

CLERIC



Standing outside petty distinctions of nationality and race, the Cleric background covers those born into or raised by a clerical institution or church, rather than those who have recently come into a clerical role. A character from a Cleric Background is one who has been born to the church, perhaps his/her parents were churchmen, perhaps he/she was given to the church at an early age or perhaps he/she became a monk or nun out of choice. In any case, the character has always been part of the church.

It is possible that a character may have a clerical profession and not have a clerical background. A Norman may be made a bishop or abbot, for example. In this case, he would have the original Background but would split his experience between his original profession and his new one.

The Cleric background is slightly different depending on the cleric's religion. In *Merrie England*, the main religions are Christianity (Roman Catholicism), Judaism and Islam. Orthodox Christianity is slightly different but doesn't affect *Merrie England*. Skills associated with the Cleric background are detailed in the following tables.

CHRISTIAN CLERIC

Skills: *Bless, Craft (Any), Insight, Knowledge (Lore or Religion: Christianity), Language (Latin), Literacy (Latin), Perform (Sing), Persuade*

Own Language: As per nationality

Professions: Alchemist, Collector, Demonologist, Diplomat, Friar, Monk/Nun, Physician, Priest

Social Rank: Clergy

Wealth Level: Poor, Affluent, Wealthy

Starting Money: 1D6d + Profession's Money

JEWISH CLERIC

Skills: *Appraise, Bless, Craft (Any), Insight, Knowledge (Lore or Religion: Judaism), Language (Other), Literacy (Hebrew), Medicine, Perform (Sing), Persuade*

Own Language: Hebrew

Professions: Alchemist, Collector, Demonologist, Physician, Priest, Sorcerer

Social Rank: Clergy

Wealth Level: Affluent, Wealthy

Starting Money: 4D6+12d + Double Profession's Money

MUSLIM CLERIC

Skills: *Bless, Craft (Any), Insight, Knowledge (Lore or Religion: Islam), Language (Other), Literacy (Arabic), Medicine, Perform (Sing), Persuade*

Own Language: Arabic

Professions: Collector, Demonologist, Diplomat, Physician, Priest

Social Rank: Clergy

Wealth Level: Poor, Affluent, Wealthy

Starting Money: 3D6d + Profession's Money

SARACEN

A Saracen comes from the Near East. Saracen is a general term describing those of several cultures, but is fine for the purposes of *Merrie England*.

Skills: *Appraise, Art, Craft (Any), Etiquette (Arabic), Falconry, Fine Manipulation, Insight, Language (Other), Literacy (Arabic), Perform (Play Instrument), Pilot (Boating), Drive (Cart), Spot, Ride (Horse or Camel), Sleight of Hand, Stealth, Tracking*

Own Language: Arabic

Professions: Acrobat, Alchemist, Animal Trainer, Bard, Blacksmith, Collector, Craftsman, Explorer, Farmer, Fisherman, Healer, Herder, Hunter, Knight, Lord, Mercenary, Merchant, Militia, Minstrel, Physician, Priest, Ranger, Sailor, Soldier, Sorcerer, Spy, Thief, Town Guard, Woodsman

Social Rank: Yeoman, Clergy, Gentry

Wealth Level: Average, Affluent, Wealthy

Starting Money: 3D6d + Profession's Money

Professions

The following professions are used in *Merrie England*, new professions are in italics: Alchemist, Artist, Assassin, Beggar, *Changeling*, Craftsman, *Demonologist, Enchanter/Enchantress*, Entertainer, Explorer, Farmer, *Friar*, Gambler, *Healer*, Hunter, *Jester*, Labourer, *Leech*, *Knight*, Merchant, *Minstrel, Moneylender, Monk/Nun*, Noble, Priest, *Ranger*, Sailor, Scholar, Servant, Soldier, *Sorcerer*, Student, Teacher, *Templar*, Thief, *Town Guard, Trickster, Troubadour, Warrior, Wizard*

Merrie England has many professions not described in *Basic Roleplaying*. Medieval settings often have a different focus to that of generic fantasy settings and *Merrie England* is no different. For all professions not listed here consult the *Basic Roleplaying* rulebook.

Acrobat

Acrobats are skilled in tumbling and dance, skilled and exotic entertainers.

