

The carved pew ends are a special feature of the Parish Church of St John Baptist, Danbury and are much admired by visitors. Every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate, and I apologise for any errors or omissions. I would like to express my gratitude to my husband, Dr Neil Sinclair, who has taken all the photographs. Mrs Elisabeth Sinclair 2012.

All the pews in the nave are oak.

N1 – N3 are the only original 15th Century pews These three back pews on North side of the Nave just inside the glass screen entry from West door are the only original pews with plain backs and level bookrests, raised from the floor on a low platform. Each bench is height 133cm width 44cm length 240cm.

Pews FS1 – FS8, S1 – S8, N5 – N12 and FN5 – FN11 are 19th or 20th Century copies of the old pews. They were carved between 1866 and 1957. There are three other spare pews which are stored, one behind the organ and two on top of the choir vestry.

The church pews were replaced in 1866 by Sanders of Maldon under the guidance of the architect Sir Gilbert Scott and the carvings were begun at this time.

All the pews have two bench ends carved out of the solid, chamfered and with fleur de lys poppyhead finials. A mythical beast has been carved on the shoulder of the integral buttress to one side of each standard. These were carved between 1866 and 1957.

The bench ends are joined by single plank forming the seat on one side and supporting the bookrest behind. Plain seat backs are finished with double roll moulding. The front pew has a moulded kerb and seven bays, the head of each having blind tracery forming a cusped ogee arch with mouchettes and leaves in the spandrels. The whole is surmounted by triple roll moulding. All pews height 70cm width 42cm.

Many of the carvings commemorate regiments stationed in Danbury during the First World War.

In 1917 carved bench ends were presented by the 'Fighting Fifth' (FN6 North end).

The 270th Infantry attached for training purposes to the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment are represented (FN10 North end).

The Rector, John Bridges Plumtre said, "Needless to add more, we are very proud and grateful to have such mementoes of their sojourn amongst us. All the troops that have been stationed here since August 1914 have been very good to us in this way. These gifts of theirs will be much treasured for their sakes and also because they give our church unique historical associations with the great war."

The 4th Gloucesters (FN8 North end), the 7th Warwickshires (FS1 South end), the 5th and 7th Highland Light Infantry (FN13 South end), the Loyal North Lancashires (FN9 South end), the 8th Dorsets (FN7 South end) and now the two graduated Battalions of the Northumberland Fusiliers (FN6 North end) and the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiments (FN10 South end).

In addition to these, individual officers have given us carved ends.

Brigadier General E K Daubeny DSO with a badge of the Old 80th Foot who were stationed in Danbury 110 years ago.

Brigadier General Sir John Barnsley and Lieutenant Colonel C Pierce with the badge of the Berkshire Regiment.

In 1933 bench end (FN5 North end) was dedicated and given to celebrate twenty one years of the Girl Guide Movement. 1911 – 1932.

In 1957 bench end (FN12 East end) was given by Mr and Mrs D Thomson in memory of their son John who was killed at sea.

In 1939, some of the benches were truncated to give a better view of the wooden effigies. This work was carried out at the expense of Sir Follet Holt of Riffhams Park. The work was carried out by Bakers of Danbury Ltd under the guidance of the architect Mr Bernard Clark.

Plan of pews

TOWER

N1 15TH C FN1 _____

N2 15TH C FN2 _____

N3 15TH C FN3 _____

FN4 _____

FS1 _____

N5 _____ ● N5a _____ FN5 _____

FS2 _____ S1 _____

N6 _____ FN6 _____

SW1W FS3 _____ S2 _____

N7 _____ FN7 _____

FS4 _____ S3 _____

N8 _____ FN8 _____

FS5 _____ S4 _____

N9 _____ ● N9a _____ FN9 _____

SW1E FS6 _____ S5 _____

N10 _____ FN10 _____

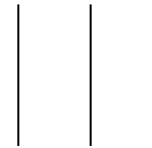
FS7 _____ S6 _____

N11 _____ FN11 FN12 FN13

S7 _____

N12 _____

S8 _____



Lady Chapel



CHANCEL

SW2W

SW2E

Terms used in heraldry to describe crests and carvings

Sinister or contourné means left (To viewer's right).

Dexter means right. To dexter (the viewer's left) is the direction animals are presumed to face.

(Note that the heraldic terms *dexter* ('right') and *sinister* ('left') are defined with respect to the bearer of a shield, standing behind it, rather than to the viewer.)

A beast may be: **Armed** having horns, teeth and claws, **Langued** having a tongue of a tincture, **Attired** having antlers, **Unguled** having hooves, **Coward** carrying the tail between its hind legs, **Queue fourchée** with a forked tail or **Double-queued** with a double tail.

Nowed means knotted, used to describe the tails of serpents and other beasts and monsters.

A beast may be in different attitudes or positions.

Affronté is whole body turned to face toward the viewer.

Guardant is with head turned to face the viewer.

Regardant is with head turned backward, as if looking over its shoulder.

Passant is walking toward dexter (the viewer's left), with the right forepaw raised and all others on the ground.

Couchant is lying down, but with the head raised.

Salient is leaping, with both hind legs together on the ground and both forelegs together in the air.

Statant is standing (in profile toward dexter), all four feet on the ground, usually with the forepaws together.

Sejant is seated.

Rampant is standing on one hind foot with its forefeet in the air.

Segreant is both forelegs raised in the air, as rampant, with wings elevated and addorsed. This term is reserved to winged quadrupeds such as griffins and dragons.

Courant (also **at speed** or **in full chase**) is running, depicted at full stride with all four legs in the air.

Glissant is gliding horizontally and is used to describe a serpent or snake.

Naiant is swimming. A dolphin blazoned as naiant is usually shown as embowed (back arched).

Addorsed or **endorsed** creatures are shown facing *away from* each other.

Combatant creatures are shown facing towards each other

Birds or other mythical creatures may have:

Wings displayed are spread to the sides to fill the area of the field.

Wings addorsed are raised as if about to take flight, so that only the top of the bird's right wing shows behind the fully displayed left wing.

Wings elevated are raised with the wing tips pointing upward

Wings inverted are raised with the wing tips pointing downward

Birds may be:

Vigilant is standing on one leg

Trussed, close, or **perched** is at rest with wings folded

Volant is facing dexter with wings spread in flight

Pelicans have featured extensively in heraldry, using the Christian symbolism of the pelican as a caring and self-sacrificing parent.

Pelican in her piety is wings raised, surrounded by her chicks who are piercing her breast to feed them, while **Pelican vulning** is a bird on her own wounding herself by piercing her own breast.

Descriptions of carvings on pew ends

N= NORTH , FN=FAR NORTH, S=SOUTH, FS=FAR SOUTH, SW=SOUTH WALL, W=WEST, E=EAST

- | | | | |
|-------|---|-------|---|
| FN1S | Lion sejant, bearded bulldog head | FN1N | Lion sejant, bearded |
| FN2S | Lion sejant, bulldog head, wings inverted | FN2N | Hare sejant, head back, mouth open, wings inverted |
| FN3S | Lion front, bearded, dragon rear, 2 tails, wings inverted and curled | FN3N | Lion body sejant, bearded bulldog head |
| FN4S | Lion sejant head tilted right | FN4N | Eagle, wings inverted |
| FN5S | Eagle regardant, wings inverted and endorsed | FN5N | Guider and guide with ragged staff, inscribed 1911-1932 Girl Guide Assoc. |
| FN6S | Child holding ribbon, inscribed 'And a little child shall lead them'
Bird on stump and serpent | FN6N | St George and dragon, inscribed 'Quo fata Vocant'. The fighting 5 th ,
attached to Northumberland Fusiliers |
| FN7S | Horned or eared owl | FN7N | Sphinx sans wings over triple towered castle.
Inscribed Gibraltar 1778-83 8 th Battn Dorsetshire Regt |
| FN8S | Bear and ragged staff | FN8N | Dog sejant with collar inscribed 4 th Gloucestershire Regt 1915 -18 |
| FN9S | Griffin passant minus wings | FN9N | Lion passant on top of crown, crest of Sovereign, 13 th Battn Loyal N. Lancashire Regt |
| FN10S | Dolphin naiant and embowed, tail under head | FN10N | Tiger passant and regardant, right paw on rose 'Royal Tiger and Union Rose', |
| FN11W | Poppyhead | FN11E | Poppyhead |
| FN12W | Angel kneeling, wings expanded, praying hands over banner
'The angel which redeemed me from evil. Bless me lads. | FN12E | Seahorse supported on waves inscribed RDT AD 1957 |
| FN13W | Elephant statant on castle 5 th and 7 th Highland Light Infantry | FN13E | Bulldog sejant bearded, wings inverted |
| N1S | Mutilated creature sejant, front paws raised | N1N | Owl headed creature with 4 legs and lion's mane |
| N2S | Bulldog sejant bearded | N2N | Bearded dog sejant (broken off) |
| N3S | Bearded dog with front paw raised, head turned to left back | N3N | Griffin (4 legs, head and wings of eagle) |
| N4S | Poppyhead | N4N | Poppyhead |
| N5S | Owl with lion head, wings endorsed and inverted | N5N | Griffin passant |
| N5aS | Squirrel sejant holding nut | N5aN | Lion sejant |
| N6S | Bulldog sejant bearded | N6N | Angel kneeling, wings expanded, hands holding St Matthew banner |
| N7S | Bulldog sejant bearded, wings inverted | N7N | Lion sejant, wings inverted, St Mark banner on chest |
| N8S | Bulldog sejant bearded, wings inverted, head back and mouth open | N8N | Lamb sejant, wings inverted, St Luke banner on chest |
| N9S | Hare sejant, head back, mouth open | N9N | Sphinx couchant sans wings |
| N9aS | Paschal lamb, halo broken | N9aN | Lion sejant, wings inverted |
| N10S | Lion sejant, wings inverted and curled | N10N | Eagle, wings inverted and endorsed, ribbon in mouth engraved St John |
| N11S | Bulldog sejant, left paw on head | N11N | Bear and ragged staff |
| N12S | Lion with owl head, wings inverted | N12N | Monkey sejant, right elbow on knee, right hand under chin |

