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Governor Belfield 548

JUDICIAL ROBES

1915

10th July

Gives information as to robes worn.

See previous Paper.

Case 10:5:15

Emergency Sept.

Noted

*H. J. R.
13/8/15*

Insert Misc 20 July 1916

See the minute on 13911.

In paragraph 8 the question is asked as to the dress to be worn at an official dinner. I think it may be well to refer to page 66 of the book "Dress Worn at Court" and explain that the velvet suit being considered a sort of full dress suit, i.e. for State balls, etc., is not strictly the proper dress for an ordinary official dinner. The black cloth court-dress

**M. J. R. writing
to the Secretary of State
on 13/8/15
re robes worn at
official dinners
& the book "Dress
Worn at Court"*

to which the Governor refers is more strictly accurate. Add, I think, that this is not a matter in which the Secretary of State would wish to lay too much stress in writing to any Colonial Administration, since it is not desirable to put officers to undue expense.

Next subsequent Paper

*at once R.
H. J. R.
3/12/16
27 May 1916*

I have had correspondence with the Lord Chamberlain's Office about this case, but as the correspondence has a general interest I am keeping it with the Chief Clerk's papers instead of attaching it.

The question raised was that ^{of the proper occasion for} ~~the velvet court suit~~ ^{or} ~~the black cloth court suit~~ ^{regularly} and the upshot of my enquiries is this:

The black cloth legal court dress is only to be worn under the robes, and, therefore, at a levée or on occasions where a levée dress is worn; [except by certain legal functionaries such as Secretary to the Lord Chief Justice, etc. who do not wear robes (and they evidently are a very limited number)] ^{alternatively} where robes are not worn the velvet court legal Court Dress is the proper thing to wear. ^{So that} ~~at~~ at an official dinner where ordinary levée dress would be worn, ^{the rule is that the velvet dress} ~~of course it is~~ obvious that it would be very uncomfortable for a judge to dine in his robes.

C.H.
15 July 16.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

No. 548.

July 10th, 1915.



Sir,

With reference to Mr. Harcourt's Circular despatch of May 10th, I have the honour to inform you as follows respecting the practice observed in this Protectorate in regard to the robes worn by judicial officers.

2. Scarlet robes are worn by the Judges when trying criminal cases or sitting on criminal appeals. When two or more Judges sit together on the criminal side they also wear the scarlet tippet. Both robes and tippet are trimmed with slate coloured silk.

3. When trying civil cases the ordinary black silk robe is worn and no difference is made when two or more Judges sit together.

The

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ANDREW BONAR LAW, P.C., M.P.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,

DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, S.W.

The black robe is open and worn over a sleeved waistcoat having braided ribs on the front and cuffs with three buttons and braided ribs.

4. The ordinary Judge's friz wig is worn in Court.

5. Advocates appearing in the High Court are required to be robed in accordance with the dress they are qualified to wear in the country in which they have been admitted, e.g. an English barrister would wear a barrister's wig and gown, a solicitor a solicitor's gown without wig, and an advocate of the Supreme Court in South Africa or of a High Court in India the robes they are respectively entitled to wear in South Africa and India.

6. At official functions the Judges wear full bottomed wigs with their black robes which are worn over the black cloth court suit with knee breeches, black silk stockings and patent leather shoes with bright steel buckles. The ordinary cambric bands are replaced by lace bands, a lace jabot is added and lace ruffles worn at the cuff.

In times of mourning the bright steel buckles are replaced by black buckles and

the

the lace bands, jabot and ruffles by starched cambric.

On the occasion of swearing in a Governor on his arrival in the Protectorate the Judge or Judges present wear their scarlet robes and tippets.

The above rules respecting dress are observed by the Judges of the Court of Appeal for Eastern Africa.

7. The dress worn by the Attorney General at official functions is that prescribed for such officers in the Manual dealing with dress issued by the Lord Chamberlain's office.

8. The Chief Justice is in some doubt as to the proper dress that should be worn by Judges at an official dinner. He considers that the most suitable costume would be the black cloth court suit, referred to above, instead of the velvet court suit. I should be glad to receive your instructions on this point.

9. Robes are not worn in the Magistrates' Court either by the Magistrates or by advocates appearing before them.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your humble, obedient servant,

Albion Beyer

GOVERNOR.

Gov.

E.A.P.

37159/16

Indones

Downing Street,

20 July, 1916.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge

the receipt of your despatch No. 548 of the 10th July ¹⁹¹⁵, respecting the robes worn by judges.

2. In paragraph 8 of the despatch

you put a question as to the dress to be

worn by Judges at an Official dinner, which involves distinctions of some nicety.

The Velvet Court Suit prescribed for His Majesty's Judges is primarily to be con-

sidered a full dress suit to be worn at

Court Balls and Full Dress Dinners. Primafacie, therefore, it is ^{not strictly official} hardly the proper

dress for an ordinary Official dinner

where Levée Dress is enjoined. But I am advised by the Lord Chamberlain's Department that it should be worn on such

occasions

DRAFTAFRICA PROTECTORATEMISCELLANEOUS

GOVERNOR

SIR H.C. BELFIELD, K.C.M.G.

MINUTE.

Mr. Scott. 13.5.16

Mr. Harris

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. Read.

Mr. H. Just.

Mr. G. Fiddes.

Mr. Steel-Maitland.

Mr. Bonar Law.

*15 July 1916**See further note on the minute paper.*

since there is no complete *level dress* for
occasions ~~by those who are entitled to~~ *judges barristers*
~~wear silk gowns~~ *others without their*
robes, and it would
be improper further
~~(to wear without robes)~~
The Court Suit of Black Cloth

which is described on page 66 of the book
appears to
"Dress worn at Court" to which you refer.
This Court suit of black cloth can only
~~should be worn on such occasions~~ *be level dress* by gentle
men who hold legal appointments but are

not entitled to wear ~~any~~ gowns, *yet it is*
conferred as a special case (see p. 65-66)

4. I am not, however, prepared to
be strict
urge the observance of ~~any~~ rule ~~in the~~

~~matter~~ in the case of His Majesty's Over-
sea Possessions; it is undesirable that
officers should incur any undue expense in
such matters for the sake of occasions
which are infrequent.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) A. DONALD LAW.