Skills: *Art (Any), Disguise, Dodge, Fine Manipulation, Insight, Language (Other), Language (Own), Listen, Perform (Acrobatics), Persuade*

Social Rank: Any

Wealth Level: **Social Rank:** Any

Starting Money: 1D3d

Alchemist

Alchemists transform the elements, making potions and developing their knowledge.

Skills: *Appraise, Bargain, any Craft skill, Knowledge (Occult), Research (Books), Knowledge (Alchemy), Literacy (own)*

Three of the following:: *Fine Manipulation, Insight, Language (other), Literacy (other), Status*

Social Rank: Any

Wealth Level: Affluent or Wealthy, usually Wealthy

Starting Money: 4D6s

Magic



Many people use magic, sometimes to ward off evil, sometimes to gain benefits, sometimes to cause harm to others. There are several types of magic that are common to the main religions of *Merrie England* and these are described below.

Amulets and Talismans

Many medieval people use and wear talismans, small magical objects that provide protection against evil.

In *Basic Roleplaying* terms, an amulet or talisman provides a 1D6 bonus, 2D6 if made with a special roll or 3D6 if made with a critical roll, to a skill in a certain specific situation. So a talisman against being seduced would give a 1D6 bonus to Piety when resisting the advances of a succubus. A magician with Craft (Amulet), Craft (Talisman) or Craft ([Talisman]) may make a talisman by first preparing the talisman then attempting the Craft (Talisman) roll. It costs 1 POW to make a talisman.

There are many ways to prepare talismans. Muslims, Jews and Christians write specific verses onto paper and put it in a locket. Sometimes verses or words from another sacred text are used, so a Muslim might use Hebrew symbols or a Christian might write in Aramaic. Many talismans do not contain sacred verses but are instead made from specific materials, perhaps a stone with a hole in it or a piece of coloured glass. Some talismans must be made in a certain way to have a desired effect, others are more forgiving.

Folk Magic

Despite the monotheism of Islam, Judaism and Christianity and the forbidden nature of magic, there are some traditions left over from the past. Each area of the known world has its own tradition of old magic. Generally, such magic takes the form of *Basic Roleplaying* Sorcery or Magic. Games Masters and players may decide what magic is available in each area.

Some examples of Folk Magic include that practised by Morris Dancers and Masons.

Folk Magic is frowned on by the major religions, but is still practised. Generally, clerics turn a blind eye to minor uses of Folk Magic but become far harsher when this magic threatens to become a religion or heresy in itself and then practitioners are stamped out with medieval ferocity.

Sorcery

Sorcery is the preserve of the Black Magician, the practitioner of forbidden and dark arts. Some sorcery is learnt from Djinn, other sorcery is learnt from teachers and other sorcerers, yet others are learnt from grimoires that have lain hidden for centuries. Sorcery uses the same rules as normal *Basic Roleplaying* sorcery. Games Masters and players must work together to determine which spells are available.

Special Magic

Each of the main religions of *Merrie England* has its own special magics. Muslims have Barakh and Sih; Jews have Kefitzat Haderech. These are described in the chapters covering those specific religions.

Religious Truth

Merrie England is a Medieval setting with several monotheistic religions competing for influence alongside many more minor pagan religions. Unlike truly oentheistic settings, these have conflicting beliefs and principles. This is fine when a character only interacts with one religion, but what happens when religions clash? How is the Truth known then?

When religions clash, the powerful and pious of each religion meet in a series of contests. These contests can be as simple as a missionary preaching to the pagans or heathens or can be a complex series of Quests against the other religion. The participants engage in struggles, contests and magical duels, each pitting their own faith against the faith of their opponents. Some win and some lose, but the overall result is determined by the relative success of the two sides.

Such a clash rarely results in a complete victory. Rather, the challenging religion forces its Truth on the other in some way. So, Islam forced its idea of Heaven and Hell onto the Afterlife, dividing the original Afterlife even further, by challenging the Christian Faith.

Where can we see this in effect? Several Sufi Saints have become part of Hinduism and Sikhism, the result of a challenge between Islam and Hinduism, or Sikhism and Islam. The Jewish Kabbalists influence the philosophical thought of Christendom, influencing both Christian and Islamic ideas of the Afterlife. The pagan goddess Brigid became Saint Brigitte, which can be seen as a victory for her cult or for Christianity.