S1S Paschal lamb, banner and halo broken
S2S Bulldog couchant and regardant, bearded
S3S Paschal lamb, banner and halo broken
S4S Sphinx couchant sans wings, tail curved over left side,
4th Gloucestershire Regt
S5S Tiger sejant, bearded
S6S Pelican in her piety (head missing)
S7S Bulldog couchant, bearded, wings inverted and endorsed
S8S Tiger couchant with dragon's feet
FS1S Goat statant crown collar with chain along back, horns broken
7th Battn. Warwickshire Regt
FS2S Bulldog sejant, right paw on head
FS3S Lion sejant
FS4S Horned or eared owl
FS5S Paschal lamb, banner and halo broken
FS6S Bulldog sejant, bearded, wings inverted and curled
FS7S Cockatrice, right foot raised on stump
SW1W Dog
SW2W Bulldog sejant bearded

In storage above choir vestry:

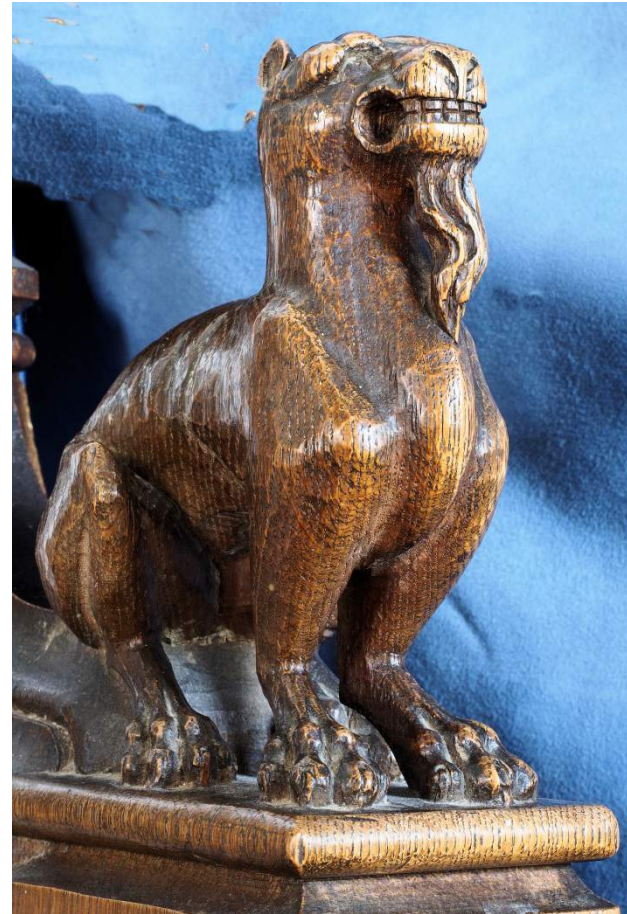
W Creature sejant

S1N Bulldog sejant, long toed feet
S2N Lion sejant, eagle head
S3N Lion sejant
S4N Squirrel sejant, holding tail on left shoulder
S5N Lion sejant, wings inverted
S6N Lion sejant, eagle head, wings displayed
S7N Bulldog sejant, wings inverted
S8N Lion sejant, eagle head regardant, wings inverted
FS1N Bulldog sejant and regardant
FS2N Lion sejant, wings inverted
FS3N Bulldog sejant, bearded, very long feet
FS4N Eagle regardant, wings inverted
FS5N Bulldog with dragon rear, bearded, wings inverted
FS6N Bulldog sejant and regardant
FS7N Lion sejant, rampant, playing stringed instrument
SW1E Eagle head broken
SW2E Eagle with lions head

E



FN1N Lion sejant, bearded



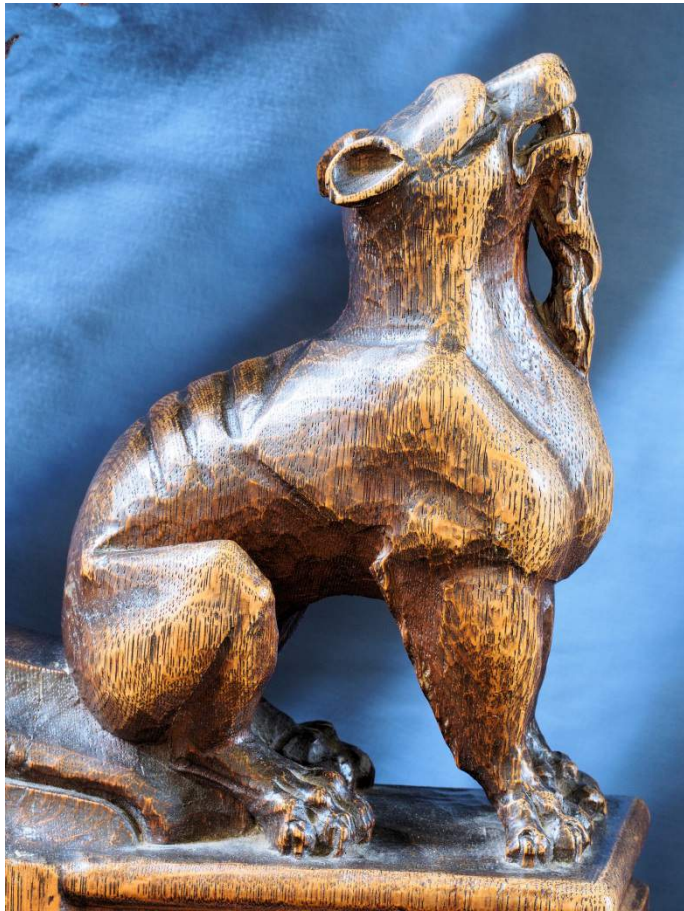
FN1S Lion sejant, bearded bulldog head



FN2N Hare sejant, head back, mouth open, wings inverted



FN2S Lion sejant, bulldog head, wings inverted



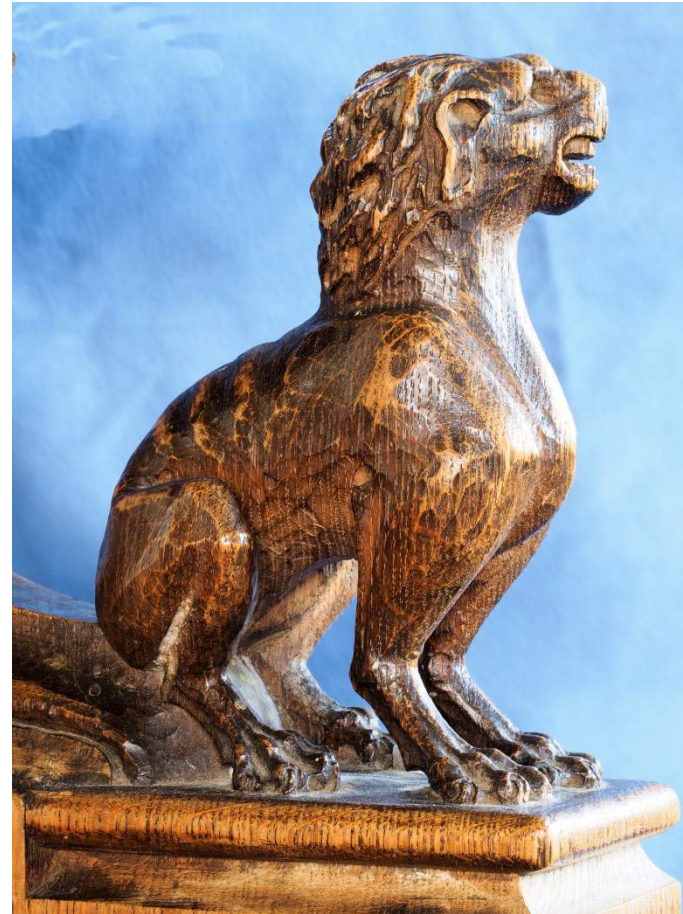
FN3N Lion body sejant, bearded bulldog head



