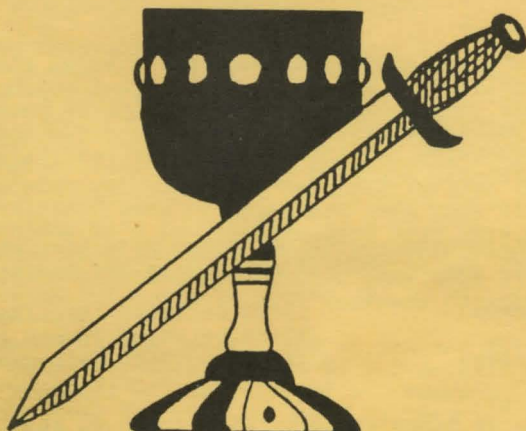


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MEMBER'S DOSSIERS Nos 35 & 36 - NOVEMBER 1988/DECEMBER 1988

REVIEWS:

SCOTT ADAM'S SCOOPS

BARD'S TALE II

HAUNTED HOUSE

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BUGSY

TONY BRIDGE

HUGH WALKER

LATEST NEWS ON THE ADVENTURING SCENE

BASIC ADVENTURING

DISCOUNTED SOFTWARE

AND MUCH MORE!!!

Members have access to our extensive databank of hints and solutions for most of the popular adventure games. Help can be obtained as follows:

* By Mail:

Please enclose a Stamped Addressed Envelope. Give us the title and version of the game(s), and detail the query(ies) which you have. We shall usually reply to you on the day of receipt of your letter. Overseas Members using the Mail Help-Line should enclose an I.R.C. for a speedy reply, otherwise the answers to their queries will be sent together with their next Member's Dossier.

* By Telephone:

We shall endeavour to help you on our phone Help-Line which will be open on 01-794 1261 during the following days and hours:

- Mondays & Thursdays	17:00 to 19:00 (Evening sessions)
- Tuesdays	12:00 to 14:00 (Lunch session)
- Wednesdays & Fridays	16:00 to 17:00 (Afternoon sessions)

* By Bulletin Board:

You can contact us 24 hours a day in the Adventure Area (SIG) of "The Fox Den". Tel: 0689-27085 (Baud rates: V21, V22, V22-bis, V23).

Please ALWAYS quote your Membership Number (shown on the label of the envelopes containing your Dossiers) when you contact us.

Creative Adventurers!

You may have written your own adventures, either by yourself, or with the help of one of the adventure-writing utilities which are now available for a growing variety of micros. We offer a number of services which may be of assistance to you:

* **PLAY-TESTING:** For a nominal fee of £5.00 per game, we shall assess and play-test any adventure that you have written. You will receive a comprehensive report, incorporating our detailed opinion of your game(s), together with our suggestions and comments.

* **MARKETING:** We can arrange for the VERY best adventures to be published nationally through a leading software company. Alternatively, we can share with you our vast experience on how to deal with software companies, how to get your game(s) reviewed in the national press, and many more services...

* **REVIEW:** We shall be pleased to review the adventures which you have written, and which you wish to make available to the general public. Appropriate details of release will also be published by us.

Please ONLY send us adventure games of a high standard (not rejects from the software companies!). Please specify for which micro(s) they will run, and do enclose a map, a listing (if you can), and a step-by-step solution to the game(s).

Dear Fellow Adventurer,

Welcome to MDs Nos 35-36, our Christmas issue!

We have been very active during the past few weeks, and the most important item of news this month is the announcement of the "Golden Chalice Awards Presentation Ceremony". Please refer to the enclosed leaflet for full details about this important occasion, and do make sure you that you pencil 25.02.89 in your diary!

Owing to popular demand, we have now produced specially-designed binders to keep your collection of Dossiers in mint condition and to build up an invaluable work of reference (see page 21 for details). The Index for Volume No 3 is also enclosed with this Dossier.

We are pleased to announce that we now accept ACCESS credit cards against any service provided by the Club (see page 46 for details), which is quite timely in view of our "Software Christmas Cracker" (see page 19)!

Still in the Christmas spirit, and if you are thinking of upgrading your computer, turn to page 22 for details of a very special ATARI ST offer arranged exclusively for ACL Members.

On the adventuring side, do not miss our Starter-Guide to part 2 of KNIGHT ORC (page 12), our Mini-Solution to FEDERATION (page 15), our report on the National Adventure Convention (page 29), and an expertly written 2-part article by Neil Shipman about mazes (page 25).

Finally, do not forget to send us your nominations for the ACL Presidential election (page 11), and your contributions for the Adventurer's Glossary (page 31).

Columnists:

- * Keith Campbell (page 7) takes stock of the adventures released in 1988, and reflects on the shining stars on the adventuring horizon.
- * Mike Gerrard (page 13) provides a wealth of advice on how to submit your own adventures for review purposes.
- * Tony Bridge (page 17) chronicles the history, evolution, and importance of the packaging of adventure titles.
- * Hugh Walker (page 23) experiences withdrawal symptoms from DUNGEON MASTER, and explores the worlds of CORRUPTION and LEGEND OF THE SWORD.
- * Richard Bartle (page 27) analyses the social structures which progressively develop within Multi-User Adventures.

Reviews:

"Ingrid's Back!" (page 5), "The Inheritance" (page 8), "Scott Adam's Scoops" (page 9), "Alien From Outer Space" (page 10), "Shadowgate" (page 11), "Haunted House" (14), "Bard's Tale II" (page 16), "Cloud 99" (page 18), "Dr Jekyll And Mr Hyde" (page 19), "Bugsy" (page 30), "Police Quest" (page 31).

We take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous, Happy New Year.

MEMBERS' SCROLLS

* These pages are devoted to your letters. We aim to provide a lively and entertaining forum for all Members, so write to us about anything as long as it is connected with Adventures! You might want to let us know about your adventuring achievements, or pass on useful tips to other Members. You might have some suggestions or comments about the Club itself, or you might have discovered some elegant or unforeseen solutions to adventuring problems. In each Dossier, we may select a "Star Letter" which will be awarded a £10.00 ACL Voucher, so we await to hear from you!

Dear ACL,

Although I'm an addicted adventure player, I have the feeling the adventures I buy these days aren't quite so interesting as they used to be. It is very nice to have a fantastic parser, interaction, and original and long backgrounds, but I miss something. I don't know exactly what it is, but it was there in adventures like DUNGEON ADVENTURE, LORDS OF TIME, SNOWBALL, CASTLE BLACKSTAR, THE SORCERER OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE and FAERIE.

Perhaps I have been spoiled by playing adventures for such a long time already, perhaps there is really something missing in the new adventures. I don't know. How do other people feel about this?

Nethanja Klein Schiphorst, Guetersloh, West Germany.

Dear ACL,

I have to ask you yet again to make a correction to something that was stated in MDs Nos 33-34. I refer of course to the gross slander by President Campbell to the effect that I do not possess a suit. Of course I do. And if we ever attend a wedding or a funeral together he'll see me wearing it, though any more remarks like that and it may well be his funeral! As for the press reception at Telecom Tower, I would like to point out that it wasn't the Tower that was going round, it was definitely Campbell after all the wine he knocked back. Nor can I remember it snowing on that day - mind you, with the height that Keith is there could have been any kind of weather up there. I thought it was just dandruff on his shoulders.

Mike Gerrard, Wistow.

THE UNWRITTEN LAWS OF ADVENTURING

With your help, the Keeper of the Scroll is currently writing the "Unwritten Laws of Adventuring" on the Scroll of Power which he keeps in a dank cave deep inside the ACL Dungeon. Already, nine Laws have been permanently inscribed on the Scroll, for posterity.

Please let us have one last, additional Law, so that the Scroll may henceforth guide the unwary adventurer. Wit and humour must be the prime ingredients, and an ACL Voucher of £10.00 will be awarded to each Member whose Law is quilled onto the Scroll.

INGRID'S BACK!

Available from Level 9 Computing for a variety of micros (see page 39 for details).

* THE KEEPER OF THE SCROLL's Review: This adventure is the sequel to GNOME RANGER (winner of the 1987 Golden Chalice Award), and if you enjoyed the previous adventures of Ingrid, then you are going to love her latest tribulations!

