

## DUNSTAN -

English cleric.

\*924 Glastonbury? Baltonsborough/Somerset? (GB:) -†988 as Archbishop of Canterbury).

[William of Malmesbury](#) records that *D* was taught the art of organ-building by Irish masters in Glastonbury, and that he built or precipitated the building of some organs (barbiton) in western England, e.g. abbeys at Glastonbury, [Abingdon](#) and [Malmesbury](#). His confined cell, some 61 by 152 cms, was apparently equipped with a forge. Here he is said to have made “metal objects, organs [organa] and bells.”

He became the patron saint of metal workers, goldsmiths, jewellers and locksmiths. He is also known to have travelled in continental Europe since he was exiled for two years in Flanders. In the aftermath of [Aix-la-Chapelle](#), including the 812 and 826 events, this could be a significant organ connection. William of Malmesbury records some two centuries after *D*'s death that he had endowed many organs in churches in western Britain,

“including an organ with brass pipes for the church of Malmesbury,”

and that he had given

“bells of wonderful size not indeed (as our period has it) with a sweet but jumbled sound, things making a noise, [and] organs which with their blend of sound at festivities seem to have aroused gladness in the people.”

Dunstan had a plaque affixed to one organ which read:

"This organ was built to the honor of St. [Aldhelm](#) by Dunstan. He who takes it away shall lose his place in the Kingdom."

It thus bears interesting witness to the strong and polarized feelings associated with the early church organ at a time when there was much dispute over liturgical acceptance.