How does this affect a *Merrie England* game? Well, if the Player Characters have the chance to influence other religions, they might want to instigate a clash of religions. Sometimes, NPCs will instigate such a clash, forcing Player Characters to act to defend their religion. Games Masters may play this out however they wish or may choose to ignore this completely. *Merrie England* does not provide special rules to simulate such a clash of religions and Games Masters are encouraged to devise their own rules as they see fit.

Fairy Features

Many of the inhabitants of Elf Land have special features that are part of their Fairy nature. They can no more change these as change how tall they are. Generally, every Fairy Folk has 1D3 Fairy Features.

Each feature can be a Fear, a Love or an Ability. Fears are things that the Fairy dreads and simply being exposed to this immediately demoralises the creature and makes him run away if he fails a Luck roll. Loves are things the Fairy loves with a passion. This love can cause the Fairy to act irrationally, perhaps against his normal nature, putting himself in danger or taking great risks to satisfy his desire. Abilities are special abilities that the Fairy has, which may be helpful or harmful. Generally these abilities cannot be resisted by mortals except by the use of blessings, relics or avoiding them by use of trickery. For example, the ability of Fearsome Aura will cause all to flee in terror – but a clever man might use a mirror to reflect the fairy's image and thus turn his own power against himself.

A Fairy must roll 1D3 to see which category the Fairy feature falls into - 1 = Fear, 2 = Love, 3 = Ability.

D10	Loves	D10	Fears	D10	Abilities
1	Bells	1	Laughter	1	Shapechange (Self)
2	Flowers	2	Church Bells	2	Shapechange (Other)
3	Wine	3	Tears	3	Gift of the Gab
4	Beer	4	Maidens	4	Instil Paralysis
5	Children	5	Dogs	5	Turn Invisible
6	Old Places	6	Iron	6	Cause Sleepiness
7	Inflicting Pain	7	Running Water	7	Irresistible Command
8	Laughing	8	Loud Noises	8	Fearsome Aura
9	Dancing	9	Fire	9	Inflict Ailment
10	Music	10	Horse Shoes	10	Minor Elemental Control

Fairy Powers

Fairy Folk are innately magical creatures. In game terms, they have a high chance of having Psychic Abilities. These abilities are not learned, instead they are part and parcel of being one of the Fairy Folk. As part of Character Generation, Fairy Folk, including Changelings, have a POWx5% chance of having a Psychic Ability from page 112 of Basic Roleplaying (two abilities on a Special success roll and three abilities on a Critical success roll).

Inhabitants of Elf Land

There are many different inhabitants of Elf Land, some fair and some foul, some kind and some nasty, some good and some evil. As well as the following fey folk, Elf Land is also inhabited by strange creatures and terrifying monsters, usually in the form of dragons, demonic black hounds, ethereal apparitions, water horses, trolls and giants.

The most common denizens of Fair Elf land are Elves, Changelings and Pixies. They are described in detail in the Fairy Creatures section of Chapter 11.

Encounters with Fair Elf Land



- To cross a bridge you must wrestle a giant who is really a friendly shape-changed pixie
- When travelling under a full moon you accidentally take a fairy road and discover a year has passed in your absence
- Journey to Elf Land to rescue your liege lord's son, kidnapped by goblins
- Aid the Elves to defeat a fearsome dragon, which can only be overcome by Christian Blessings
- Free a beautiful maiden imprisoned in an Elf tower, only to watch in horror when she ages to a feeble hag on return to the mortal world
- Joust with a fairy knight and win a bag of gold, whose contents after nightfall turn into sunflower seeds

Life in Merrie England

Life in the Medieval period is very different to life today. Most people live in rural villages or in monastic communities. Some live in towns or castles. Here, we describe how people live in those places.

Village Life

Medieval villages are small, with up to a couple of hundred people living there. A village has a small church, a duckpond, a series of fishponds, surrounding fields and small houses where the people live. The fishponds hold fish for eating, as every good Christian must not eat meat on Fridays, and provide food the whole year round. The duckpond is used for keeping ducks and geese, fattened up for winter slaughter they provide food throughout the winter. Many villages have a mill, normally situated alongside a river, this grinds the village's grain, producing flour which is given to the Church as tithing and the Lord as taxes as well as to the villagers themselves. The miller normally takes a handful of flour himself as payment, building up a substantial stock of flour.

