

Jennie MacDonald Wickizer (1852-1941)

Jennie MacDonald Wickizer was born on December 31, 1852, in Knightswood, Scotland, near Glasgow, to Daniel and Elizabeth MacDonald. When she was three years old, her family moved to the United States. On October 19, 1873, she married William Wickizer in Minonk, Illinois. William was born on September 1, 1846, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. They moved to Bloomington, Illinois, in December 1879. Their first child, May, was born in 1881, and their second child, a son named Wallace, was born in 1885. Sadly, Wallace passed away when he was only four years old.

Not much is known about the Wickizer family except for what is listed in the Bloomington City Directories starting in 1880. In the 1880-1881 directory, William was listed as a "tinner," someone who makes and repairs tinware, and Jennie worked as a sewing machine agent. They lived at 605 East Empire in Bloomington. By 1882-83, they had moved to 519 North Main Street, where they lived on the second floor of a building. The first floor was a saloon owned by a man named L. Haker. In 1884, Jennie was listed as an agent for "Domestic machinery and fancy goods," likely selling sewing machines and sewing supplies. By 1886, Jennie was working with "notions," meaning she sold sewing materials, while William was still listed as a tinner.

In the 1887 directory, Jennie was first listed as a "Baker and Confectioner" and ran her business from their home at 529 North Main Street (the old 519 address). By 1889, William was also listed as a baker, and they moved to 608 North Main Street. By 1893, William was listed as the "manager" of their bakery, and they lived above it in a two-story brick building. In 1897, the bakery was listed under Jennie's name. William's health had likely declined, as he was no longer listed as the manager. By 1899, their daughter, May, was a student living with them, and the bakery was now known as "Wickizer's Bakery."

In 1900, the census showed that William was a baker, Jennie was the bakery's manager, and May worked as a candy saleslady. In 1902, they moved to 101 West Mulberry, and May no longer lived with them. By 1905, Jennie was the sole owner of the bakery. She and William were also founding members of the Second Christian Church, which was incorporated in 1901. William passed away on July 18, 1908, after suffering a stroke. He was buried in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington. After his death, Jennie continued to live at 101 West Mulberry. By 1909, the bakery was no longer under Jennie's ownership and was taken over by W.L. Freeman, who continued to use the Wickizer name for the bakery until 1917.

Jennie passed away on May 9, 1941, at the age of 88 after being ill for three years. She was survived by four grandchildren, as both of her children had passed away before her. She was buried next to her husband and son in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery.