

= Athelm =

For other men called Æthelhelm , see Æthelhelm (disambiguation)

Athelm (or Æthelhelm ; died 926) was an English churchman , who was the first Bishop of Wells , and later Archbishop of Canterbury . His translation , or moving from one bishopric to another , was a precedent for later translations of ecclesiastics , because prior to this time period such movements were considered illegal . While archbishop , Athelm crowned King Æthelstan , and perhaps wrote the coronation service for the event . An older relative of Dunstan , a later Archbishop of Canterbury , Athelm helped promote Dunstan 's early career . After Athelm 's death , he was considered a saint .

= = Background = =

Athelm was a monk of Glastonbury Abbey before his elevation in 909 to the see of Wells , of which he was the first occupant . The see was founded to divide up the diocese of Sherborne , which was very large , by creating a bishopric for the county of Somerset . Wells was likely chosen as the seat because it was the center of the county . Some scholarly works suggest that Athelm may be the same person as Æthelhelm , son of King Æthelred of Wessex , but this is not accepted by most historians . A few sources state that Athelm was Abbot of Glastonbury before he became bishop , but other sources disagree and do not give him that office . This traces to later medieval chroniclers , not to contemporary accounts . His brother was Heorstan , who held land near Glastonbury .

= = Archbishopric = =

Between August 923 and September 925 he became archbishop . His translation from the see of Wells set a precedent for the future , and marks a break with historical practice . Previously the moving of a bishop from one see to another had been held to be against canon , or ecclesiastical , law . Recently , however , the popes had themselves been translated , and this practice was to become common in England after Athelm 's time . He was West Saxon , unlike his predecessor , Plegmund , who was Mercian , reflecting the shift in power to Wessex . Athelm was a paternal uncle of Dunstan , who later became Archbishop of Canterbury . It was Athelm who brought Dunstan to the king 's court .

Athelm presided at the coronation of King Athelstan of England on 4 September 925 , and probably composed or organised the new Ordo (order of service) in which for the first time the king wore a crown instead of a helmet . He also attested the king 's first grant to St Augustine 's Abbey in Canterbury . It is unclear if the reason that no coins were minted with his name was his short term of office or a change in policy towards the Archbishop of Canterbury minting coins in his own name . Nothing else is known of Athelm 's brief time as archbishop .

= = Death and burial = =

Athelm died on 8 January 926 . He was later considered a saint , with a feast day of 8 January . He was buried at first the church of St John the Baptist near the Saxon @-@ era Canterbury Cathedral . When a new cathedral was constructed under Archbishop Lanfranc after the Norman Conquest of England , the earlier archbishops of Canterbury were moved to the north transept of the new cathedral . Later , Athelm and his successor as archbishop Wulfhelm were moved to a chapel dedicated to St Benedict , which later was incorporated into the Lady Chapel constructed by Prior Thomas Goldstone (d . 1468) .