

# HISTORY CENTER

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

You think politics is bad now?



Mayor Louis Sinsheimer, pictured here in c.1935. If only he'd had Derek Johnson around when a conflict with the city superintendent of roads boiled over into violence.

# FIST FIGHT OVER STREET DEPT. DELAY

## Superintendent Roselip and Mayor Struggle In Latter's Office Over Slow Pay December Checks for Street Department Still Unsigned By City's Chief Executive

As a climax to a controversy of six months' standing between Mayor L. F. Sinsheimer and Walter B. Roselip, street superintendent appointed by the council when it took office last year, a fist fight between the two took place in the office of the mayor at Sinsheimer Bros. store about 10:30 o'clock this morning.

The fight is said to have resulted when Roselip and his assistant, W. L. Kelley, both of whom, it is claimed, have not yet received salaries for December, went to the office of the mayor and demanded that the warrants be signed. After considerable discussion, the fight started, it is claimed, with Kelley standing in the doorway to keep employes of the store from joining in the mix-up between the mayor and the street superintendent. The mayor is said to have called for a doctor to attend him after the scuffle.

The conflict is said to have been over before police officers came to the scene, but Roselip voluntarily walked into police Judge R. L. Perry's court and offered to plead guilty to a charge of battery. He was not accompanied by an officer when he went to the court room. Roselip is said to have explained to the judge that he had had a fight with the mayor following a discussion over warrants, some of them dating back six months, which Roselip said had not been signed by the mayor.

No complaint had been sworn to against Roselip, and Judge Perry released him on his own recognizance, asking him to return tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

**NO COMMENT FROM MAYOR.**  
Mayor L. F. Sinsheimer was reached by telephone at his residence but refused to give a statement. When asked about the affair in his office this morning, he replied: "I do not know what you refer to."

When asked if there was not a fight between him and Roselip, he answered: "I haven't the slightest idea of what you refer to."

**ROSELIP STATEMENT.**  
Mr. Roselip, in a statement given out this afternoon, declared: "I am not sorry for what I have done. I felt that it had to be done, that it was the only way."

"The mayor has continued to work on me and cause me considerable aggravation for a number of months. I did my work as a man working for a salary, and expected to get paid when my salary was due."

"No excuse has been given why either Kelley or myself should not have been paid. At the present time we have received no pay for December, and our October and November salary was not paid until Dec. 20."

"For the last six months, the mayor has tried to bring out that I am incapable in the work I am doing. It has been impossible for me to receive my salary or money for incidental expenses, or the salaries of those who I hired as assistants."

**WARRANTS WERE PASSED.**  
"Many times I have appealed to the councilmen to get the salaries, but have been unable to get any results because the councilmen have no authority in the matter. The warrants were passed by the council at the regular meetings, and some of them have been passed several times, showing the desire of the council to pay them."

"This morning W. L. Kelley, my assistant, and I took eighteen warrants, some dating back as far as July, for salaries, expenses, etc., to the mayor's office for his signature. Mr. Kelley and I walked into the office as gentlemen, informed the mayor of our mission and asked for his signature on the warrants."

"The mayor gave us no definite answer to the signing of the warrants."

rants. He said that he would look them over 'at his leisure.'

"I asked the mayor when that would be, and he continued to murmur, 'at my leisure.' After considerable discussion as to the 'leisure,' I told him that we were there to get the signatures on the warrants and that we would get them or he would suffer the consequences. He wanted to know what I meant by the 'consequences' and I told him that he could take it any way he wanted to. However, I told him again, he could suffer the consequences."

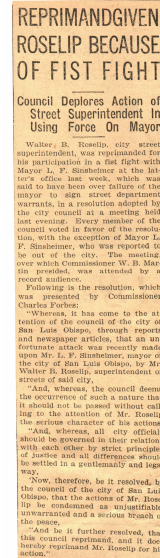
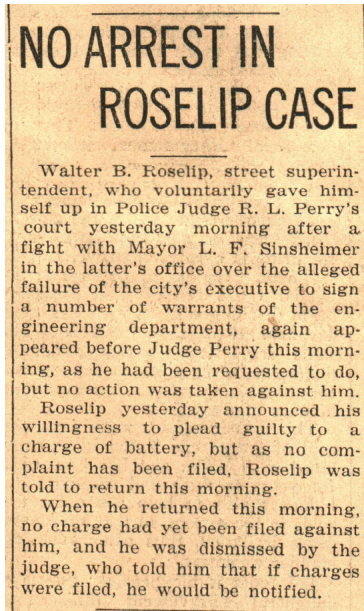
**FIGHT STARTS.**

"I found that we could make no headway by gentlemanly methods, so I struck his glasses, without touching him, and knocked the glasses from his nose. They landed on the table. He got up and we went to it."

