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Fall 11-4-2018

## British Christmas Decorations

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### Recommended Citation

Cook, Wesley, "British Christmas Decorations" (2018). *USU Student Folklore Fieldwork*. Paper 596.  
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## **British Christmas Decorations**

### **Customs**

**Informant:** Christine D. Hamilton is a mother of seven. At 66 years-old, she is a grandmother and great grandmother to many grandchildren. Christine immigrated from England when she was still an infant, eventually settling in Provo, Utah. Christine is proud of her British heritage and is happy to share her experiences growing up in an immigrant household. Christine is my grandmother from my maternal side of the family. With her husband Ron Hamilton, Christine lives in the suburbs on the west side of Logan, Utah.

**Context:** I interviewed Christine in her cozy home in Logan, Utah on November 4, 2018. She was sitting in her office working on adding to her family history work. Christine was bundled in a warm pair of pajamas to help with the night's chill. Decorating her office are the various objects from England she has collected over the years. When asked about any memorable traditions she had growing up, Christine thought for a minute, smiled, and began talking about Christmas traditions. Being first generation British, British traditions were very prevalent in Christine's childhood home. One of the most memorable traditions that Christine has is how her family decorated for Christmas. Christine vividly remembers decorating the home with crate paper decorations. These decorations were crisscrossed across the ceiling. Adorning the center of the crisscross was a Christmas bell. When Christine grew up and had children of her own, she passed on this knowledge to her children. This tradition did not stick with any of Christine's children. A meniscal part of this tradition is still evident in how Christine decorates her own home on Christmas.

**Text:** Um my parents brought over a tradition from England. That um.. was one of the things they did at Christmas time to decorate the ceilings. And we loved as kids and looked forward to each Christmas when my folks would get out this special, uh kind of crate paper, decorations. These were just really really long strands of red crate paper that was twisted to make this really unique design to begin with. Then they would hang them from one corner to another, kind of crisscross, on the ceiling. And they would loop them in this crisscross from one corner to the other, so that there was these beautiful red loops hanging from the ceiling. Then they would go to the other corner and do it crisscross so there was loops hanging from that corner. And then in the middle, uh.. they had a big Christmas bell that opened up and flair out, and they would put that in

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the very middle of the ceilings right where the two decoration things crossed, so that it was right in the middle of that. And we just loved that as kids, and I can't remember seeing anybody else.

Friends and um.. we did have that many other family that came over from England, but that was something we loved every year.

**Texture:** While talking about her childhood home during Christmas, Christine smiled a lot. She was very excited to share these experiences with me. It had been a very long time since she had the opportunity to share these memories with someone. This tradition is not used by my mom or her siblings. It is likely that this tradition would have been forgotten when my grandmother passes away.

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English 2210

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Fall 2018