FN3S Lion front, bearded, dragon rear, 2 tails, wings inverted and curled



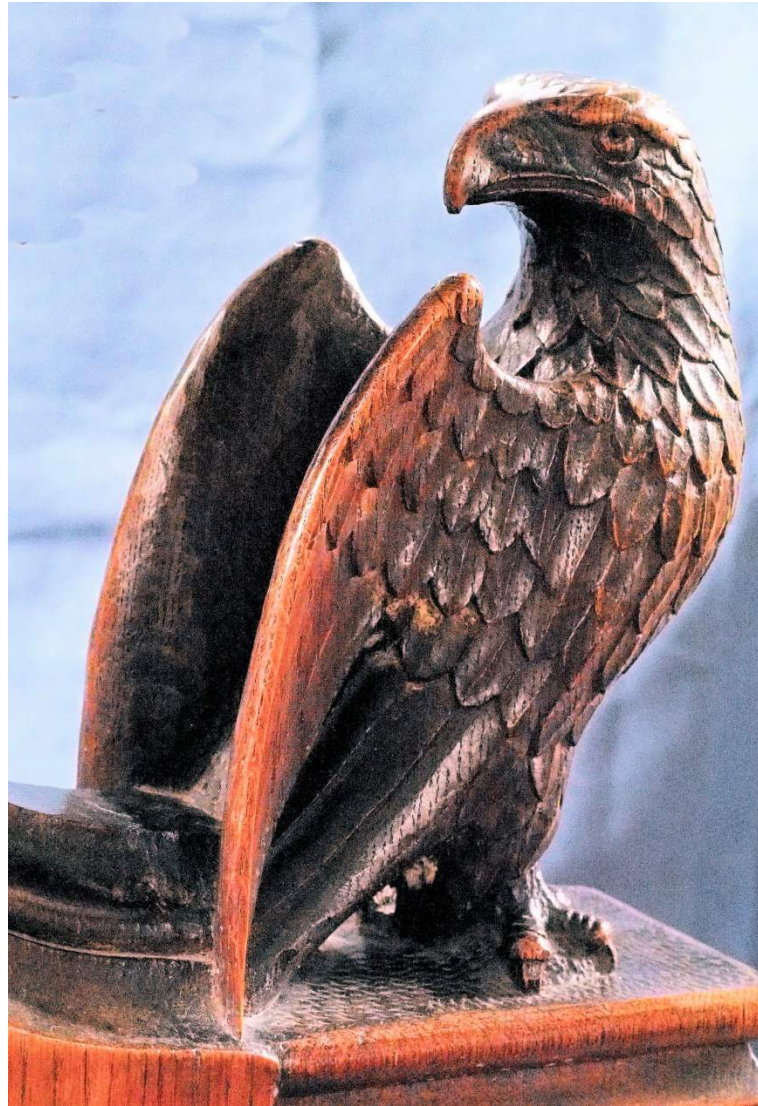
FN4N Eagle, wings inverted



FN4S Lion sejant head tilted right



FN5N Guider and guide with ragged staff, inscribed 1911-1932 Girl Guide Assoc.



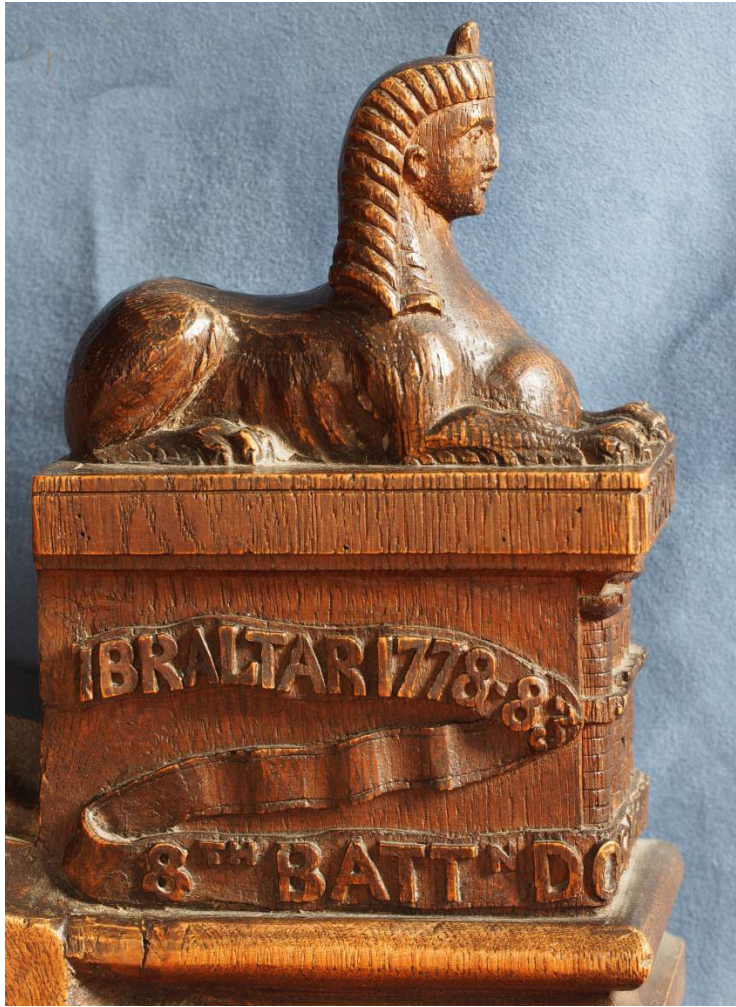
FN5S Eagle regardant, wings inverted and endorsed



FN6N St George and dragon, inscribed
'Quo fata Vocant'. The fighting 5th,
attached to Northumberland Fusiliers



FN6S Child holding ribbon, inscribed
'And a little child shall lead them'
Bird on stump and serpent



FN7N Sphinx sans wings over triple towered castle.
Insc. Gibraltar 1778-83 8th Battn Dorsetshire Regt



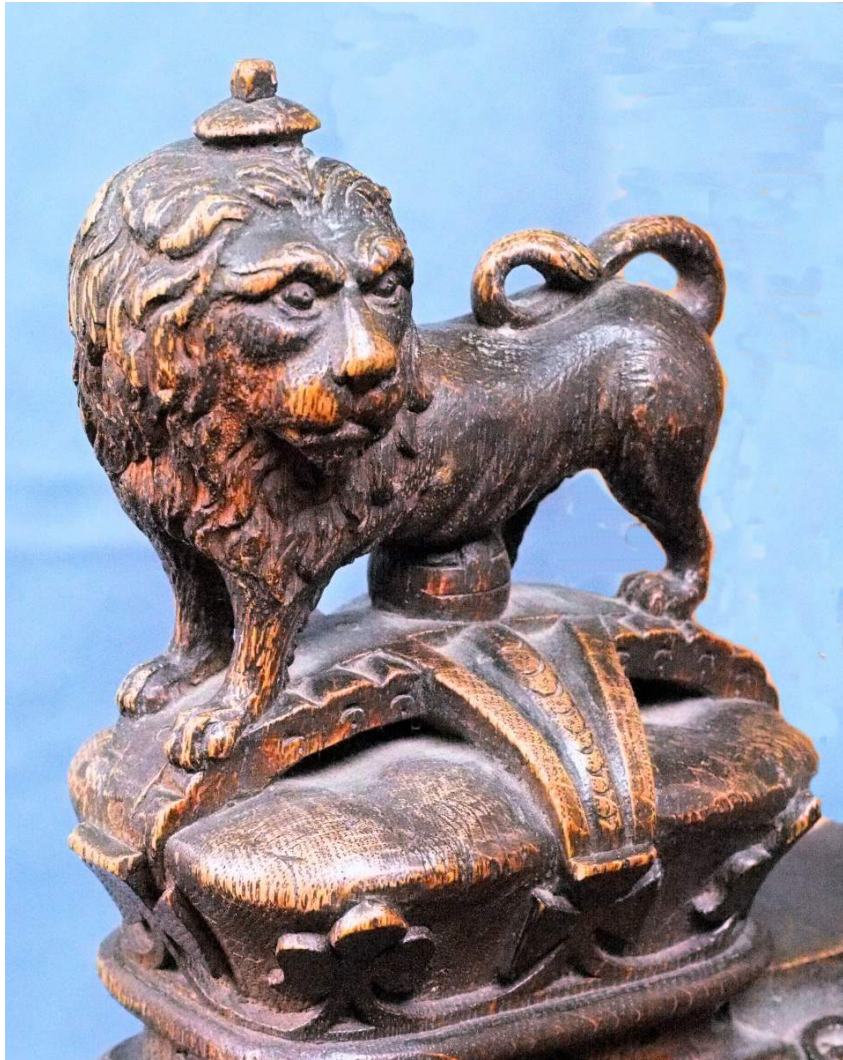
FN7S Horned or eared owl



FN8N Dog sejant with collar



FN8S Bear and ragged staff



FN9N Lion passant on top of crown, crest of Sovereign
13th Battn Loyal N. Lancashire Regt



FN9S Griffin passant minus wings



FN10N Tiger passant and reguardant, right paw on rose
'Royal Tiger and Union Rose',
York and Lancaster Regiment



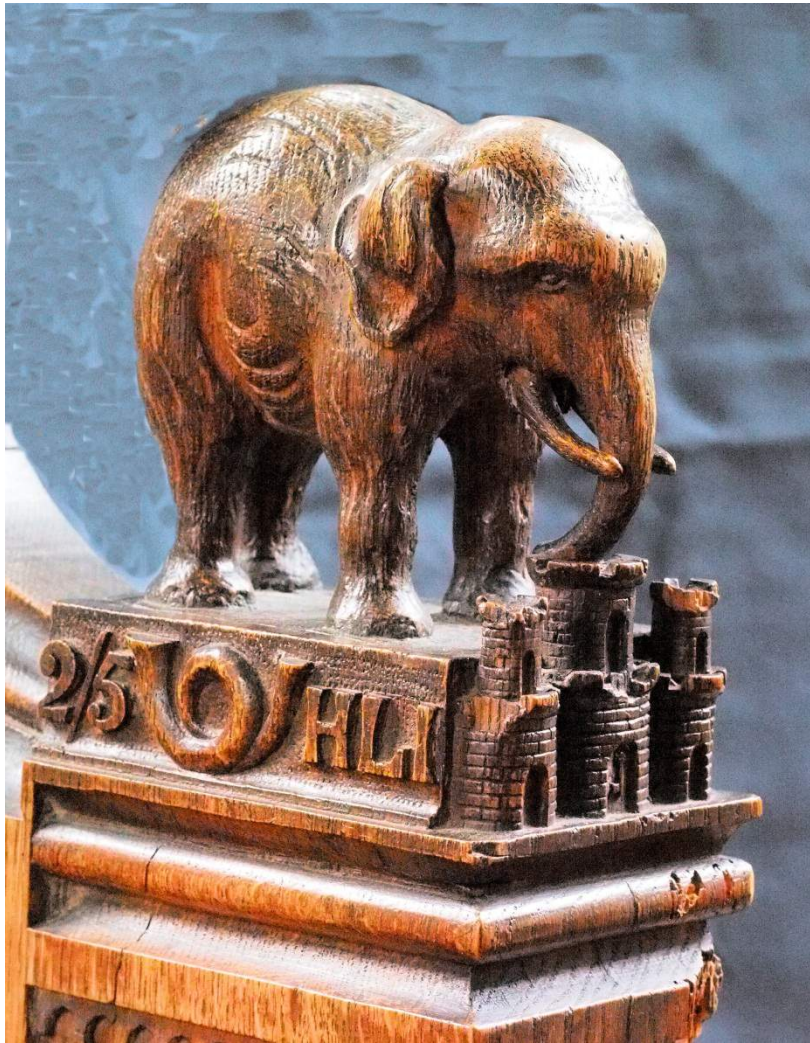
FN10S Dolphin naiant and embowed, tail under head



