

Victorian Ornaments



The Victorian period (late 1800s) was a time of change and progress. Innovation and invention were all the rage. This vision of progress influenced new fashion, culture, decoration, and even behavior. Victorian culture was centered mostly in urban (city) areas, especially those with large populations and businesses. In Alabama, this most likely would have included cities such as Mobile and Montgomery. While other rural (country) Alabamians may have heard about the latest Victorian fashions and trends, they probably did not have the money or time to fully join in.

Victorian ornaments are a typical reflection of the Victorian culture because



Victorians were very interested in arts and crafts. They especially enjoyed decorated ornaments that were inspired by distant lands. The Cathay lantern was a brightly decorated ornament based on Chinese culture. (Cathay is an Old-World word that refers to China.) Cornucopia ornaments were made and stuffed with items, such as flowers, berries, and nuts. The cornucopia ornament was used as a table or tree decoration. They could also insert trinkets and goodies inside and give them as gifts. Victorians filled large table cornucopias with food. Cornucopias traditionally have been a symbol of abundance and giving. Victorians would have decorated their trees and houses with many of these decorations.



Look in the *Sampler Gallery* to see more items from the 19th century.



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