This is a 3-part adventure, and follows Ingrid Bottomlow's attempt to foil Jasper Quickbuck's plan to steamroll the gnome-belt to make room for a yuppie housing scheme. In Part 1, Ingrid must collect signatures for a petition from the irate villagers, whilst in Part 2 Ingrid must protect Gnettlefield Farm (where she and her family live) from the actual steamroller which has already destroyed the neighbouring villages in Dribble Valley. In the final part, Ingrid disguises herself as a maid and infiltrates Jasper Quickbuck's Manor in order to find a permanent way of getting rid of him.

If I had to describe this game in one word, I would use "hilarious". If I could choose two words, then I would add "brilliant" to the former epithet. INGRID'S BACK is simply very, very funny. True, it may not be everybody's sense of humour, which you will instantly either love or hate. The game is a huge spoof tempered by an underlying, dry sense of fun which puts the adventure in a class of its own. The interaction between the many characters (Ingrid's own family, villagers, outsiders) is truly remarkable and I think that all possible permutations of interaction between the characters have been catered for.

The accent is more on entertainment than on the puzzle aspect of the game. For example, it is well worth it to enter the Green Gnome Inn, type WAIT 50, and then sit back and enjoy the hilarious spectacle developing on your screen. Alternatively, try to follow the various characters as they attend to their daily business. For all this, though, there are several good puzzles (which get progressively more difficult in the later parts), and brain power and logical thinking are definitely required to complete the game.

Technically, it is difficult to fault the game as it is quite obvious that a lot of time and effort have been put into it. The usual high level commands (GOTO, RUN TO, FIND, UNDO, etc...) make life easier for the player, and the RAM SAVE/LOAD facility is present on the versions of the larger micros. Level 9's new-style graphics (ST version) are quite pretty, although I soon switched them off to concentrate on the text.

Incidentally, do not dismiss the accompanying novella, written by Peter McBride. It is very funny on its own and provides useful background information to the adventure.

All in all, Level 9 have produced a remarkable adventure. Extremely funny, highly polished, and utterly entertaining. Well done!

ATMOSPHERE: 18/20 - VOCABULARY: 17/20 - GRAPHICS: 17/20

PSR: 19/20.

TALENT REWARDED! *****

Have you completed an entire adventure game? After the frustration and enjoyment of doing so, why not get some reward for your efforts? Send us a complete step-by-step solution (including map) of ANY adventure game which you have completed. Upon receipt and assessment, we shall give you an Adventure Credit ranging from 1 to 10 (with a coefficient factor from 1 to 3). Credits will be given on EVERY complete adventure game received, and will be awarded on the following basis:

- The COMPLETE solution to the game must not have been published in previous Member's Dossiers.
- Clarity of the map.
- Elegant solutions (shortest possible routes, simple but effective use of input commands, etc...).
- Difficulty of the game.

We shall keep a running total of all Credits given to Members, and the current Top 5 will be published in every issue. Every six months, prizes will be allocated as follows:

* 1st prize: £50.00

* 2nd prize: £25.00

* 3rd prize: £15.00

* 4th prize: £10.00

* 5th prize: £ 5.00

It will not matter whether or not we already have the solution to the games in our offices (the odds are that we will!). The more games you send in, the more chances you have!

Position as at 28.10.88

=====

1st Prize: Mr M. Balvers, Kaatsheuvel, The Netherlands....900 Credits
2nd Prize: Mrs A.S. Sloman, Brighton.....348 Credits
3rd Prize: Mr A. Mac-Gregor, Basingstoke.....335 Credits
4th Prize: Mrs J. Pancott, Weymouth.....247 Credits
5th Prize: Mrs S. Parry, London.....234 Credits

This competition closes on 23.12.88. (Entries received after this date will qualify for our next competition).

* IMPORTANT: The Top 5 winners will be announced in MDs Nos 37-38.

Prizes will be awarded to them, and their score will revert to zero.

Those Members who did not qualify for the prizes (i.e. placed from 6th downwards) WILL KEEP THEIR RUNNING TOTAL INTACT for the following competition.

TOP OF THE GAMES

(The best-selling adventures - September/October 1988)

No 1 (1) TIME & MAGIK (Mandarin Software/Level 9 Computing)
No 2 (-) LEGEND OF THE SWORD (Rainbird Software)
No 3 (6) CORRUPTION (Rainbird Software/Magnetic Scrolls)
No 4 (5) GNOME RANGER (Level 9 Computing)
No 5 (9) BEYOND ZORK (Infocom)

* KEITH CAMPBELL'S PAGES.

So far, 1988 has been a strange year for adventures, and one that gives little cause for pleasure amongst adventure players.

All but gone are the good quality cassette adventures. Remember those classics from Adventure Soft? GREMLINS, ROBIN OF SHERWOOD, REBEL PLANET, and KAYLETH, are but a few. Brian Howarth and Scott Adams have completely disappeared from the scene. Melbourne House, now part of the Mastertronic empire, brings us no further spoof like those golden oldies HAMPSTEAD, TERRORMOLINOS, and DODGEY GEEZERS. We seem to have been left, this year, with one sole horror offering, WOLFMAN, from Rod Pike and CRL, a few budget titles of middling to awful quality, and a few reasonable home brews.

That is not to mention MINDFIGHTER, basically a disk game, but available in cassette versions, from Mediagenic and Fergus. But I'm afraid I found that game drab and dull. Sorry Fergus, but where have your happy-go-lucky spoof sagas gone? Will we ever see the like of BORED and BOGGIT again?

And what is happening on the disk front? Last year, by September, we had got to grips with no less than six titles from Infocom. As I write this, in early August, I have so far seen only three - BEYOND ZORK, BORDER ZONE, and SHERLOCK. Level 9 have produced nothing new to date (I consider them to be a disk producer these days, happily offering cassette versions) although by the time you read this article, two of their adventures should be out. But one of these is GNOME RANGER II, and I understand a GNOME RANGER III is planned! Can we really take that much GNOME RANGER, I wonder? Where are the bright new ideas to inspire us?

Adventure with a different look, as implemented by Sierra in the KINGS QUEST type format, and by Mindscape in UNINVITED style, have been welcome, but hardly compensate for the lack of real meaty textual stuff.

Worse still, is the outlook on the Infocom front. Despite Infocom games now potentially opening up to thousands more computer owners, due to the increasing ownership of 16-bit (disk) computers, Mediagenic (formerly called Activision) have seen fit to 'delist' the majority of Infocom's pre-87 titles, including the ST and Amiga versions.

My campaign against this, after being tipped off by the cunningly obsequious Mueller, was through Campbell's Comment in "Commodore User", and brought an angry denial from Rod Cousens over the phone. However, when the fuss had died down, he admitted to me that it was true, and was due to market considerations. But that isn't the end of the story! Would you believe that Mediagenic's current policy is to not even release NEW titles for those two machines! If you haven't a CBM64 or IBM PC, it seems, Infocom's adventures will no longer be available to you, with the possible exception of any new Infocom Plus games that might come along.

.../...

The only shining stars this year have been adventure houses associated with Rainbird Software. Silicon Soft have introduced an exciting new adventure format in LEGEND OF THE SWORD, whilst Magnetic Scrolls have come up with no less than three new adventures so far, all to their usual high quality. Now how do Rainbird manage to eke out a living releasing these top quality games on such loss-making machines as ST and Amiga? Perhaps they know a thing or two about marketing that Mediagenic have yet to learn? (It's certain they know infinitely more than Mediagenic about adventures).

Oh, by the way, did I hear you query the figure 'three' for Magnetic Scrolls 88 releases? Well, there was JINXTER, CORRUPTION, and FISH of course. FISH may be out by the time you read this - after the underling Mueller's annual two-months-long skive. It's got me hooked at the moment - I'm doing swimmingly well, and being jostled in Battersea tube station by the rush hour crowds of sardines and pilchards! I suppose you're feeling decidedly green about the gills, reading this? Well, to find out more, you'll have to read the full review in the October issue of "Computer and Video-Games", which was out in mid-September! Yes, that's an outright plug, Mueller, and there's nothing you can do about it from a sun-drenched Greek island, is there? Hope you forgot your suntan cream!

KEITH CAMPBELL. ACL PRESIDENT-ELECT.

THE INHERITANCE.