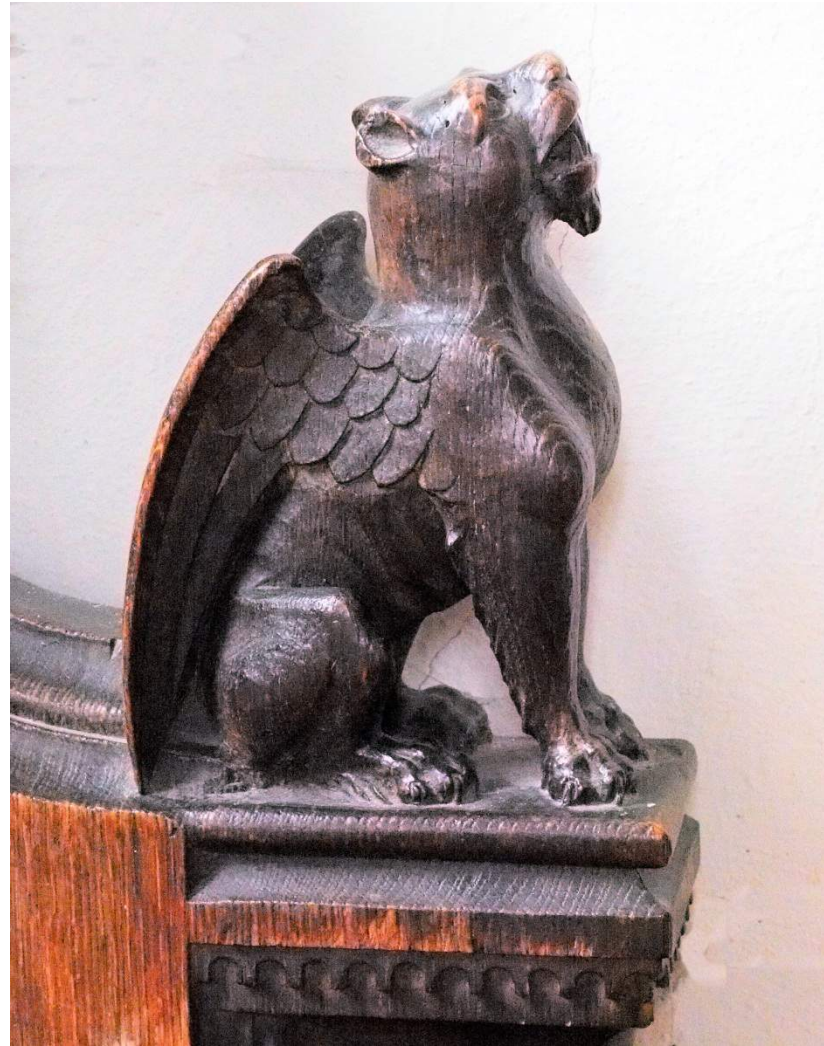
FN12W Angel kneeling, wings expanded
Praying hands over banner
'The angel which redeemed me
from evil. Bless me lads.



FN12E seahorse supported on waves
insc. RDT AD 1957



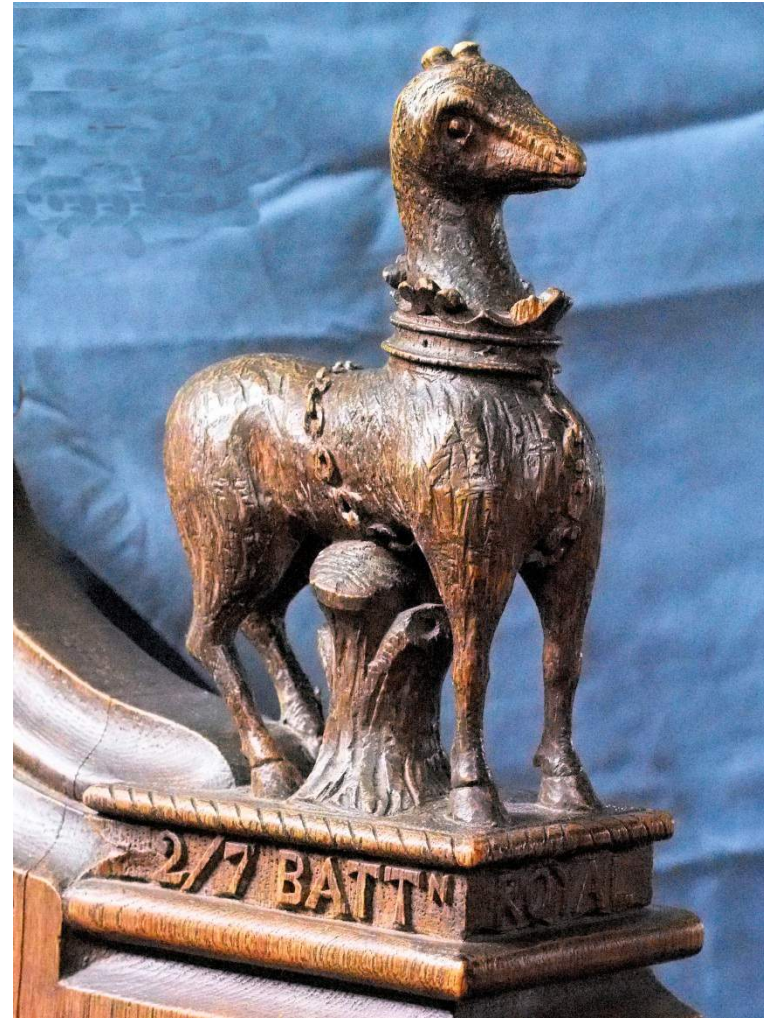
FN13W Elephant statant on castle
5th and 7th Highland Light Infantry



FN13E Bulldog sejant bearded, wings inverted



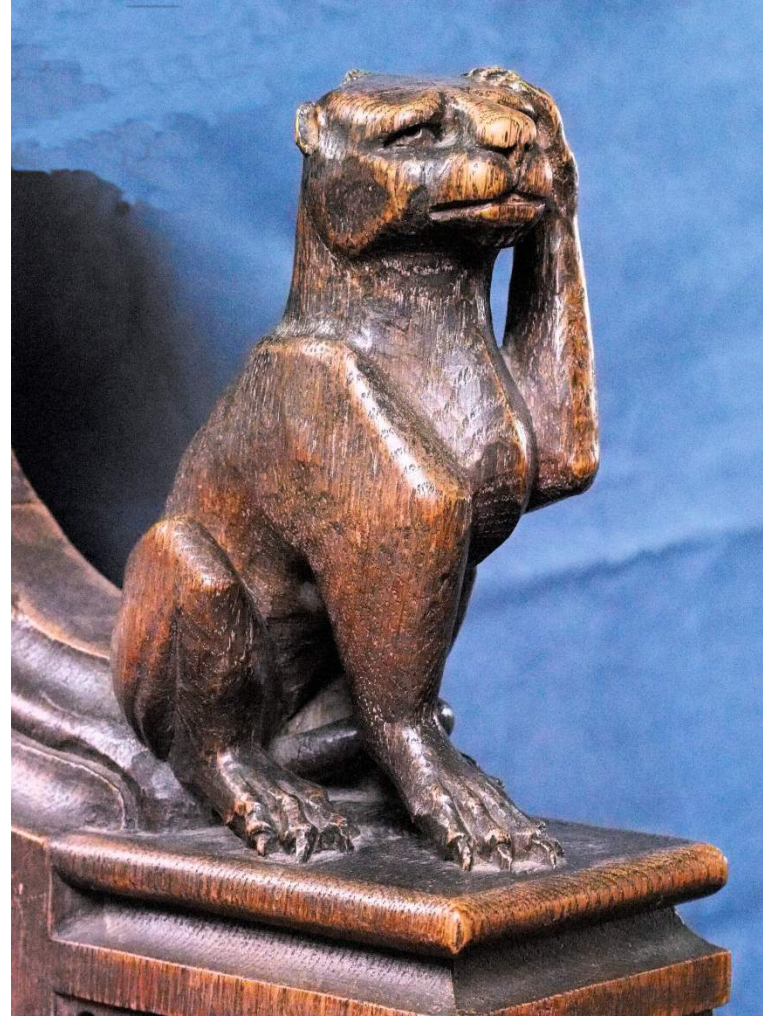
FS1N Bulldog sejant and reguardant



FS1S Goat statant crown collar with chain along back, horns broken 7th Battn. Warwickshire Regt