Villagers are mainly labourers, for the village's heart beats



for 3 months, from June to September 1226, forcing its citizens to tear down the city walls and fill in the city moat. Louis dies in November 1226, but the Crusade continues under Humbert de Beaujeu. They take Labece in 1227 and Vareilles and Toulouse in 1228. Tired of fighting, Raymond accepts a treaty from Queen Blanche of Castile, the King of France's regent. He surrenders but retains the title of Count of Toulouse, his daughter must marry Alphonse, the king of France's brother, with their children inheriting after Raymond's death, but the County reverting to the French Crown if they died without issue. Raymond accepts in April 1229 and is briefly imprisoned and publicly whipped for his support of the Cathars.

Aftermath

Raymond of Toulouse helps the Catholic Church suppress the Cathars. He fights against Raymond-Roger de Trencavel, exiling him to Aragon. When the English invade in 1242, Raymond rebels and supports them, but they quickly leave and he is forgiven by the French King.

The Inquisition has a large part to play in the aftermath of the Albigensian Crusade. It is informally present throughout the Crusade, directing the religious affairs of the Crusaders and looking for signs of relapsing of heretics. However, it takes centre stage in this period. Many Cathars are burned at the stake, many more are tortured and forced to betray their families and friends. Bodies of relapsed Cathars are even dug up to be burned as heretics.

The final strongholds fall, one by one. Cathar castles are normally situated on high hills and on mountains and prove to be formidable strongholds. However, without the support of the local lords they are doomed. The exile of de Trencavel means the loss of the last Cathar noblemen and the loss of military support.

Montsegur is one of the last Cathar strongholds to fall. It is besieged in 1243-1244 and eventually falls. However, some of the defenders escape, carrying with them a great treasure.

Cathars are burned until 1321 when the heresy is finally declared extinct.

Running the Albigensian Crusade

Unlike the Crusades in the Holy Land and the Crusades against the pagan Balts, the Albigensian Crusade is one against fellow Christians, albeit heretics. Even worse, the people of the area are exactly those who propose the ideas of Chivalry and Courtly Love. The people of the southern coast of France are civilised and peaceful, poetic and charming. Many of the Crusaders are from France and have been to the area. Many are from Occitania, sharing a language and culture with the Cathars. This is a Crusade of brother against brother. Games Masters should emphasise this aspect of the Crusade.

Games Masters should not shy away from portraying the horrors of the Crusade. The slaughter of the citizens of Beziers, whether Cathar or Catholic, the burning of the cathedral and church, the burning of Cathars at the stake at every town and city conquered; all these should be described and elaborated on. The Crusade should be a thing of terror, of horror and of contrasts. Emphasise the nobility of the Occitan Lords and the land-grabbing nature of the Crusader Lords. They should emphasise the moral ambiguities that the participants might face. Is it right to burn people seeking refuge in churches? Should heretics be burned at the stake? Are the Cathars really evil or is this just a land grab by the nobles of the Crusade?

The Albigensian Crusade is excellent material for a campaign.

Players may play Crusaders, filled with holy fire and fighting against evil heretics. They can gain treasure, loot towns, rape women, pillage and gain titles and wealth. They can even be forgiven for their sins by participating in the Crusade. However, do they continue to see things in the black and white of Catholic versus Heretic? How do they react to the continuing horrors of the Crusade? Are they sickened by it, or do they pursue the Crusade with ever-increasing vigour?

Players may also play Cathars, a peaceful people only wanting to pursue their own beliefs without interfering with the affairs of others. What will they do in the face of the invading Crusaders? Will they fight? Will they try and persuade the Catholics of their rights and to persuade them to abandon their Crusade? What happens when the Inquisition calls? Will they be prepared to die for their belief, becoming martyrs? Will they repent of their heresy and become Catholics? What then, will they continue in their heretical

**Attacks**

Fist	55%	1D10+db	Crushing
Trample	55%	2 x db	Crushing

Powers: Automaton, Trample, Wound Immunity.