Available from Infogrames on tape for the Spectrum 48, Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC and MSX (£9.95 each), and on disk for the Commodore 64 and Amstrad CPC (£14.95 each).

* THE SCOURGE's Review: Like Gaul, this game is in 3 parts. The objective is to leave your apartment block, get on a plane to Las Vegas and win a million dollars in one night at the casinos - thus fulfilling the terms of your Aunt's will.

Part 1 consists of matching the objects found in your room with the various other inhabitants who detain you until you have returned what you borrowed from them. No clue is given about who wants what and there is a time limit.

Should you reach Part 2 you must board the correct plane, having acquired the correct artefacts to ensure an uninterrupted journey - then you must board the correct bus at the airport in Las Vegas. Again, no clue is given. It is all trial and error and as no SAVE routine is offered it gets very tedious indeed.

Part 3 is your reward for enduring the first two; this is a gambling routine comprising Fruit Machines, Boule and Craps. My favourite are the Fruit Machines.

The instructions give virtually no information on gameplay, thus avoiding problems of mistranslation, whilst the perils incumbent on not having a computer with a French accent are circumvented by having no text-input whatsoever. Control is by cursor-keys or joystick - but what happens when you press fire is left for you to work out (if you can). Not an "adventure".

ATMOSPHERE: 6/20 - VOCABULARY: N/A - GRAPHICS: 12/20

PSR: 7/20.

SCOTT ADAMS' SCOOPS.

Available from AdventureSoft for the Spectrum 48, Commodore 16, Commodore 64, Atari XL/XE, BBC and Electron (£9.99 each).

* THE GRAND ELF's Review: This is a compilation of four adventures from the pen of He Who Started It All. Three of them (Pirate Adventure, Voodoo Castle and Strange Odyssey) are among the first ever available commercially, while the fourth, Buckaroo Bonzai, is a new story based on the film of the same name.

I suppose most readers will know of the older adventures, even if they haven't played them, and they've been held in high esteem for many years. I can recommend Pirate as an excellent practice ground for beginners - Castle is a Dracula story and relies quite a bit on clock-watching, while Odyssey is one of the first space adventures and fairly complex.

The story of Buckaroo concerns pop groups and science fiction (it says here), though I haven't seen the film and don't know what the objectives are.

The adventures are text-only, boasting a nice black character set on a stark white background. Input is processed extremely quickly, though this is partly because the vocabulary is extremely small. Location descriptions are stripped down to bare necessities and action is concentrated on object manipulation. Of these there are plenty, and in Buckaroo, the purpose of most of the objects is fairly obvious. So it's just a case of moving to and fro collecting and using each object to progress. As a consequence, the atmosphere lies solely in the puzzling.

The lack of those facilities which we take for granted nowadays (RAM Save/Load etc) belies the antiquity of the programs (even the new one), and the overall "feel" of the programs brings back those wonderful old days of 16K programs, with plenty of keys to go with all the locked safes and padlocks, heavy hints as to what each object is doing in the story, and plenty of sudden death. The responses of the computer to your input are quite friendly, though limited - for the most part, the adventures have been honed over the years so that spelling mistakes are not a problem, though Buckaroo confuses "they're" and "their".

Three of these are classics and a spot of adventuring history - at the price, they're a steal. The new one seems to be fairly undemanding, and should be looked upon as a bonus offering.

ATMOSPHERE: 7/20 - VOCABULARY: 10/20 - GRAPHICS: N/A

PSR: 15/20.

* GETTING STARTED (Buckaroo): 38-218.

"THE UGLY BUG BALL"

Please do contact us with details of ANY bug(s) which you have encountered whilst playing adventures. These can be serious Bugs, funny Bugs, nasty Bugs, but they must be Bugs! Please supply the name of the adventure(s) and the computer version(s) on which they appear. We shall publish details of the most interesting, irritating, or witty bugs, together with the senders' name. Happy hunting!

* ESCAPE FROM PULSAR 7 - Spectrum version. You can use the Larder as a store for all your objects by dropping them in there, since the command TAKE LARDER will add it to your inventory! Whenever you want anything all you have to do is DROP LARDER, GO LARDER and then TAKE <object>. The drawback is that when you leave the Larder you find yourself back in the Galley although I suppose you could use it as a teleport to the Galley (GRAHAM PUGH, Michaleston Super Ely).

D&D/R.P.G. COLUMNIST/REVIEWER WANTED!!!

In view of the increased importance of D&D and R.P.G. titles in the adventuring world, we have decided to start a regular column in the Dossiers covering these games - and we need someone to write it! If you are an experienced player of these types of games, if you own a Commodore 64 with disk-drive (and ideally an Atari ST too), and if you feel that you can contribute to this new column, then please get in touch with us to discuss the details of this exciting development!

THE ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE.

Available from Incentive Software, together with DRAGON'S TOOTH, for the BBC B (£7.95).

* THE SCRIBE'S REVIEW: Called urgently to an Antarctic research station you find that an Alien Life Form is taking over members of the team, transforming them into mutants. Can you destroy the ALF before it possesses everyone? The scenario is a sort of cross between The Thing and Invasion of the Body Snatchers. The Alien is a clever mixture of text/graphic adventure and strategy game. Descriptions are minimal but all 30 locations are well illustrated - until the mutants set fire to them! Finding out who's already been taken over, then injuring and killing them is no easy task. Useful objects and information are well hidden around the station so examining and searching everything is vital. Some commands have to be very exact but the game is worth persevering with - although it probably doesn't deserve Incentive's Gold Medallion.

ATMOSPHERE: 10/20 - VOCABULARY: 9/20 - GRAPHICS: 13/20

PSR: 11/20.

* GETTING STARTED: 58 the 270 in the 118 of 248.

SHADOWGATE.

Available from Mirrorsoft on disk for the Atari ST and Amiga (£24.99 each), and for the Apple Macintosh (£26.95).

* SAM's Review: The castle Shadowgate, once a shining fortress, is now an evil ruin in the foul clutches of the dreaded Warlock Lord and his minions. Will you, the last in an ancient line of kings, be able to defeat this fiend before he is able to carry out his ultimate plan - the raising of the titan Behemoth and the destruction of the land?

SHADOWGATE is a mouse-driven graphic adventure in which the graphics really do play a part. Objects and features in a location are usually not described at all in the sparse room descriptions. If the graphics show an object in a location the player can manipulate it by selecting it with his mouse. The graphics (Macintosh) are well drawn and highly detailed. There is also a little animation and some digitised sound effects are thrown in for good measure.

There is no parser as such, instead of typed input the player uses the mouse to point to one of eight possible verbs and the object(s) to which he wishes to apply his actions. So, for example, if you wanted to open a chest you would select the verb OPEN and then click on the picture of the chest. Having only eight verbs may sound very limiting but surprisingly this isn't the case. One reason for this is the use of the ambiguous OPERATE command which can be used to do anything from wearing a helmet to unlocking a door.

The game itself is a little unoriginal and the lack of parser means the puzzles can't be at all complicated, so you might find it too easy. By far the most annoying thing, though, is the number of sudden death traps (You have been crushed by a large rock) in which no warning of impending doom is given to the player - not having a RAM save compounds the annoyance. In all SHADOWGATE is a reasonable game but nothing special - an adventure to play when you're feeling too lazy to type and don't want to stretch your mind too much.

ATMOSPHERE: 11/20 - VOCABULARY: N/A - GRAPHICS: 16/20

PSR: 14/20.

* GETTING STARTED: Take a close look at the 226 in the first location. 148 are 90. Examine the graphics very carefully to reveal hidden objects or exits.

NOMINATIONS FOR ACL PRESIDENT

The ACL President is democratically elected by all Members for a period of one year (renewable), and Members are now invited to send in nominations for the position in 1989. Each Member may submit up to three nominations, and these must reach us by 31.12.88 at the latest. For obvious reasons, the nominees must have a connection to the adventuring world. A 3-way election will then take place (MDs Nos 37-38), and either Keith Campbell (if he is re-elected) or a new President will start his/her term of "office" for 1989. Please do send us your nominations, since the post of ACL President is an important one as representative of all ACL Members on the adventuring scene.

A Starter-Guide to KNIGHT ORC (Part 2).

(By Henry Mueller).