FS2N Lion sejant, wings inverted



FS2S Bulldog sejant, right paw on head



FS3N Bulldog sejant, bearded, very long feet



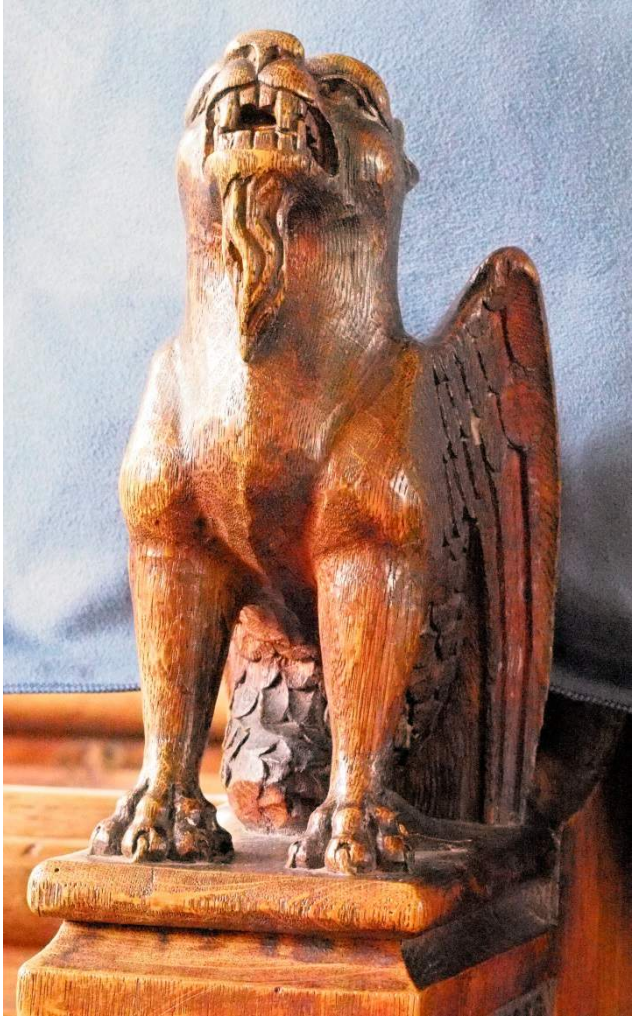
FS3S Lion sejant



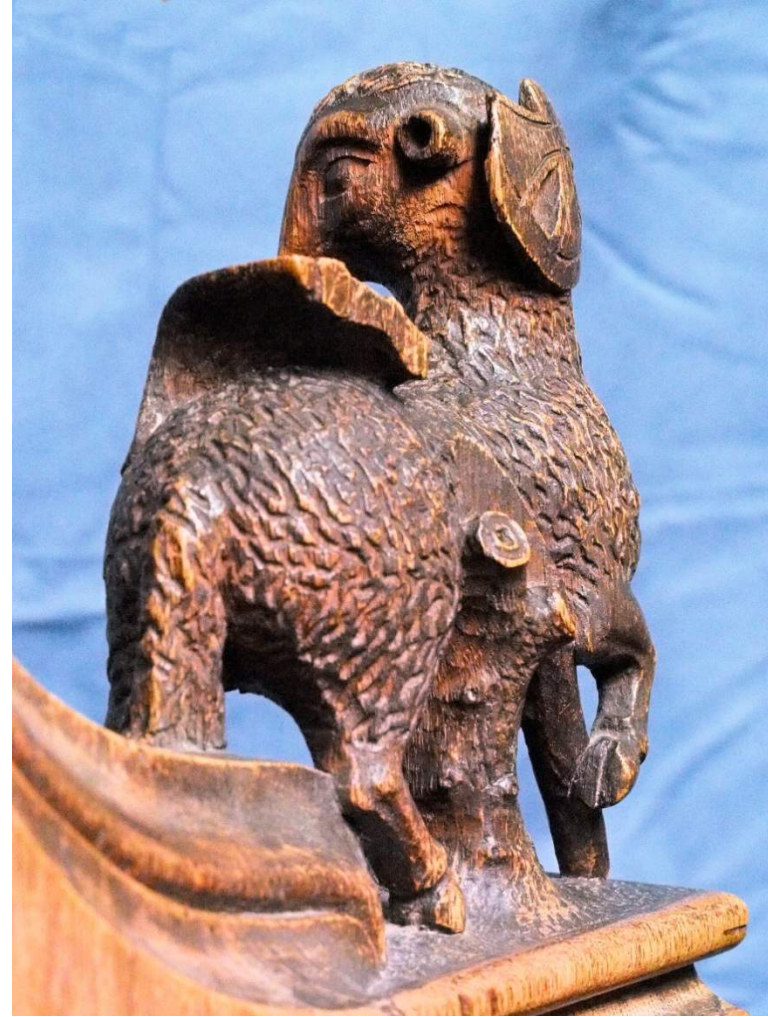
FS4N Eagle regardant, wings inverted



FS4S Horned or eared owl



FS5N Bulldog with dragon rear, bearded, wings inverted



FS5S Paschal lamb, banner and halo broken



FS6N Bulldog sejant and reguardant



FS6S Bulldog sejant, bearded, wings inverted and curled



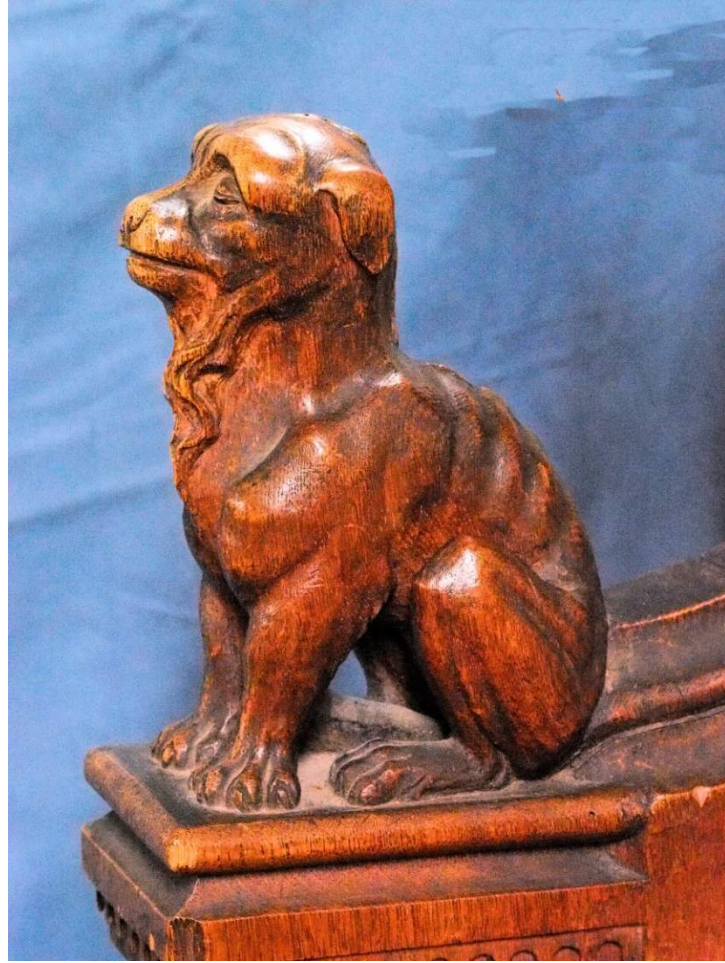
FS7N Lion sejant, rampant, playing stringed instrument



