



The Life of Merlin, Vita Merlini (Forgotten Books)

Geoffrey of Monmouth

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Book Description:

"Vita Merlini, or The Life of Merlin, is a work by Geoffrey of Monmouth composed in Latin around AD 1150. It retells incidents from the life of the Brython Merlin, and is based on traditional material about the character.

Merlin is referred to as a prophet, king and law-giver in the text. There are multiple episodes in which he losing his mind and lives in the wilderness like a wild animal, similar to Nebuchadnezzar in the Book of Daniel. It is also the first work to describe the Arthurian sorceress Morgan le Fay, as Morgen.

Geoffrey had dealt with Merlin in his two previous works, the *Prophetiae Merlini*, purported to be a series of prophecies from the sage, and the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, which is the first work presenting a link between Merlin and King Arthur. The *Vita Merlini* presents an account of Merlin much more faithful to the Welsh traditions of Myrddin Wyllt, the archetype behind Geoffrey's composite figure of Merlin. Whereas the *Historia* had Merlin associating with Arthur, his father Uther Pendragon, and his uncle Aurelius Ambrosius in the 5th century, the *Vita's* timeframe is during the late 6th century, and includes references to various figures from that period, including Gwenddoleu ap Ceidio and Taliesin. Geoffrey attempts to synchronize the the *Vita* with his earlier work by having Merlin mention he had been with Arthur long before." (*Quote from wikipedia.org*)

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Publisher's Preface; The Life Of Merlin; Endnotes

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