"I believe that the people of the city know that it is not my custom to go around picking fights, that I am not looking for trouble, but I felt that it was necessary in this case."

Public Works department) entered Mayor Louis Sinsheimer's private office in the Sinsheimer Department Store with a list of demands. The mayor had not been signing warrants (a warrant of payment is similar to a check) and this member of city staff wanted to know why. When he did not receive the answer he wanted to hear, he physically assaulted the mayor, knocking his glasses from his face. A fistfight ensued.

Following the fracas, Mr. Roselip proceeded immediately to the courthouse and offered to plead guilty to battery. The judge, having no idea what had occurred, ordered him to return the next day. Roselip showed no remorse for his actions, putting out a statement that included these words: "I am not sorry for what I have done. I felt that it had to be done and this was the only way."



When contacted by the press, Mayor Sinsheimer denied all knowledge of the incident. As far as we can find he never spoke publicly about it. He also never made explicit his reasoning for not signing the warrants, though he was widely known as mayor who kept a tight reign on the city's finances. Ultimately, due to the Mayor's stance, no charges were brought against Roselip, though he was reprimanded for his actions by the City Council.

I think we can all agree, as modern observers looking back, that this is an incident that went too far. Disagreements, even over sincerely-held beliefs and decisions of momentous importance, can and should be resolved with words. Here's hoping we can all do our part not to let history repeat itself.

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# Mumtober at the Dallidet

*We've got chrysanthemums on our mind.  
So forget about October, this year it's Mumtober!*

*We've been growing over 20 different varieties of  
mums at the Dallidet Gardens, along with our usual  
assortment of flowers, vegetables, and herbs.*

*The menu will include:*

*Heirloom Tomato Bisque  
Four-bean Black Corn Soup  
Onion Soup  
Squash & Pumpkin Soup*

*Learn about the care and cultural significance of the  
chrysanthemum while soaking in the beauty of the fall garden.*

*You don't want to miss out, buy your tickets today!*

*Saturday, October 23, 2021  
12:00 to 2:00*

*\$50 per ticket*

*1185 Pacific Street  
San Luis Obispo*

*Plus, we'll be raffling  
front-row center tickets to  
"An Irish Christmas"  
at the Clark Center*



*[www.historycenterslo.org/mumtober](http://www.historycenterslo.org/mumtober)*

September and October are probably the best months on the Central Coast - the weather gets nice, the beach tourists go home, and the harvest comes in. So get ready to celebrate the harvest at the Dallidet with Mumtober!

We have over 20 varieties of mum flowers getting ready to bloom, and we want to show them off, while feeding you with food made from Dallidet produce.

If you've joined us at any of our recent Dallidet events since last November, you know the quality of the Dallidet produce. If you missed out, [act fast so you don't miss out again!](#)

We couldn't be more excited to share the fruits (and vegetables) of our labor with you all once again.

Take home a piece of the Dallidet with our [2022 Dallidet Garden Calendar](#)! Each month features 3 photographs of flowers, plants, fruits, or vegetables growing in the Dallidet Gardens, along with history and descriptions of each plant.

Bring the beauty of the Dallidet Gardens into your home for the whole year! [Click here to order now!](#)



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Sun., Oct. 17th, 2-3:30 p.m. Historic Walk: Victorian-Age SLO Guided stroll past 22 century-old homes and churches in the Old Town Historic District. See residences of past mayors, newspaper editor, Cal Poly founder, and other newly rich in the horse-and-buggy days, and learn of their



life styles. Meet in front of the Jack House, 536 Marsh St. No reservations, free. Masks required if no vaccination. Leader: Joe Morris, 805-549-0355

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Haven't visited the museum lately? Now's the perfect time, to see our new exhibit [L'dor V'dor](#): Generations of the Jewish Community on the Central Coast.

In Hebrew L'dor V'dor means "from generation to generation" and since the 1850s generations of Jewish migrants have made their way to San Luis Obispo County from all over the world.

The Blochmans, Cerfs, Goldtrees, Greens, and others came from as far away as Russia to make their homes on the Central Coast, creating the community we recognize today.



Thomas Kessler  
Executive Director