The first feeling upon entering Part 2 of KNIGHT ORC is usually one of dismay. A variety of nasty characters appear to be exclusively intent on ambushing you, killing you, stealing from you and, generally speaking, making life impossibly difficult for you. You will probably spend the first half-an-hour being systematically bashed to death, and running aimlessly around, whilst sardonic comments echo throughout the land about your basic inability to keep hold of your hard-gained possessions for more than 5 minutes. Yet, there are many useful objects to be found (and to be kept!), and 21 life-preserving spells are scattered around the countryside. Learning these spells (which you must either read, see or hear), will provide increased protection against your foes, and will ultimately enable you to gain the knowledge and experience needed to solve the puzzles.

The first spell you will learn is probably the GLOW spell (to be found by reading the inscription near the beginning of the game). CAST GLOW ON ME (or on any carried item to make it luminous, or even at a room!) will enable you to see in dark places. Next, explore the underground passages in the Mountains to the East where you will meet the leader of the Orcs. He is carrying a much-needed Map, but will not give it to you until you provide him with a rat-pie (wait a few turns to be told about that). GOTO RAT-PIE is the next obvious command, and leads to the next puzzle... Why can't you get up the stairs, and who keeps clobbering you? If you WAIT at the bottom of the stairs, the answer will be revealed. Just STEAL then WEAR the HELMET at the appropriate time, then up you go... The Sack to be found in there is essential, as items dropped in it cannot be stolen from you. Trade the Pie for the Map, and you now know most of the important locations of the Land!

Try and follow the roving characters to learn more about them and to gain valuable knowledge. Following the Druid, for instance, will get you the CHARISMA spell - cast this on yourself, and you are already more loved (well, less hated)! The Rainbird is very useful, too. Ask it to tell you about various characters and objects in the game; here again, a wealth of useful information will be provided.

The GROW spell is written on the back of a door (close it first). Cast GROW on the tiny Marrow, and you now have the CURE spell, which you can then cast on yourself (ad infinitum) during fights. Life is definitely looking rosier!

Some spells are wonderfully informative (EMPATHY will tell you what other characters think, LOCATE will inform you where vital objects are, DETECT will assess the magical property of a targeted item), some are defensive (SHIELD will render you virtually invincible), some are offensive (FIREBALL and DEATH are pretty drastic!), others are simply useful.

The key word is EXPERIMENT, and this is probably the most satisfying aspect of the game, as most possibilities/permutations of the spells have been catered for! Cast spells around (as often as you wish or need to), follow people about, and bear in mind that multi-cooperation is needed to solve some of the puzzles.

SUBMITTING ADVENTURES (Part 1)

(By Mike Gerrard)

Now don't get me wrong, I do think "The Quill" is a terrific program, but there are some days when I wish it had never been published - and that the world was GAC-less and PAW-free as well. Those days are when I get more than the usual number of home-grown adventures in the mail, all clamouring for attention, demanding to be loaded and looked at - and some even saying "I'll look forward to seeing my adventure reviewed in the next issue." The next issue, of course, is already down at the printers, and the one after that is probably half-written already, and there's this innocent reader thinking I've been sitting around twiddling my thumbs just waiting for his adventure to come in to fill a glaring great gap on the page. Gaps in the adventure reviews that I do are not something I worry about - and I'm sure that applies to other reviewers as well. Your main worry is deciding what to put in and what you'll have to leave out.

I've already written something about home-grown adventures versus the commercial companies (see MDs Nos 31-32), and how I do try to look at all games of interest, full-price, budget and independent, so I thought it might be of interest to ACL readers, and also of great help to me, if I said a bit more to the adventure-writers among you about what your chances are of getting a review - and how you can increase them. And I'm talking here mainly about Spectrum adventures, as the vast majority of my mail comes from the adventure pages I do in "Your Sinclair", though I think my words of wisdom will also apply no matter where you're submitting your adventures.

For starters, let's just quickly look at the odds against getting reviewed. Each month, I receive on average about 20 or 30 adventures, and at most I've got room to review about six. Sometimes it's less than that, if I want to squeeze in a solution or a map as well. Of those 20 or 30, about half a dozen will be from big or budget software houses, the rest being written at home and sold mail order. Chances are that the professional releases will get a bit more attention, for various reasons. One is that if someone's agreed to publish them, it's already likely that they're better than average... though looking at some of the stuff that gets published, that isn't always the case. I'll also be more inclined to review them for the reasons that Keith Campbell stated recently (never argue with your President!): these are the games you'll see on the shelves of your software shop, from companies that people have already heard of, so more people are going to be interested in these than in something they have to send for mail order from an unfamiliar source. I also endorse Keith's point about reviewing these games even if they're bad, to warn people off - though why he didn't warn them off "Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less" I can't imagine.

.../...

So already, you see, your chances of getting a review are pretty slim, and only the very best of the home-grown adventures will ever get a look-in. You might think that your adventure is great, and that it ought to be reviewed because you've put tons of work into it, but unfortunately for you there are about twenty other people all finishing adventures every month, and they all think the same about their games too!

One thing I can tell you is that it's no good writing to me saying that you're thinking of writing an adventure, and do I like the idea and will I review it? I'm only interested in finished adventures, because until it's finished I've no way of knowing whether it'll be great or grisly, and you may not even finish the game as writing adventures even with a utility like "Paw" is harder than some people think so I'd be wasting my time trying to advise you in advance.

One thing that will guarantee your game not getting more than a glance from me will be if there are bugs, spelling mistakes or grammatical mistakes in the first few locations. I do get lots of games sent where it's obvious the writer can't spell, and whereas you might overlook just the occasional mistake, it's not a very good sign if you see three spelling mistakes on the first screen. And some of the mistakes can be pretty awful, believe me. Get someone who's good at English to check the game for you, if you know you're not so hot yourself. The worst mistake of all was the game where the name of the actual software house was mis-spelled on the loading screen! If you can't spell your own name, what on earth is the rest of the adventure likely to be like?

(To Be Concluded in MDs Nos 37-38)

HAUNTED HOUSE.

Available from Incentive Software, together with NOVA, for the Amstrad CPC (£7.95).

* **OBERONIDES' Review:** This game is the "additional" extra of the package, and has a fairly simple plot. You, a tired old tramp, have been trapped in an old house, and must escape.

Like NOVA, this game wins no prizes for originality. The usual "haunted house" inhabitants are here - the mummy, Dracula, the werewolf, etc. However the puzzles are interesting, and the graphics good. The game has one massive drawback, though: it's the easiest game I've ever played! The adventure can be solved by finishing 3 puzzles, in about 25 moves, and the other puzzles are superfluous. This is bad planning, and severely detracts from your enjoyment of what could be a good game. Recommended for small children and novices only!

ATMOSPHERE: 12/20 - VOCABULARY: 10/20 - GRAPHICS: 13/20

PSR: 5/20.

* **GETTING STARTED:** 45 in the master bedroom. 51-196 to deal with the Mummy.

FEDERATION

(A Mini-Solution by The Inn-Keeper)

Available from C.R.L. for the Spectrum 48 (£8.95), Commodore 64 (tape: £9.95 - disk: £14.95), and Amstrad CPC (tape: £9.95 - disk: £14.95).

Please refer to MDs Nos 33-34 for a review of this adventure.

How to use Mini-Solutions: Each Mini-Solution covers most of the problems and puzzles encountered in a specific adventure. Once you have found the heading that relates to your problem, a clue can be obtained by reading the first section from right to left. The solution to the actual problem is then given in coded form. Please note that, in order not to give too much away, we have printed a few dummy headings, which have nothing to do with that particular adventure!

