

## 16<sup>th</sup> C Men's Shirt

by Countess Aryanhwy merch Catmael

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I preface this documentation as I preface all comments about my sewing: I am not a seamstress. I do not enjoy it, I am not good at it, and I find it extremely difficult. I am perfectly competent with technique (e.g., I have a mean running stitch), but the geometry of making a pattern and getting it to fit both the person it's intended to fit and internally, I find opaque and difficult. I also don't know much technique beyond that basic running stitch, and rolled hems.

All of which to say: I started this shirt last summer with the intent that Joel wear it at Raglan. It was finished the week before 20 Year Coronation.

Joel has yet to pick a firm time period/place for his persona, but is leaning towards 16<sup>th</sup> C Germany. I looked through a number of books of paintings and woodcuts from that era (Dürer, Cranach, and Jost Amman), and all of them have poofy shirts. I began from the guidelines for "the quintessential shirt" posted by the Renaissance Taylor [1], since they looked relatively straightforward and did not involve too much complicated geometry. I took the figure provided there and drew it out on scratch paper and labeled it with the dimensions I'd taken from Joel (I should note that the early part of this project was done while he was in the US, so no fittings in the meantime). I read on another webpage (alas, did not note down which) the suggestion to make the body of the shirt a 60x60cm square; that was 14cm wider than the shoulder-breadth measurement I took, and would fit loose enough around the chest as best as I could tell, so I decided to go with that. Unfortunately, the end result was rather small, and not very poofy at all. The sleeves are also 60cm long, and 29cm high, with a 3cm seam allowance so that I had plenty to do nice finished seams, following the instructions at [2] (I'd never sewn French seams before). One thing that I didn't find much information on was how to finish the cuffs. I ended up doing them rather like the neckline, but without any gaps. And no ruffles, because ruffles are complicated.

There are a number of things that went wrong:

- No underarm gussets. They weren't explicit in the introduction, and I was hitherto only vaguely aware of their existence, and so it didn't occur to me to add them.
- Everything was going *so well* and then I cut the neckline on the wrong side, which means the sleeve seems go along the inner arm instead of along the back.
- Widget ate one of the neck ties, and the thought of taking out the collar seam to replace it was just too much, so that's why one is shorter than the other. Someday I'll fix it. But if cats peed on medieval MSs, I'm sure they also chewed on shirt-ties.

Materials:

White linen fabric that I won in a Raglan raffle.

Cotton thread.

Ties for the neck done with braided DCM floss.

Modern metal buttons.

References & Notes:

[1] [http://www.renaissancetailor.com/demos\\_shirt.htm](http://www.renaissancetailor.com/demos_shirt.htm)

[2] <http://annekata.com/2010/07/hand-sewing-101-felled-and-half-french-seams/>