

SECTION III - Duties of a Herald

3) Heraldic Regalia and How to Wear It (January, AS XXIX)

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Abstract: Brief description of the types of heraldic garments and regalia worn in the West, with instruction on when to wear them.

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HERALDIC REGALIA AND HOW TO WEAR IT

Hirsch von Henford

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Each herald while on duty should wear appropriate heraldic regalia. This is most important for the field, duty and court heralds, because it indicates that the words that they are saying are official, and not personal opinions. It is desirable for heralds doing consultation or other duties to wear regalia, but often the presence of the table under a heralds' banner is regarded as de facto wearing of regalia, and all persons seated on the "operations" side of the table are assumed to be heralds on duty.

The converse of the statement that each herald on duty should be wearing regalia, is that any herald wearing regalia is assumed, by both the people and by other heralds, to be on duty. Therefore if you go off duty, you should immediately remove your regalia. In addition, if you are called into court and are wearing regalia, you should remove the regalia unless you are specifically handling heraldic business.

There are set standards of regalia for each level of rank. However, the major concern is that a herald on duty wear SOMETHING green with the crossed trumpets of the College on them, not necessarily the exact type of regalia appropriate to his rank. If the only piece of regalia remaining is a cloak, and a Cornet needs to go out on the field to make an announcement, then the Cornet should wear the cloak, not waste time looking for a baldric.

If at all possible, you should attempt to make, or have made for you, the proper regalia for your rank. This is as follows:

Cornets:

A green baldric, on which is a pair of gold trumpets in saltire, on front and if possible on the back. It does not matter which shoulder the baldric is slung from. A cornet herald should NOT make a baldric, but should use one if available. If you are serious in your pursuit of heraldry, make a tabard.

Pursuivants Extraordinary:

A tabard, sleeveless, with the trumpets on front and back. Custom has established that the trumpets on the back are large and extend across the back, and the trumpets on the front are smaller and centered on the left breast. A tabard with large trumpets centered front and back is also acceptable. The tabard may be belted or allowed to hang loose.

Pursuivants/Heralds:

A green cloak, with the trumpets large and centered on the back and optionally (but preferred) over the left breast. A cloak may be expensive, and if you can't afford it, see if your branch can help defray expenses. Remember that if the branch pays for it the branch owns it, and pass the cloak on to your successor.

Titled Pursuivants/Heralds:

A sleeved tabard, with the arms of your branch on the front and back, and either the arms of the branch on the sleeves (this is the period form of an heraldic tabard) *or* the sleeves can be green and have the gold trumpets of the College on them. This form of tabard is always official, and stays with the office, not the person holding it. This form of tabard is almost never worn belted, but rather is fastened at the side by ties or buttons, or allowed to hang free.

It should be noted here that baldrics are generally less visible than tabards. If you are creating spare heraldic regalia to be used by cornets and trainees it would be better to make tabards than baldrics, despite the expense of more fabric. Every branch larger than a shire should have spare tabards if at all possible to allow for the fact that more than one herald will be active at events.

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