- * **KEEP GETTING GASSED AND CANNOT BREATHE?** sutarappa gnihtaerb a deen ot gniog er'uoY (Go 102 then 100, then get 236 and 33 it).
- * **CANNOT GET FROM YOUR SHIP TO THE QUANN TULLA?** nottub deruoloc a sserP (Go to the 180 of your ship then 46 the 261-135).
- * **CANNOT OPEN THE CARGO BOX?** yek laiceps a sdeen tI (The 130-169 is at 181-211).
- * **WIRING KILLS YOU IN COMMUNICATION CENTRE?** noitcetorp emos deen uoY (In an 155 is the 202).
- * **CANNOT GET THE CRED CHIP?** ...noitautis ykcits a si sihT (67 the 255 of 81 when confronted by the 243-136).
- * **CRANE STOPS YOU?** pu sgniht gnkcip sekil tI (30 the 214-91 for the crane).
- * **CLEANING ROBOT KILLS YOU?** kaerf htlaeh a s'ti smees tI (42-188 and 126 will 35-15).
- * **DON'T KNOW WHERE TO FIND THE KEYPAD CODE?** X ,ssik a su eviG (In the 266 room there is a 115. 63-7).
- * **CAN'T FIND THE DYNAMITE?** pihs ruoy hcraes (20 your 112).
- * **WHAT IS THE MATTER DISPLACER FOR?** sllems eno siht nokcer I (It just gets you 207 if you 55-7 in 86-231).
- * **CAN'T GET THE GRILLE OPEN?** ?ti t'nsi ,gnitatsurhp luS (72 the 122-225 at the 175).
- * **CAN'T GET PAST THE SHARPSHOT HUNTER?** ecruos thgil a ezeuqs ot deen uoY (49-142).
- * **CAN'T GET THROUGH ANTEROOM NORTH OF WRECKED MESS ROOM?** noitcetorp erom emos raew ot deen uoY (33-164).
- * **NEED A REPLACEMENT TORCH?** tobor-draug eht hcraes (31-152 after you have 207 it).
- * **GET BLOWN UP BY THE DESTRUCTOR CANNON?** nopaew nainozamA na esU (40-251 which is in a 192 in the 172-83-152).
- * **CAN'T SEEM TO BE ABLE TO USE THE BRACELET?** etunim tsal yrev eht litnu tiaW (65-7 once you have 128 the 185).
- * **HOW DO YOU GET THE MULTI-TASK DROID TO WORK?** rewop fo mrof emos sdeen tI (26-95 which is in the 239 of the 145-234).
- * **CAN'T FIND THE COMBINATION TO THE SAFE?** tew teg ot evah 11'uoY (23 the 258 of the 198-166).

.../...

* CAN'T PRIME THE BOMB? ellirg eht tuoba eulc eht eeS (Get the 221-253 150 and 253 will 61-10).

* WHERE SHOULD THE BOMB BE PLACED? !ysion s'ti tub pihs eht fo trap tsekaew eht nI (102 of the 77 of the 239).

* CAN'T GET ON THE DECK OF GUARD CENSORS TO PLANT THE BOMB? yaw lasrevinu a si erehT (The 130-169 is 263).

* CAN'T GET OFF QUANN TULLA WHEN THE BOMB IS PLANTED? yttocS nwod em maeB (Use 133-212 but make sure that you 33-205).

* DYING FROM LACK OF WATER WHEN TELEPORTED? retaw ,retaw (Make sure you 21-183 after the bomb is planted).

* CAN'T FIND ANYTHING IN THE HUT? tsrif ti fo dir teG (43-7-109 then 58 the 160).

* GUARDS ARE KILLING YOU? ?etam thgil a toG (72-120-42-216 but only 13 the 157 first 194 you).

* CAN'T GET PAST THE GUARD AT THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF? hgual mih ekaM (You must 55 a 209 from a 97).

* THE CANNISTER FREEZES YOUR HANDS? noitcetorp dnah emos deen uoY (33 the 154 from an 88-245).

* CANNOT GET THE POWER PAK OUT OF THE CANNISTER ezeerf ton lliw ti erehw noitacol eno si erehT (56-17 the power pak in the 139 of 2-241).

* CANNOT SWIM ANYWHERE WHEN ON THE LAKE? snoitcerid eht LLA esU (36-109).

BARD'S TALE II: THE DESTINY KNIGHT.

Available from Electronic Arts on disk for the Commodore 64 (£16.95), and Amiga & PC (£24.95 each) - other versions to follow.

* PATHFINDER's Review: After rescuing the town of Skara Brae from the evil Mangar, the bard had sought a quiet life of drinking, gambling and lechery, paid for by his art. His name was renowned throughout the Realm, and the story of his party's valour was legend. So when another evil Archmage appears, Saradon the Good, wizard of fame, has little hesitation in asking the bard to sort things out.

The Destiny Wand had united the people of the Realm for 700 years, ensuring a strong nation immune from attacks. But Lagoth Zanta has stolen the Wand, breaking it into seven pieces and placing each segment within a Snare of Death deep within a dungeon. The bard must reforge the wand, thus uniting the armies of the Realm against the forces of Lestradae that are ravaging the kingdom.

Characters from BARD'S TALE I can be used in this RPG, but a starter dungeon is included allowing those who have not played the original game to build up a strong party. Magic users are much more important in the new game, as the beasties trying to stop you are more powerful and more numerous. New spells are included for the existing character classes and a completely new class, the Archmage, has been created. Some of the spells are pretty odd, such as "Summon Herb" which creates a troll-like magic-user whose most frequent spell is "Summon Herb"!

If you enjoyed BARD'S TALE I, you'll like the sequel. It's like meeting an old friend again.

ATMOSPHERE: 15/20 - VOCABULARY: N/A - GRAPHICS: 13/20

PSR: 17/20.

* TONY BRIDGE'S PAGES. (Part 1).

In the Music Business, there are two Golden Axioms:

1: The cheque's in the post
and 2: The packaging is 70% of the battle.

The second holds just as true in the Software Business (I don't know about No 1!).

Software companies in the UK started selling adventures with the very minimum of packaging - I suppose they thought it wasn't worth getting too excited over a 16K adventure, which is all we poor tape-users could look forward to then. In the States, of course, cassette-based systems were a non-starter, so lucky adventurers there could get lost in screen after screen of scene-setting and complex puzzles galore.

The very first ZX Microfair sticks in my memory mainly because it was there that I saw the first Artic adventures. Adventure A was followed by Adventure B, then - yup, you guessed - Adventure C, and the series continued inexorably to the logical but curtailed conclusion of Adventure E (did F make an appearance, I can't remember!). Somewhere along the way they all acquired names ("Espionage Island", "Planet of Death", mentioned in MD No 1, "Inca Curse", "Golden Apple" and "Ship of Doom" in no particular order) as well as a brief notoriety. One of the first "Shock Horror look what these computer games are doing to our youth they should be banned" stories surfaced when someone reported to their MP that their little Johnnie was doing rude things to a Native Woman in an Artic adventure.

These Artic adventures came surrounded by the full glory of a cassette case, and it wasn't until "Golden Apple" that colour was featured in the artwork (the first four stories actually had no artwork until they were re-packaged some years later for a new generation of players). It wasn't only the packaging that was minimalist; the longest location description was something like "You are in a cave", which served its purpose I suppose, but didn't do much for the atmosphere. Screen layout was black text on a white background and absolutely no frills like coloured highlights. In those far-off days, adventurers were interested mostly in puzzles, and those posed by the Artic team were an infuriating blend of the easy, the illogical and the mind-numbingly difficult (I still haven't solved them all!) - the stories, too, were rather basic and not much more than an excuse for a few puzzles. It wasn't until "Golden Apple" that some semblance of a logical and progressive storyline was introduced.

But one thing they all had in common - they were faster than Florence Griffith-Joyner! Until then, we poor cassette users had grown accustomed, thanks to good old Basic programing, to things taking a much more leisurely progress but now we could move around the landscape as fast as we could type. Machine code was the magical ingredient of course and I really must sit down with all those books one day and learn the darned thing!

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I still remember (with absolute astonishment now; however did I find the time?) poring over all the magazines for the really long type-ins. This was before the days of checksums and the other sissy typing aids - the crowning achievement of my masochism was to send off for the listing of a machine-code "Dungeons, Monsters and Treasures"-type game. It arrived on a thick bundle of pages containing several thousand minute lines of data, mostly in the form of "FF 04 00 03.....". It took me weeks to type all this in to my poor old ZX81 (with the customary RAMPack crash at regular intervals) and of course it didn't work. The author, I must say, was very patient with me, and eventually we agreed that the best thing was for him to send me a copy of the game on cassette - naturally that didn't load either! If anyone ever managed to get "Shelob's Lair" to work, or has seen a running copy in a museum somewhere, please let me know what it is like - the documentation promised wonders beyond compare. It did one thing for me, though, it cured me forever of typing in listings!

