

Stalls in the CHOIR of Rochester Cathedral.

The sedilia in the presbytery, drawn by John Carter and engraved by James Basire for the Society of Antiquaries (*Vetusta monumenta*, vol. 3, plate 5, no. 2). The plate is dated 23 April 1790.

A similar plate – drawn by Thomas Fisher, engraved by — Royce, paid for by the dean and chapter – had been published two years previously by Thorpe (1788, plate 45).

The surfaces inside the sedilia were painted – three bishops at the back, an angel on either side. There was an inscription on scrolls carried by the angels (Thorpe 1769:701, Denne 1788:203) consisting of a verse from the bible: *O altitudo divitiarum et sapientiae et scientiae Dei! Quam incomprehensibilia sunt iudicia eius et investigabiles viae eius!* (Romans 11:33). Apparently the surfaces were scraped down in the 1740s, when the choir was refurbished.

Of the three small shields in the canopy, the first is for the church of Rochester, the second for the church of Canterbury. The third was identified by Hope (1898:311) as the arms used by bishop Brinton (1373–1389); and that, presumably, fixes the date of the sedilia.



Vetusta monumenta, vol. 3, pl. 5, no 2.