"With irony and reverence your life,
"Though short, can be alright. Use piety rife
"With ribaldry," he stuttered, and is dead.
I celebrate the way he wore his life.