Meanwhile, back in the commercial world, Level 9 were, I believe, the first software house (bedroom might be more accurate at this stage...) to include anything more than the cassette in their packaging, which was in the form of a large plastic freezer-bag. The size of this allowed them to include a small four-page booklet with a pretty drawing or two - this was "Documentation".

(To Be Concluded in MDs Nos 37-38).

CLOUD 99.

Available by mail-order only from Marlin Games, 19 Briar Close, Nailsea, Bristol, BS19 1QG, for the Spectrum 48/128 (£2.95).

* Mr McNORRIS' Review: That naughty Jack Frost is running amok in the magical world of Cloud 99, causing havoc with the weather. You, wakened from a deep sleep, are called on to sort out Jack good and proper - and all before dawn, too! Sounds like you should have had that third Weetabix after all! Not to worry, however, as this is only a light-hearted, home-grown, PAW'ed game from Marlin - and for a budget game it's pretty good too!

For your cash you get TWO versions. The 48K version is, as you might expect, standard PAW presentation with no graphics. The 128K version gives you more of the same but with a little extra sparkle, though, and graphics, a RAMSAVE/LOAD facility, as well as a few Help messages. The graphics, although simple, give you something to stare at whilst you ponder the thought-provoking problems in the game. The extra descriptions work well too, adding to the atmosphere.

The game never takes itself TOO seriously - for example, how do you cure the cockerel who can only go "COCK A DOO"? Simple, you give him the scrap of paper with the doodles on it! Get it? Well, if you don't, perhaps this game is not for you. Some adventurers may find the responses and situations a little infantile. Be prepared to spend time finding the right words as the game can be a little, er, fussy! However, I liked the game (especially the 128K version) and despite its few shortcomings I am prepared to say so. So there.

ATMOSPHERE: 12/20 - VOCABULARY: 9/20 - GRAPHICS: 12/20

PSR: 13/20.

SOFTWARE CHRISTMAS CRACKER FROM ACL!

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Here is a Christmas treat if you order software from us: We shall send you a £1.00 ACL Credit Voucher for EVERY £20 worth of software that you order from us! To qualify, we must receive your order by 31.12.88 at the latest. That is all! And with 10 pages of software in this issue, there are over 600 titles/versions to choose from!

DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE.

Available from The Essential Myth for the Spectrum 48 (£7.95), Spectrum 128 (£9.95), and Spectrum +3 (disk: £12.95).

* PANDORA's Review: "I enter the hall; I flatter myself quite the pleasantest room in London! It is large and comfortable, paved with flags, warmed (after the fashion of a country house) by a bright, open fire, and furnished with costly cabinets of oak, which I have kept polished to the highest shine. The tall drapes to the south of the room are drawn back, but admit little light; the square outside is flooded with premature twilight, and the louring sky gives an infinitely welcoming aspect to the homely aroma of roasting apple wood inside."

The only way in which I can convey the extraordinary quality of this adventure is by quoting the paragraph above, which is typical of the vivid location descriptions throughout. These frequently change according to the time of the day and the mood of the observer, so you have to be prepared for a great deal of careful reading.

The three-part adventure uses a password system, and clings faithfully to R.L. Stevenson's original chilling tale of the respectable doctor and his monstrous alter ego. In your role as Dr Jekyll you begin the adventure on the verge of completing the experiment which will lead you towards your final terrible nightmare.

At times, the Gothic character set did prove a little difficult to read, leaving me with a lasting impression that Hyde must have been short-sighted! Occasional excellent graphics add to the atmosphere, although there are less of these towards the end of the game. The transformation sequence at the end of part one is brilliant.

Part three is extremely difficult, verging on the impossible. At times your success depends on speed, and the slightest hesitation brings disaster. Even using the solution I still had great difficulty in finishing it. I did eventually succeed, even if the air was blue for a while, but don't say you weren't warned!

Highly challenging, absorbing and extremely addictive, it is in a class of its own. For style and atmosphere I've not seen a game to beat it.

ATMOSPHERE: 19/20 - VOCABULARY: 15/20 - GRAPHICS: 13/20

PSR: 18/20.

* GETTING STARTED: 53 yourself a 259 before 75-4-173.

Please note that, owing to the Christmas and New Year holidays, our offices will be closed from 21.12.88 to 3.01.89 (both dates inclusive). NB: Software orders will still be processed during that period.

ADVENTURE QUEST (Part 5 - Final Part)

The item in question is the 68; 30 it when you are cold. Naturally, do not forget to pick up the 229 in the same location!

Having collected these two items, you will now have to deal with some Orcs chasing you across the Moors. How to get rid of them? (Hint: 35-197 they cannot 52 you. Solution: 35-109 from the 174 where you 182 the 68).

The way forward from the Moors is Southerly. Find the Path (from the Tiny Ledge: South four times, then East). Carry on down the Path until you reach a Circle of Stones. How to deal with the Ghosts? (Hint: Use an 161 already 208. Solution: 30-68). The way South is a dead-end, so go East instead twice until you end up lost in a Marsh. The Marsh will need to be explored as a valuable Mist-Stone is hidden in its midst, but you are not properly equipped as yet (as you will discover to your peril if you explore the Easterly locations). Proceed South all the way until you stand outside the door of a House, then go IN. South will take you into the Hall of the House, but how to deal with the Vampire? (Hint: Use the 249 method. Hint: 93. Solution: 24 the 215 (before you see the Vampire) which is in fact a 93!). Go Up into a High Room where you will find some Boots. Return to the Marsh as you are now ready to explore it. Three locations to the East of where you originally turned South, you will find the Mist-Stone. You will have to deal with two problems in the Marsh:

- 1) How to deal with the Skeletal Hand? (Hint: 65 something 268. Solution: 35-127 (with the 203)).
- 2) How do you avoid dying in the Quicksand? (Hint: 219. Solution: 33-137).

The way out of the Marsh is (from the Mist-Stone): 106-106-104-106 then 104 all the way. Return to the High Room in the house and THROW <ITEM> in order to move them forward (Star-Stone and the Sun-Stone). Go Out onto a Small Ledge, collect your valuables, then go South until you reach a Ramp. Problems with a Face along the way? (Hint: 254 it. Solution: 30-163 to 254 it). Go Down the two ramps, then Up to stand just below the Door of Rock (collect any transported items on the way).

At this stage, make sure that you are carrying the four Stones and the Medallion. The Tower has four Doors, and each one has to be opened by inserting the correct Stone. Go Up after you have opened a Door (one-way only!). The correct combination is: Rock Door (89), Gold Door (252), Silver Door (129), and Glass Door (99). As you reach the Throne Room, you are confronted by the Demon Lord himself! (Hint: 65-199. Solution: 28-171). Go North to a crossing of passages, then carry on Westwards. Oh no, more Orcs! How to deal with them? (Hint: 37-151. Solution: There is an 144 which is 104 then 102 from the crossways between passages - 37-16-7). The Tower is now yours to explore, so return to the East/West passage, then carry on North through a corridor and a passage until you reach the top of the stairway. From now on, it is Down all the way until the final confrontation with the Demon Lord! How to deal with him? (Hint: 76. Solution: Go 100 into the 134 making sure the 158 is 187 you. WELL DONE!!!

ACL BINDERS

Our specially designed binders will keep your Member's Dossiers in mint condition and will allow easy reference to your collection.

Features:

- * Elegant deep green colour, with the Club's logo and name embossed in luxurious gold lettering on both the front cover and spine.
- * Volume reference boxed on the spine to individualise each binder (set of numbered gold stickers provided with each one).
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Two different kinds of binders have been produced (although they are similar in appearance to blend into one single collection):

The ring-binder will hold up to 12 single Dossiers (of the format up to MD No 20 inclusive, i.e. corner-stapled).

The strip-binder will hold 6 double Dossiers (of the new design style which started with MDs 21-22 onwards, i.e. hard cover and centre-stapled).