FS7S Cockatrice, right foot raised on stump



SW1E Eagle head broken



SW1W Dog



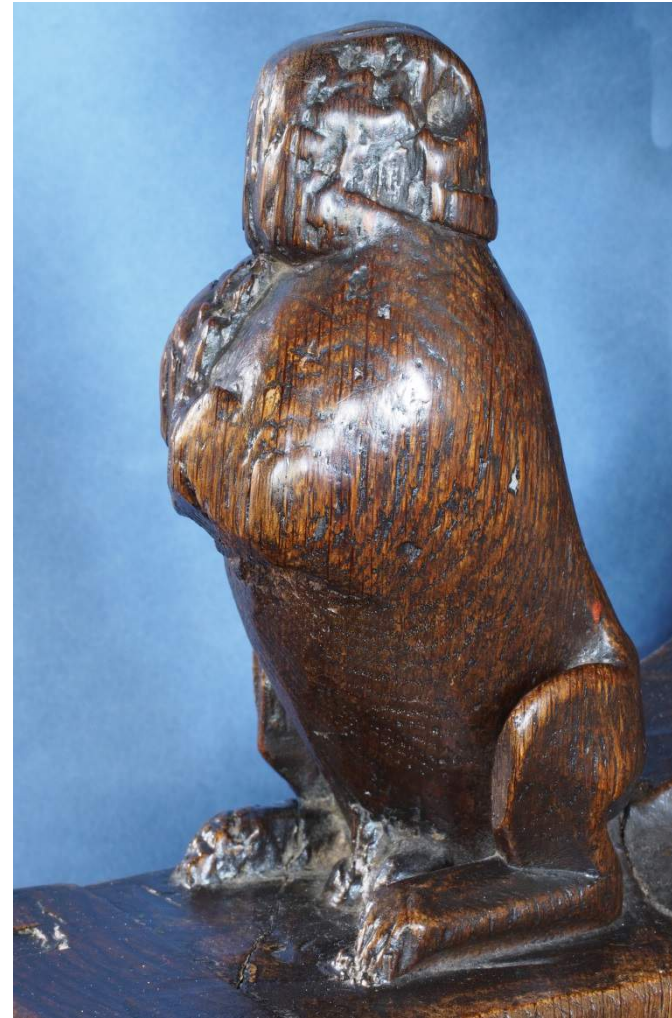
SW2E Eagle with lions head



SW2W Bulldog sejant bearded



N1N Owl headed creature with 4 legs and lion's mane



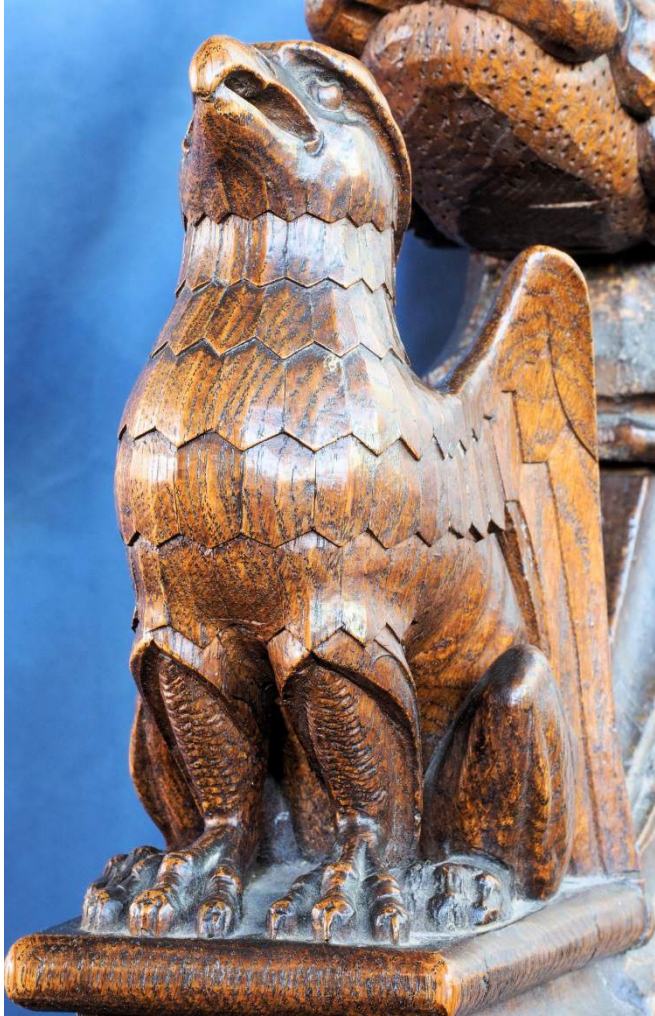
N1S Mutilated creature sejant, front paws raised



N2N Bearded dog sejant (broken off)



N2S Bulldog sejant bearded



N3N Griffin (4 legs, head and wings of eagle)



