

Herald Batons and Maces

Brief history and instructions for SCA use construction.

Taran the Wayward

Kingdom of Meridies

When one looks at images of heralds in period manuscripts, typically the thing that is seen to identify the herald is a tabard. As such within the Society for Creative Anachronism, there has been an interkingdom effort to have heralds wearing tabards when performing duties of office.

Another item that is seen nearly as frequently is the herald holding some item of office—a baton, a wand, or sometimes a ceremonial mace or scepter. While it would be marvelous to have an item that is entirely of period construction, often times there is not the skill, nor time, nor money to make that happen. This paper provides some information regarding constructing batons and maces for SCA use that are based in appearance on items from period images of heralds. I readily recognize that I am not a craftsman, these are largely made by combining existing items found at most hardware stores. The intent is to lend to the period feel of a tournament.

I have utilized these maces and batons in processions and in tournament lists. They have been helpful to increase pageantry and to help clearly indicate a direction to what is happening on a field. The maces when showing heraldry have been made in such a way to be able to swap for kingdom or individual heraldry without having separate items for each purpose.

In 1430 there is an image of William Bruges kneeling while a spiral baton is held by St. George. I have heard that the image was an inspiration for the black and yellow spiral marshal's batons. This is the first of the items that I am providing construction information on, but was the most recent item built. The second item is a mace inspired by a 1510 image of Anton Tirol and a lucky thrift store find. The last item is a mace based on an image from Seimbacher in 1530. There are multiple heralds in this armorial shown with similar maces. These images were the inspiration for the first mace I created, although it is the last in this article. The last image chronologically is of Thomas Hawley in 1556 and shows him carrying a simple tapered rod. I shall not include construction instructions for this, as it would be simply sanding of a dowel, but this is included to show that it is easy to add use of a baton to a herald's bag of tricks.



William Bruges, Garter King of Arms 1430



Thomas Hawley, Clarenceux King of Arms 1556



Anton Tirol 1510



Holy Roman Empire 1530

Spiral Baton

This item was probably the most complex construction for my prototype. This requires a bit more technological skills, but not that much. I fear that I did not take step by step build instructions and only have a finished project and a picture of a portion that was cut off for length in which to show how to combine the pieces.

The inspiration for this piece is the image of William Bruges from 1430. In that image the baton appears to be similar to a unicorn horn with a handle. Using that image as my guide, I set to build this baton. My prototype did NOT include the threaded rod and was found to be a bit “floppy” in use. The threaded rod provides additional stability but finding rod threaded to fit the threading of the finials has been difficult. It is possible that a solid rod could be threaded with a tap and die set to the appropriate threading.

Materials

Rope Moulding (2) <http://www.michaels.com/artminds-rope-moulding/M10398598.html#start=7>

Brass Lamp finials (2)

Brass colored craft wire

Threaded rod (thread count and diameter to fit both finials)

Plastic Wood

http://hardwareonlinestore.com/index.php?option=com_virtuemart&view=productdetails&virtuemart_product_id=1364&virtuemart_category_id=15601&gclid=CKKTs7Tu88UCFUo8gQodf7MAxA

Short turned table leg (grip) http://www.lowes.com/pd_849-1380-2556_?productId=3042622&pl=1&Ntt=table+leg

White spray paint and Clear polyurethane

Tools:

Drill/drill bit

Dremel/router

Pliers

sandpaper

Construction

Remove the preset screw from the table leg (grip) with Pliers

Using the screw hole as a guide, drill through the length of the grip. Sand the flat surface to remove the lathe impressions.

Put the threaded rod through the grip and attach one finial to prevent it from sliding off.

Holding the grip, determine the total desired length of the finished baton and mark the rod for cutting (remember to include a short bit for the top finial)—mine is just under 3'

Using a dremel with metal cutting wheel, cut the threaded rod to length.

Carve groove down the center of the flat side of the rope moulding. Depth of the groove will depend on the threaded rod. In order to get a nice spiral, there needs to be approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " gap between the two parts of rope moulding.

With the handle and both finials on the cut rod, cut the rope moulding to length—I have found that the mouldings original length has them a bit offset to get the spiral—make sure that you leave some length to adjust for this offset.

Using Plastic Wood spread a thin layer down the flat sides of the rope mouldings (into the groove as well). Sandwich the threaded rod in between the rope mouldings. Make sure there is room for the handle and both finials along the threaded rod. It is best to have a small bit of the plastic wood squish out down the length of the baton for complete coverage—this will be sanded down later. Use a small bit of the craft wire to hold the pieces together to dry.



Allow to dry completely—usually several days to a week.

Using sand paper, sand the joint of the moulding. Fold the sandpaper in half and sand the plastic wood to flush with the moulding—pay particular attention to the rope cuts. Once the rope is fully defined, check the diameter of your finial. You will want to sand a slight taper into the baton down to the diameter of your finial so they match nicely. I suggest beginning your taper about 1/3 down the baton. As you remove diameter, use folded sandpaper through the rope cuts to keep the definition of the spiral.

