



ANDREW MOSES GETCHELL

- **Railroad worker, Mayor**
- **Born.** January 18, 1860 in Glencoe, Minnesota to William and Phoebe Getchell.
- **Married.** Emma Sweet of Jefferson, Montana in 1893 and honeymooned at the Chicago World's Fair. They had four children: Alton was member of the Fire Department, Litton was a chiropractor, Marion chaired the Missoula Selective Board, and Flora was the Secretary/Treasurer of the union Club and married Undersheriff H. K. Powell.
- **Died.** November 14, 1934 at his home when stricken suddenly by a heart attack. Former Mayor W. H. Beacom paid the following tribute to Mr. Getchell, "In the passing of Andy M. Getchell Missoula has lost one of its highest type of citizens. Generous to a fault, his hands were never closed to human need. Strong with likes, charitable with his dislikes. If the breath of scandal touched the garments of a fellow mortal he would not accept the naked charge as proof of guilt. He had to have proof. One could not know Mr. Getchell at all intimately, without becoming a better citizen."
- **Northern Pacific Railroad:** Andrew came to Livingston, Montana in 1888. He was employed with Northern Pacific Railroad prior and after his term as mayor. He retired as an engineer in 1928.
- **1905.** He moved his family to Missoula.
- **1914.** Mr. Getchell was elected as Missoula's 23rd mayor. He served until 1916.
- **Politics.** Mayor Getchell and Councilman Hodson were elected from the Socialist Party. As two constituted a majority and Missoula was a commission form of government at the time, the Socialist Party was then in complete control of the administration.
- Andrew's agenda included:
 - An active campaign to acquire the municipal ownership of the water works and other public utilities. (This has been a common thread of many Mayors but has never been achieved.)
 - He improved and beautified all public parks as rapidly as finances could be reserved for such.
 - Appoint an experienced person as Street Commissioner, who could also act as Inspector.
 - Re-organized the Police Department through the elimination of two assistant chiefs and appointing a Chief of Police who would share responsibilities with the councilman in charge of the Department of Public Safety and Health. (At the time this meant the demotion of current Commissioner William H. Houston who had also been the past Sheriff of Missoula. This move made a mortal enemy of Mr. Houston.)
 - Instituted regular and systematic fire drills. The drills should occur as often as two or three days a week. He installed up-to-date equipment and did away with the last team of horses used in the Fire Department. The motorized equipment made the operating cost less and gave quicker service.
 - Enforced the "Speeding" and "Gambling" laws.
- **Resignations.** At one point, the Socialist Party applied pressure for Mayor Getchell and Commissioner Hodson to submit their resignations from office. It seemed the two men were not



Satire: The Missoula Merry Go Round

accomplishing all the items on the Socialist Party's agenda. The 'trick' here was that the Commissioner was responsible for accepting the Mayor's resignation while the Mayor was responsible for accepting the Commissioner's resignation and both men refused to accept the other's resignation. The public came to their defense and the resignations were thrown out.

- **Civic.** Mr. Getchell was a member of lodge No. 13. During his membership he expressed concern on the small portion of the actual members represented at lodge meetings. "I say that I don't know where the people go, but I can make a guess. I think that they go to the picture shows."



Located in Grave 8, Lot 11, Block 24A