N3S Bearded dog with front paw raised, head turned to left back



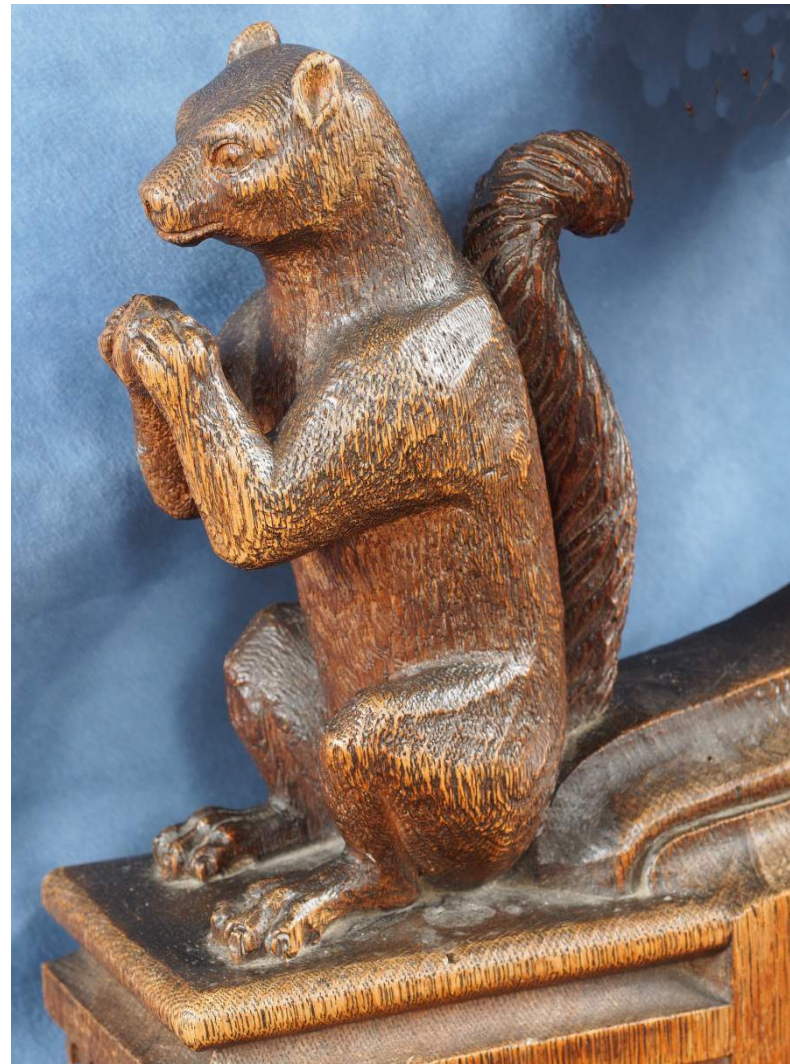
N5N Griffin passant



N5S Owl with lion head, wings endorsed and inverted



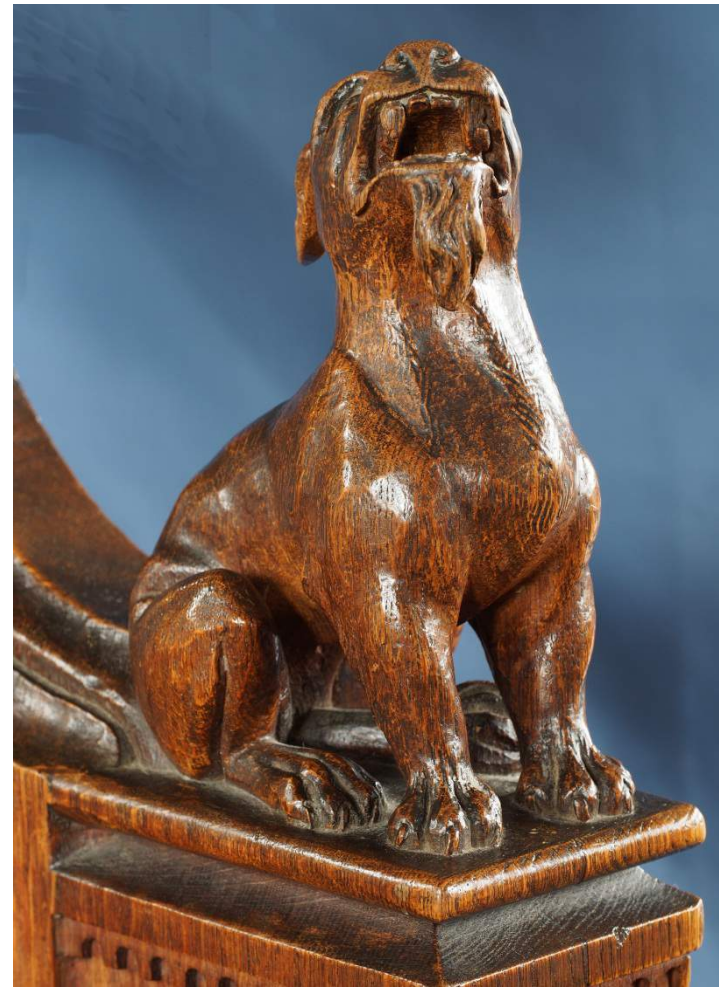
N5aN Lion sejant



N5aS Squirrel sejant holding nut



N6N Angel kneeling, wings expanded, hands holding St Matthew banner



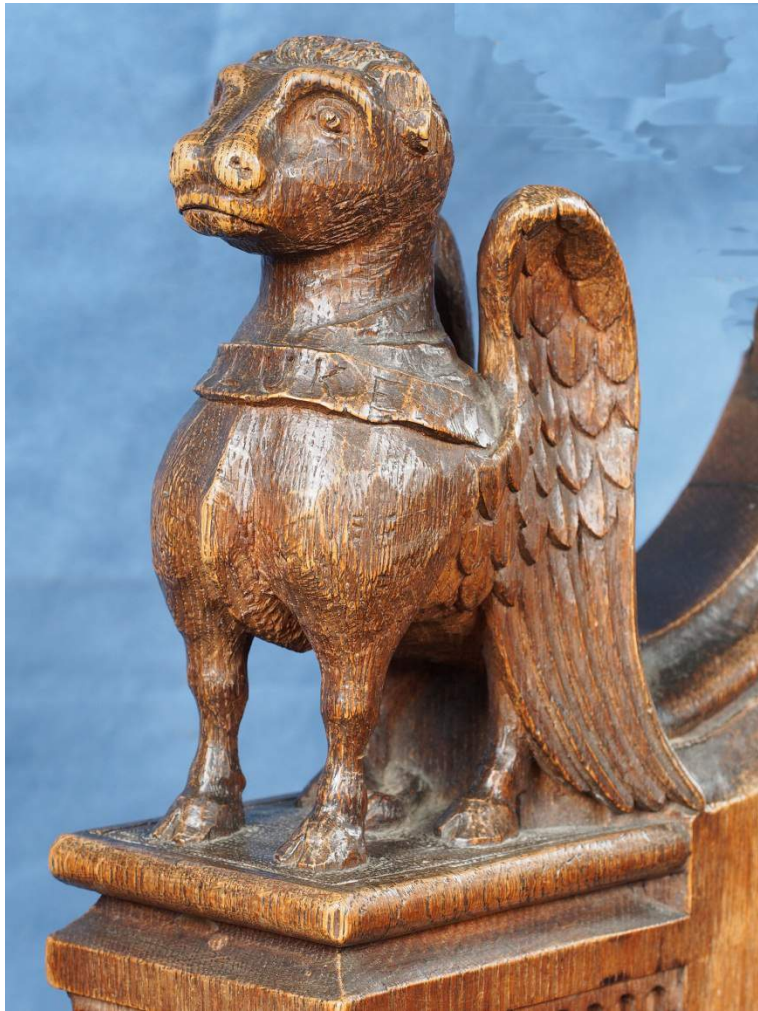
N6S Bulldog sejant bearded



N7N Lion sejant, wings inverted, St Mark banner on chest



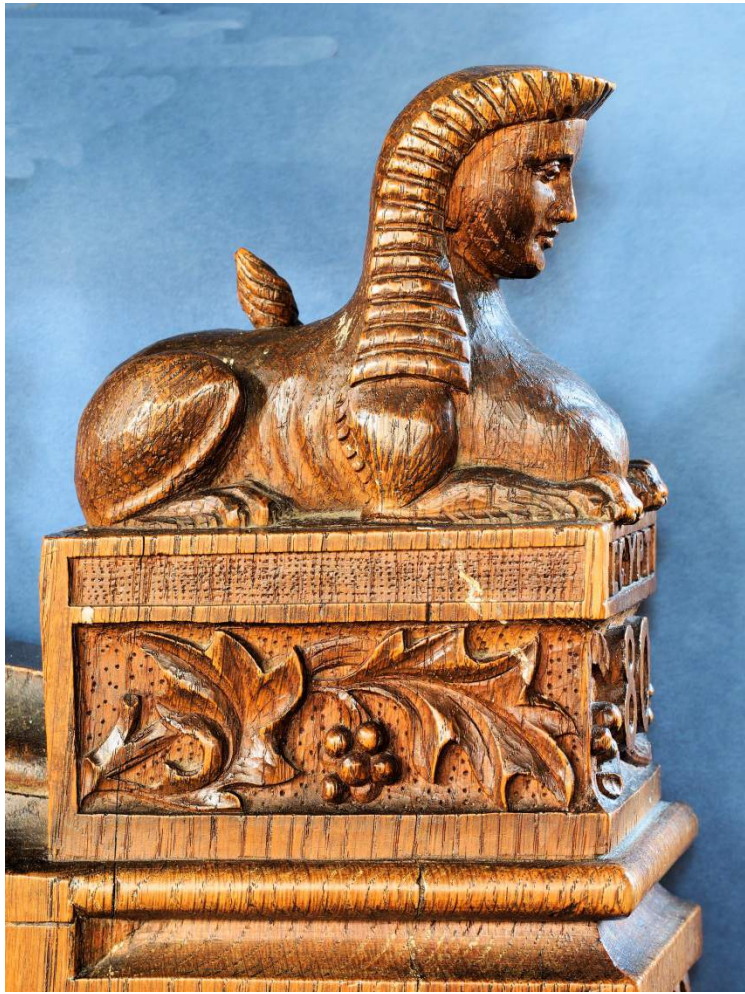
N7S Bulldog sejant bearded, wings inverted



N8N Lamb sejant, wings inverted, St Luke banner on chest



N8S Bulldog sejant bearded, wings inverted,
head back and mouth open



N9N Sphinx couchant sans wings



N9S Hare sejant, head back, mouth open



N9aN Lion sejant, wings inverted



N9aS Paschal lamb, halo broken



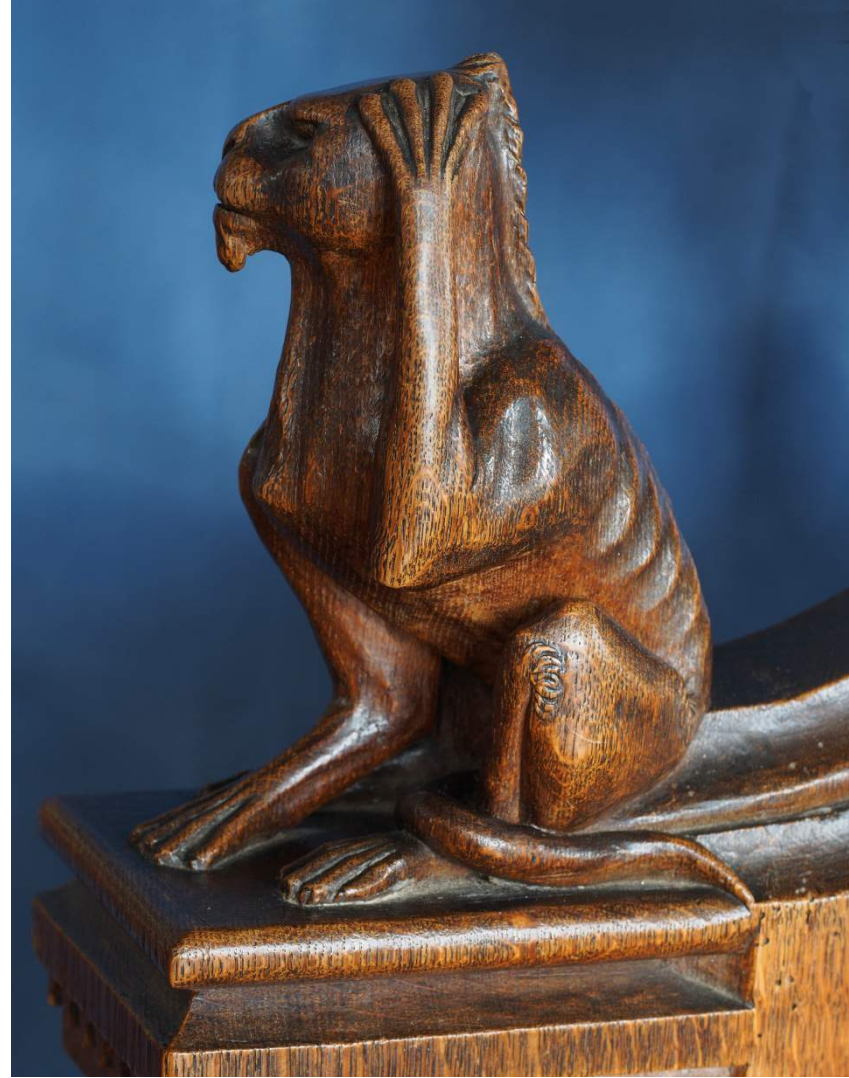
N10N Eagle, wings inverted and endorsed, ribbon in mouth engraved St John