Once fully sanded, remove the finials and spray paint the spiral and handle. Allow to dry completely (at LEAST one full day between coats). Spray with polyurethane—also allowing to dry completely between coats.

Run the craft wire along the spirals. Begin by folding a small loop into the wire, place this over the threaded rod to secure it and guide it along one of the spiral grooves. At each end of the baton wrap a small bit of wire around the threaded rod to secure it.

Combine all pieces onto the threaded rod for finished baton: Finial, handle, wrapped spiral, and then top finial.



Heavy early 16th century heraldic mace (1510 Anton Tirol)

This mace design began when I found a plaster lamp with acanthus leaves at a thrift store. The lamp stem nearly demanded that something be done. The original required a couple extra parts to protect the bare plaster and allow for combining the other parts together. Once it was completed, I realized that the central portion could also be done with a turned table leg instead. Inspiration for this design was based on the 1510 image of Anton Tirol, while his mace appears to be smooth, the detail of the lamp body needed to be displayed.



Components

Curtain holdback (grip) <http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/21OckX0neJL.jpg>

Table leg http://www.lowes.com/pd_238439-1380-2999_?productId=3041294&pl=1&Ntt=table+leg

Onion shaped bun foot http://www.lowes.com/pd_236115-952-52012_?productId=3557008&pl=1&Ntt=table+leg

Round bun foot (same diameter as large surface of onion foot) http://www.lowes.com/pd_236112-952-52011_?productId=3502284&pl=1&Ntt=table+leg

Tee nut (same thread/size to fit on preset bolt in the round bun foot)
http://www.lowes.com/pd_454383-37672-180303_1z0yk34_?productId=4409731&pl=1

Construction

Again, these instructions are designed to be usable for minimal technical expertise.

Remove the preset bolt from the Onion foot—hold onto it.

In that hole set the tee nut (epoxy/glue is appropriate here). The tee nut will be where the bun foot connects.

In the other end of the onion foot, place the bolt you removed from the top—drill a pilot hole first.



Cut the square portion off the top of the table leg. Sand this smooth and drill a pilot hole to accept the other end of the bolt from the onion foot. Use some wood glue here to keep these pieces together.

Connect the curtain holdback to the bottom of the table leg. The holdback has a screw set into the base which is designed to go into a wall, I used that to connect it to my mace (although I had to use epoxy in the lamp body rather than connecting it to a wooden leg body)



The image below is of all items connected before painting. Note the bottom hilt is the curtain holdback. The onion foot and the round bun are connected at the top of this item.



Paint all surfaces with appropriate paint—this varies in period from white, to brass, to wood. Allow to dry COMPLETELY.

On the flat surface of the round bun foot, paint the armory of the peer/branch as appropriate.



Spray all parts with polyurethane. The round bun foot should be kept as a separate part—multiples can be made for various patrons. The other portions should be a “single unit”.



1530 mace (Holy Roman Empire Model)

This mace is based on images of multiple heralds with similar flat topped maces, many showed armory of the Holy Roman Empire, but some showed personal heraldry as depicted in the bottom image. It should be noted that while the mace in that image has a golden metal finish, Meridies sumptuary laws at the time of construction identified that herald batons be white. I was charting new ground so used the shape in the 1530 image with the white mace coloring from the image of Anton Tirol.

Components

21" table leg

Straight leg mounting hardware

Allen Ross curtain holdback (the top of this will be where you paint armory, ensure that you have a flat surface here) http://www.lowes.com/pd_40978-89299-240392-038-L50_?productId=3104261&pl=1&Ntt=curtain+holdback

Round wall plaque (approximately 6") <http://www.michaels.com/artminds-pine-circle-plaque/10067602.html#start=22>

White Spray Paint

Colored paint (for armory)

Clear polyurethane spray

Construction

Find center of wall plaque on the back of the plaque. (I drew straight lines across the middle with a pencil and the intersection was my center) Predrill a small pilot hole in the center, then connect the curtain holdback into the center of the wall plaque.

Cut/grind the protruding screw from the back side of the plaque—being careful not to damage the surface of the wall plaque.

Using the guide for the pilot hole or the cut screw of the curtain holdback, center the mounting hardware and attach it to the wall plaque.



(This plaque/holdback/mounting hardware comprises the head of the mace. For SCA use this is removable in order to make multiple mace heads for multiple patrons—peer, kingdom, local branch)

Connect the table leg

Sand all wood pieces to ensure smooth surfaces, sand the plastic and metal pieces lightly to allow for texture to aid in paint adherence.



Spray paint the entire mace, make sure that the leg is not tight to the mounting hardware. Allow the mace to dry completely between coats.

Once dry, paint the desired armory on the top surface of the holdback



Allow to dry completely.

Spray entire mace with polyurethane and allow to dry completely before using mace.

Enjoy!