A Golem can attack with both Fists and a Trample each round. A golem has a magical word written on part of its body, normally its head. If that word is removed, the golem becomes deactivated. Some golems have a magical inscription written on calf parchment placed in their mouths that contains the golem's instructions. Changing this inscription changes the instructions the golem follows.

LAMIA

Descended from Lilith, the first wife of Adam, these serpent women live in the deserts of North Africa, Arabia and the Holy Land and seduce travellers.

Lamias have the body of a serpent but the upper parts of a human woman. They can cast an illusion that makes them appear as whole women, but those who are pious can attempt to roll a Difficult Piety roll to see their true form.

Lamias in human form can attempt to entrance one male humanoid per round, using the Seductive Appearance power. If a man is seduced by a Lamia's appearance he falls in love with her and will protect her, even if it means him dying. If the man resists then he is immune to her charms for a whole day. If an entranced man sees the Lamia's true form, he can attempt to shake off the love trance as per the standard Seductive Appearance rules. Men who are sway from the lamia stay in love with her for her APP in days. Thus, the Lamia can ensure that she keeps a band of bodyguards around her at all times. Games Masters may rule that an entranced man may use his Piety to try to break free, especially if the Lamia wants to make love with the entranced man.

The kiss of a Lamia can drain POW, but does not necessarily do so. The Lamia can choose to drain POW on a kiss, matching her Mana against the victim's Mana, with success resulting in the permanent loss of 1D6 POW and the gaining of the same number of Mana by the Lamia. A Lamia cannot kill someone by draining POW, as it can only drain POW down to 1.

When a Lamia's Bite attack hits and causes damage, the Lamia can hang on and attempt to drain blood. Each round, the Lamia drains 1 point of STR permanently. A man who is entranced by the Lamia feels this as an incredibly charged erotic experience and will never resist such an attack. Anybody drained to 0 STR will die.

The Lamia's constriction attack can only be used when she is in serpent form. Once she has succeeded in a constriction attack, she can do damage each round on a successful attack. Her damage is twice her damage bonus. Damage is cumulative and will break through armour once the damage done has exceeded the armour's APs, doing damage ignoring armour thereafter.

A Lamia can have children and, considering the number of bodyguard lovers that each Lamia has, often does. Girl children are themselves Lamias, boy children are tainted humans (use the statistics for Changelings, but they have Demonic Powers instead of Fairy Features). Children will stay with the Lamia until they reach puberty, then will leave. Girls find caves or abandoned houses of their own, and boys find towns where they can seduce women and cause trouble, often luring strangers to their mothers and sisters.

Characteristic	Roll	Average	Location	D20	Points
STR	3D6	(10-11)	Head	19-20	0/5
CON	3D6	(10-11)	Left Arm	16-18	0/4
SIZ	3D6+6	(16-17)	Right Arm	13-15	0/4
INT	4D6	(14)	Chest	11-12	0/6
DEX	4D6	(14)	Abdomen	07-10	4/5
APP	3D6	(16-17)	Tail	01-06	4/5
Move:	10				
Hit Points:	32				
Damage Bonus:	+1D4				
Mana:	2D6+6				
Armour:	The Lamia's serpent body has 4-point skin				

Attacks

Bite	49%	1D6+db+STR Drain	Bleeding
Kiss	49%	POW Drain	Special
Constrict	69%	2 x db	Crushing

Skills: Hide 87%, Sneak 87%

PROCURE FAVOUR (PEOPLE)

The demon can procure favours from the specified people. The magician must specify the favour required when requesting it from the demon. Each demon can only influence certain groups of people, so Eligos can procure the favours of Knights and Lords.

PROVIDE (THING)

The demon can provide the thing specified in the ability. This can be as simple as a key or as complex as an army and normally happens instantly, or whenever the demon is able.

PUNISH (WRONGDOER)

The demon has the power to punish those who do wrong. Each demon can punish its own kind of wrongdoer and does not have to worry about niceties such as proof of guilt, courts of law or verdicts. It simply knows if someone has done wrong. The demon's punishments may be severe and are often over and above the normal punishments that a court of law might mete out. Demons are quite expert at punishment.

