

Otto of Freising Encyclopedia Article

Otto of Freising

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Otto of Freising

c. 1111-1158

German bishop and historian who furnished the first written mention of the Prester John legend. Otto was present at a meeting in 1145 between Hugh of Jabala and Pope Eugenius IV when Hugh related the story of "a certain John, a king and priest who lives in the extreme Orient, beyond Persia and Armenia, and who like his people is a Christian...." The tale, which appeared in Otto's *History of the Two Cities*, (1143-46), inspired numerous European efforts to locate the mythical king's realms, first in Asia and later in Ethiopia.