N10S Lion sejant, wings inverted and curled



N11N Bear and ragged staff



N11S Bulldog sejant, left paw on head



N12N Monkey sejant, right elbow on knee, right hand under chin



N12S Lion with owl head, wings inverted



S1N Bulldog sejant, long toed feet



S1S Paschal lamb, banner and halo broken



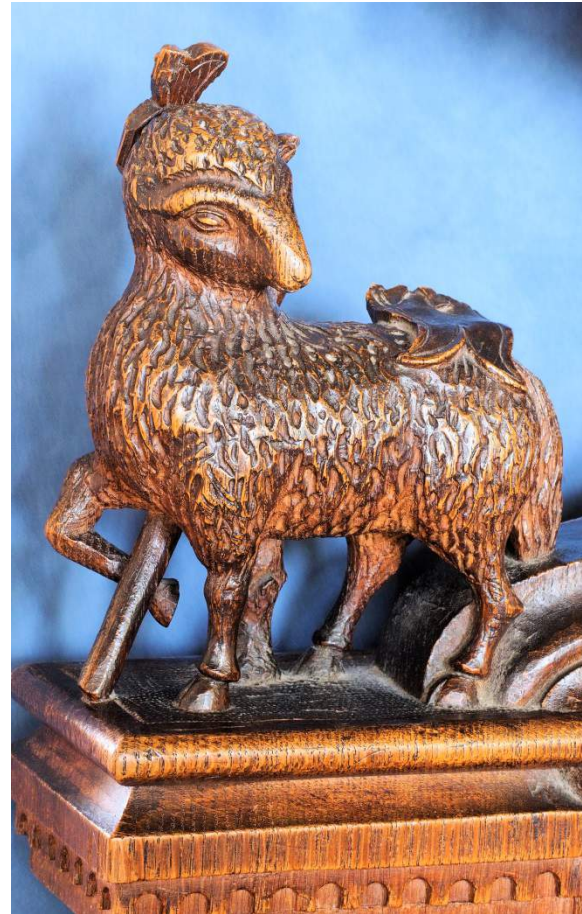
S2N Lion sejant, eagle head



S2S Bulldog couchant and regardant, bearded



S3N Lion sejant



S3S Paschal lamb, banner and halo broken



S4N Squirrel sejant, holding tail on left shoulder

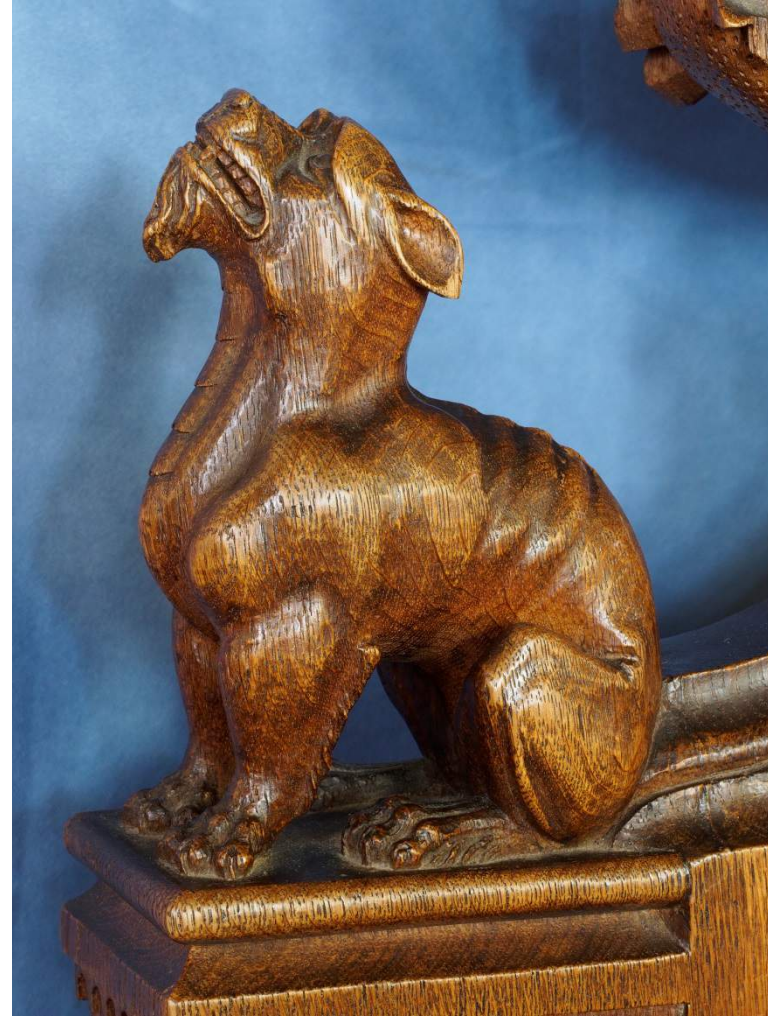


S4S Sphinx couchant sans wings, tail curved over left side,
Gloucestershire Regt

4th



S5N Lion sejant, wings inverted



S5S Tiger sejant, bearded



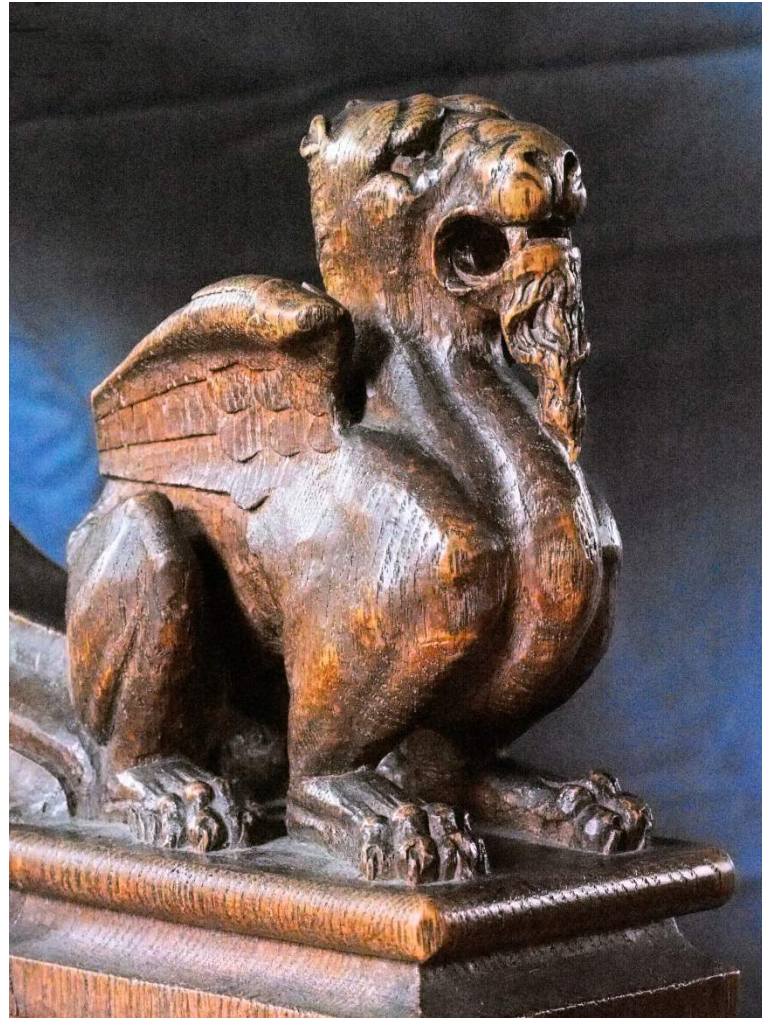
S6N Lion sejant, eagle head, wings displayed



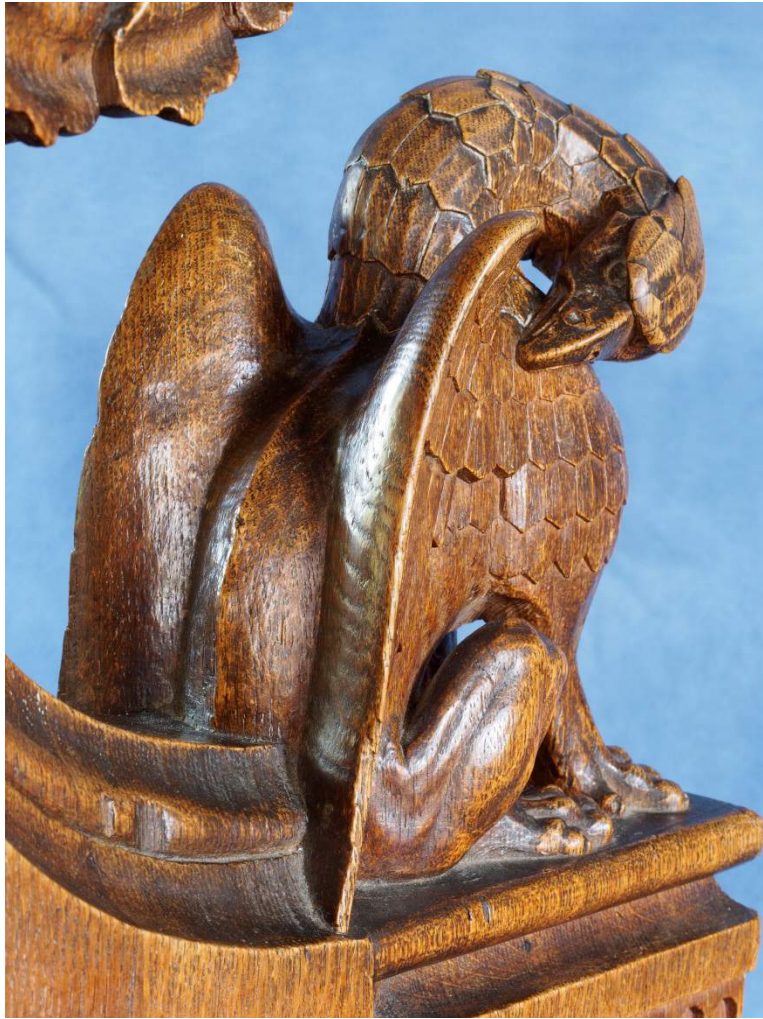
S6S Pelican in her piety (head missing)



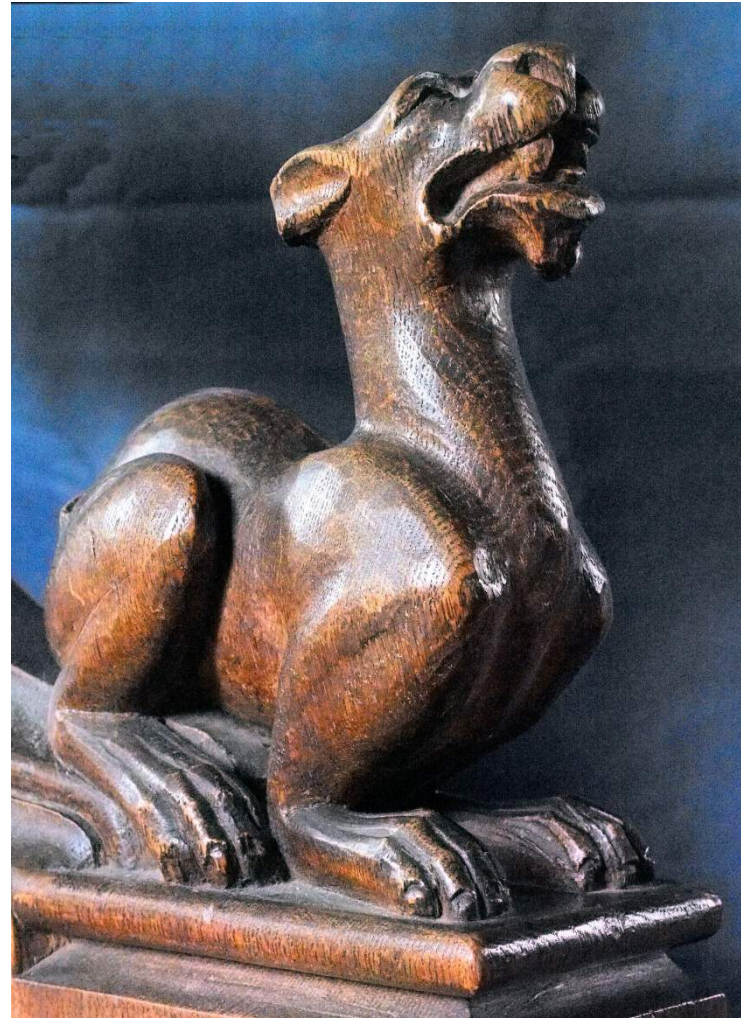
S7N Bulldog sejant, wings inverted



S7S Bulldog couchant, bearded, wings inverted and endorsed



S8N Lion sejant, eagle head regardant, wings inverted



S8S Tiger couchant with dragon's feet