Price: U.K.....: £5.95 per binder
 Europe (Air Mail only).....: £7.45 per binder
 Rest of World (Air Mail only): £8.45 per binder
 (Please specify ring-binder or strip-binder when ordering)

BACK ISSUES OF MEMBER'S DOSSIERS

We believe that your Member's Dossiers (MDs) will build up to form an invaluable work of reference, which you will be able to consult time after time. Since MD No 1 was published in April 1985, many topics have been covered:

- * Reviews of 226 adventures and complete solutions to 28 adventures
- * In-depth series of popular adventures
- * Interviews, Guest-Writers, Useful Addresses, Hints 'n' Tips
- * Basic Adventuring, Charts, Golden Chalice Awards, etc...

Back issues of Member's Dossiers are available as follows:

Price: U.K.....: £1.50 per Dossier
 Outside U.K. (Surface Mail)...: £1.80 per Dossier

MDs Nos 5-6, 11-12, 17-18, and from 21 onwards (e.g. 21-22, 23-24, 25-26, etc...) are Double Issues, and count as TWO DOSSIERS EACH.

- * **SAVE MONEY!!!** 7 - 12 Dossiers: Deduct 15% from your total.
 13 - 18 Dossiers: Deduct 20% from your total.
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* **SAVE EVEN MORE MONEY!!!** Order 25 Dossiers or more, and deduct 30% from your total. For instance, the COMPLETE COLLECTION (MDs Nos 1 to 34) will cost: £35.70 for U.K. Members, or £42.84 for non-U.K. Members.

HELP WANTED!!! *****

PLEA TO ALL ADVENTURERS: Please do contact us if you can assist us (even partially) with any problems mentioned on this page. Not only will you ensure that Adventurers may proceed with their games but, one day, you may well have to rely on other fellow Adventurers helping you!

In this issue, we should like to thank particularly Marco Andreoli for his most useful contributions.

- * **URGENT:** We require solutions (or comprehensive playing tips) on the following three titles: SHADOWGATE, THE UNINVITED and ARAZOHS TOMB. All help will be gratefully received.
- * Carsten Ekstrand is unable to enter the spaceship in QOR, and cannot visit some rooms in the mothership because of some blocking beams.
- * John Vincent is utterly stuck in VILLAGE OF THE LOST SOULS (and so are we!). Can any Member oblige?
- * Eileen Worth cannot get started at all on the BBC version of LOST IN SPACE. What are the initial moves?

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL OFFER!!!

Silica Shop and ACL are very pleased to announce an exciting special deal, exclusive to ACL Members: Any Member purchasing an Atari 520 ST-FM from Silica Shop will get a 10% discount off the RRP!

The Atari 520 ST-FM is a powerful 16-bit micro, and has a built-in double-sided disk drive. Boasting a generous 512K RAM, the FM version can be plugged straight-away into a T.V. set (lead included). Other features include a 95-key keyboard, MIDI interface, GEM operating system, mouse controller, serial and parallel interfaces, and many more!

Members have the choice between two special offers:

- * **OFFER No 1:** The Atari 520 ST-FM which retails at £299.00 (£269.10 to ACL MEMBERS).
- * **OFFER NO 2:** The "super-pack" comprising of the Atari 520 ST-FM and 22 software titles (worth £450.00 alone) which retails at £399.00 (£359.10 to ACL MEMBERS).

In both cases, Silica Shop will throw in Superbase Personal (database), 1st Word (word-processing), Neochrome (graphics package), and a mouse-mat, as Christmas gifts to ACL Members!

In order to take advantage of this very special offer, contact Peter Brailsford at Silica Shop on 01-300 3399 (ext. 306), or at "Silica Shop", SDL, Unit 10, Ruxley Corner Industrial Estate, Sidcup-By-Pass, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 5SS. VISA and ACCESS cards are accepted. Only ACL Members with a valid subscription are eligible for this offer which will close on 31.01.89.

I have not intentionally abandoned my Spectrum but there has been little to entice me away from my ST and I have been guilty of the even more heinous crime of virtually abandoning Adventure (apart from some play-testing and assessments) for less brain-taxing pursuits... such as lawn-mowing and strategy games (hereby alienating vast hordes of strategic-lawn-mowers!).

Furthermore, it seems that I am not alone in discovering that after many weeks of playing DUNGEON MASTER, it is incredibly hard to settle down to a text adventure.

I have tried, honestly! Perhaps my choice of subject was unfortunate... I bought what I thought was a 2-part adventure for the Spectrum called S.T.I. (by Bug-Byte) - at least the blurb which rambles through the introductory scenario with varying degrees of near-literacy made sufficient references to Parts 1 & 2 to fool me. Apart from the fact that Part 1 is AWFUL (managing to make a PAWED game appear hot off the Series A Quill) as far as I know, Part 2 doesn't exist - 'Marketing'?

A certain degree of difference of opinion appears to surround MINDFIGHTER - one usually-reliable-reviewer hails this as heralding the dawn of a Golden Age in Adventure while other, equally discerning, sources suggest that it is a somewhat less deserving effort. As I received my Spectrum version as a gift from the author(s), I haven't dared to load it yet!

On the positive side, my Spectrum has undergone a face-lift since I was given a couple of reject Saga keyboards whose faults appear to have been more in the eyes of the rejecters than in fact - having fitted my 48 into one, can anyone tell me how to fit my Sinclair 128 into the other? - without using a hammer!

Unfortunately, since I wrote at the beginning of the year about what wonderful hopes I had for Smart Egg Software, I haven't heard a thing from them. This is a shame as they displayed genuine talent with SERF'S TALE and RIGEL'S REVENGE and I looked forward to seeing what they could produce from their own original ideas. (SERF'S TALE was, of course, a rewrite of COLOSSAL and RIGEL was written from a storyline commissioned by Mastertronic). Ah well! Perhaps if we continue to wait patiently our various expectations may be rewarded?! I have heard that RIGEL'S REVENGE is to be converted to the ST - which I regard as utterly ridiculous! At £1.99 this was marvelous value (Amstrad excepted!) but to rate the sort of prices which ST games command it will need a bit more than "enhancement"!

Turning to Atari awhile, can anyone tell me how to stop hordes of Gauls suddenly appearing from nowhere in ANNALS OF ROME? I do enjoy this game but my facility for wiping Rome off the map of Europe is prodigious! - the Celts win!

However, I have three adventures to comment on - two are games

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#24
and one is very real life concerning the problem of how to convince a mail-order company that you have not received the goods which they say they have sent? Yes, I know I should have listened to the wisdom of my own advice and ordered from ACL!!!!

Both the games are from Rainbird; viz. CORRUPTION by Ms. Scrolls emporium and LEGEND OF THE SWORD by Silicon Soft.

There is an excellent computer shop in Guildford in which I spend more time chatting than money and the few occasions that I buy a game there cause great comment and even rejoicing. In a fit of conscience, the other day, I bought CORRUPTION. The parser seems to have regressed since THE PAWN, an achievement which I hardly thought possible - it's complex but utterly thick... you know, the old UNLOCK DOOR - What with? Which key? etc. AND you can't POT any PLANTS or whatever in this game! The documentation consists of a pile of un-numbered Filo-fax-type pages (what used to be called 'Loose-leaf diaries', as carried by vicars before the Yuppies got at them). Mine are held together by a bit of string - I am surprised that Rainbird have missed the marketing ploy of offering suitable binders at a 'special discount'. At a score of 60, I am fed up with the thing - I await with eager anticipation the glowing reviews which will prove me wrong yet again!

The other game is different matter altogether. After a somewhat less than enthusiastic start, I found myself drawn into LEGEND OF THE SWORD and, although it is not my place to review this game for ACL, I was sufficiently impressed to find out more about Silicon Soft. A bit of detective work turned up a phone number... and a bit of help with the game!

LEGEND is Silicon Soft's first game, took 2 years to complete, is written in C and has 230 locations. The program occupies 95K, the 'cameo graphics' take 170K and a further 70K for the General Commands, so the disk is accessed almost constantly but the type-ahead facility renders the interruption negligible.

The system was developed by Colin Mongardy, a professional programmer, Carl Buckingham devoted himself full-time to the game-play/text and Eugene Messina is responsible for the mapping. Where the game frays around the edges is the result of the usual sloppy play-testing by Rainbird but this is mainly confined to parser-tripping - even so this parser knocks Ms. Scrolls' into a frothy heap. Although I found two or three true bugs, these neither crashed the game nor spoiled my enjoyment of finishing it.