PUTREFY WOUND

The demon can make a wound putrefy, or rot. This causes an infection and a fever and could well be fatal. Even if not fatal, it will last a long time and will be painful and unpleasant. Such a putrefying wound will be very difficult to heal and has a -60% penalty on any attempts to cure the wound.

RECONCILE PEOPLE

The demon can reconcile certain types of people. It magically does this, perhaps with intermediaries or with whispered words or simply by changing the hearts of the people concerned. This is a magical effect, wielded by a very magical being. As such, it cannot be resisted. The parties concerned stay reconciled until something happens to break them apart, but this needs more than a trivial or simple matter to break such a reconciliation.

REMOVE OFFICE (OFFICE)

The demon can remove somebody from office. Certain demons have power over particular offices, in the same way that certain demons can grant particular offices.

REMOVE SENSE (SENSE)

The demon removes the specified sense from the target. Such a removal is irrevocable and instant. This can affect more than the normal physical senses, so a demon could Remove (Sight), Remove (Understanding) or Remove (Sanity). The sense can be restored, but this might involve a contest against the demon itself and this would have to be run as a scenario by the Games Master.

RESTORE (STATUS)

The demon can restore the specified status. This is a magical effect and the status is restored by the individual's actions, the actions and opinions of others, demonic intervention and many other factors. The status is not restored overnight and sometimes takes years, but it is inevitable. From a game point of view, this may involve the gaining of Renown, increasing Status or some other mechanism.

**REVEAL (THING)**

The demon can reveal a particular thing to the magician. This thing can be as specific as Women's Secrets or as general as Hidden Things. The demon may well reveal the location of hidden treasure, or of a fugitive or of a secret, but this may not always be what the magician wanted. A hidden treasure might be halfway across the world or be guarded by a horde of demons; a secret might not be what the magician desired to know. However, a Games master could well simply reveal something without any strings attached.

SHAPECHANGE (THING TO THING)

The demon will change the shape of a stated thing, person or creature into another stated shape. This is permanent and can only be reversed by using powerful magic. The demon does not have to be in the presence of the thing to be changed and does not need to overcome any magical resistance. This is different to the Shapechange spell in that it is not something that is regularly cast, but a one-off instance. A magician may

CAMPAIGN SETTING

Whitlingthorpe

Whitlingthorpe is a small hamlet situated between the Soke of Peterborough and Fotheringay Castle, in the county of Northamptonshire. To the West lies Rockingham Forest and Castle. To the Northeast lie the fenlands around Peterborough and Kesteven Forest. To the Southeast lie the fenlands of Cambridgeshire. To the Southwest lie the castles of Northamptonshire. To the Northwest lies the town of Stamford in Lincolnshire.

Whitlingthorpe itself lies in a bend of the River Nene, just as the river nears the Great North Road. Although a mere hamlet, Whitlingthorpe gets its fair share of visitors, including those travelling along the Great North Road, and those travelling between Fotheringay and Peterborough Castles.

Notable Places

WHITE MILL

The village mill lies just to the north, on the Nene itself. Whit, the miller, is a taciturn chap who keeps himself to himself, but prides himself on never overcharging. He had a reputation for honesty.

THORPE INN

This lies on the Great North Road itself and has lodging for up to 20 people. It is a place of wonder for the children of the hamlet, and they are forever being shooed away from weary travellers.

WHITLING PRIORY

Located to the Northwest of Whitlingthorpe, Whitling Priory owns the hamlet of Whitlingthorpe. The Prioress, a cousin of the Abbot of Peterborough, acts like a great lady rather than a humble servant of God.

CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL

This very small church is a gift from the Prioress. It rests atop a hill. It currently does not have a priest, but the villagers' spiritual needs are taken care of by Brother John and Sister Mary, who live near the Church.

NICK'S HUMP

A small hillock, Nick's Hump is an Old Place that is frequented by the Fairy Folk. Most of the villagers stay away from it. Sister Mary is the only one who regularly visits, to gather mushrooms.

Notable People

BROTHER JOHN

A handsome Benedictine Monk, Brother John left his monastery to serve the good people of England. He wandered the country for several years until he came to Whitlingthorpe and met Sister Mary. Despite the recent crackdown on clerical concubinage, Brother John and Sister Mary are effectively husband and wife.