A sequel is under development, called THE FINAL BATTLE, which is scheduled for release in the New Year. While this is initially a 16-bit game, it is possible that a trimmed version may be available for the 8-bit machines. To my mind, this is the way that games should go, rather than 8-bit games masquerading as 16-bit via the addition of digitised sound and graphics to take up the slack memory. If LEGEND was available as a text-only for the Spectrum it would wipe the floor with anything else around!

BASIC ADVENTURING (Part 8)

MAZES for Beginners by Neil Shipman (Part 1)

#25

Do you throw up your hands in horror when you find yourself in a maze? Do you blunder around for ages without getting anywhere until you're so frustrated that you hit Break and consign another adventure, unfinished, to the back of the cupboard? Well, with a bit of patience and logical mapping, it's possible to find your way through the most convoluted maze. Mapping is usually done by dropping objects to identify locations which all appear the same and we'll look at a simple method of doing this in a minute. But first, let's consider whether mapping is necessary at all.

You may already have been given a route through the maze either as straightforward directions - now what was written on that old scroll you dropped ages ago? - or in the form of a clue. For example, "NEW CONSTRUCTION AHEAD" could indicate that simply going North, East, West would take you safely through! In the maze itself EXAMINE everything in the location description as well as the ground, floor, walls, ceiling and roof - even if they're not mentioned. SEARCHING may reveal something that EXAMINE didn't, and FEELING around, especially in the dark, could produce some surprises! Also, if you've got a lamp switched on then try turning it off - a luminous clue might be revealed. Any sound or odour should prompt you to LISTEN or SMELL and, if it's quiet, you might find that SHOUTING produces an echoing call from a particular direction. Perhaps one of the objects you've already found will help you negotiate the maze. A compass is the obvious one but how about looking through a telescope, wearing infra-red goggles or dropping and following a creature or robot? And if there's a breeze why not try lighting a match to see where the smoke goes?

If none of these ideas work and you have to map the maze by dropping objects, first make sure you're carrying as much as you can. Let's say you have an axe, a bottle, some matches and a shovel - and for simplicity's sake we'll assume only 4 compass directions and 4 maze locations. Draw up a table with directions across the top and numbers down the side, leaving room against each number to write in the name of an object. Enter the maze and in the first location drop the Axe and write Axe against number 1. You should now have something like Table 1 below. Going North you can still see the axe so you haven't moved and can write 1 under N. East takes you to another location so write 2 under E, drop the bottle and write Bottle against number 2. North from there takes you to further location so write 3 under N, drop the matches and write Matches against number 3. North from 3 takes you back to the bottle (2) then East from 2 takes you to the matches again (3). Going East from 3 you can still see the matches (3) but South from 3 takes you to the bottle (2). South from 2 gets you killed so mark this with an X. Your "map" now looks like Table 2.

Table 1					Table 2				
LOCATION	N	E	S	W	LOCATION	N	E	S	W
1 Axe					1 Axe	1	2		
2					2 Bottle	3	3	X	
3					3 Matches	2	3	2	
4					4				

(To Be Concluded in MDs Nos 37-38).

We provide a facility for Members to Buy, Sell or Swap computer-related products. Please write to us with details of the Hardware or Software items (originals only) which you wish to trade. Details will appear in one issue only, so please let us know if you want them to be re-included in subsequent Dossiers. This service is FREE to all Members. (Please note that we are not responsible nor liable for any consequence arising from this service).

* Ian M. Sealy, 37 Fawsley Leys, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 5QZ, would like to sell: CUSTERD'S QUEST and RIGEL'S REVENGE (£1.00 each), THE HULK, SPIDERMAN, BORED OF THE RINGS, ROBIN OF SHERLOCK, THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE, QUEST FOR THE HOLY JOYSTICK, RETURN OF THE JOYSTICK, and VALKYRIE 17 (£2.50 each), THE COLOUR OF MAGIC, THE BOGGIT, BUGSY, and MINDSHADOW (£3.50 each), GNOME RANGER, REBEL PLANET, KAYLETH, and THE SIDNEY AFFAIR (£6.00 each), LORD OF THE RINGS (no book), SHERLOCK, SILICON DREAMS, and KNIGHT ORC (£8.00 each). Also, these utilities: THE WRITER, THE ARTIST II, and DEVPAC III (£10.00 each). All titles on tape for the SPECTRUM 48.

* John Manuel, 18 Oakmont Drive, Cowplain, Portsmouth, PO8 8TH, would like to sell: ZORK 3, SUSPENDED, ENCHANTER, PLUNDERED HEARTS, THE LURKING HORROR, and STATIONFALL for the ATARI 800XL. Also, NORD & BERT for the AMIGA. All titles on disks at £9.00 each.

* Sylvia Parry, 19 Avening Terrace, London, SW1 4PL, tel: 01-870 4641, would like to sell: CORRUPTION, THE PAWN, JINXTER and GUILD OF THIEVES for the ATARI ST (£50.00 for the lot).

* Graham B. Pugh, 4 Longreach Close, Michaelston-Super-Ely, Cardiff, CF5 4TG, tel: 0222-594546, would like to sell ADVENTURELAND, RED MOON, THE GOLDEN BATON, THE TIME MACHINE, ARROW OF DEATH (1), ARROW OF DEATH (2), and WARLORD (£2.00 each), EMERALD ISLE, BLACK CRYSTAL, and THE HOBBIT (£3.00 each). All titles on tape for the SPECTRUM 48.

* Robert I. Glave, 145 Haydock Garth, Bransholme, Hull, East Yorkshire, HU7 4 LW, tel: 0482-822467 (after 18:30), would like to sell or swap DRACULA and MORDON'S QUEST (£3.00 each), THE MAGICIAN'S BALL (£2.00), JEWELS OF BABYLON, QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL and KOBAYASHI NARU (£1.00 each). All titles on tape for the COMMODORE 64.

ACL REVIEWING TEAM

(In this issue)

THE GRAND ELF.....: Tony Bridge.
THE INN-KEEPER.....: Allan Phillips.
THE KEEPER OF THE SCROLL: ACL Editorial Team.
MR MCNORRIS.....: Simon Husbands.
OBERONIDES.....: Roderick Dunlop.
PANDORA.....: Susan Roseblade.
PATHFINDER.....: Kirk Thomson.
SAM.....: Gavin McGarvie.
THE SCOURGE.....: Hugh T. Walker
THE SCRIBE.....: Neil Shipman.

Multi-User Adventures, by virtue of having lots of real people as players, develop their own social structures within the framework of the game. The subtle inter-relationships that develop between folk who would be complete strangers if they met in real life is one of the more interesting manifestations of a mature MUA, and can indeed become the main reason why some people play such games. I thought in this issue I'd look into this aspect of MUAs more closely.

One thing which must be stated at the outset is that MUAs are living, growing things. New players join in, old ones move on, and the general atmosphere, or "feel" of a game, can change quite radically over time. Sometimes the emphasis is on scoring points, three months later it might be on chatting. One year a game can be dominated by fighting, yet the next three there is hardly any at all. That's just within one game, even between different versions of the same game there can be vast differences in atmosphere.

The overall setting is determined by the game itself, of course. The way certain key issues are treated has a strong bearing on how a game feels to the players. If spells are easy to cast, weapons do phenomenal damage, or you get an enormous number of points for killing someone, then you would expect more fighting than in a game where fleeing was easy, resurrection possible to half original status or more, and little to give you an advantage in combat.

The scenario plays a part - players will be friendlier if they share a goal, eg. escaping from a POW camp - but not as great as one might think. Psychologically, the room descriptions are more important rather than the grand overall setting; they exert a subtle influence on the perception of the game by newcomers, which they carry with them for life. Dank, gloomy, oppressive rooms deep under ground are more likely to give a novice permanent paranoia than are wide, breezy open spaces with plenty of light.

So far, this isn't any different from the case with Single-User Adventures, where the desired atmosphere of a game is determined by the game author and is deliberately programmed with that in mind. Filling the game with nasty monsters that often attack you leaves a different impression at the end than one packed with mind-numbing puzzles. In this way, the adventure is like a book, where part of the attraction is burying yourself in a different time and place, well thought-out and detailed enough to be convincing. With books and SUAs, of course, everything is under the control of the author. With MUAs, though, we have this irritating problems of all those players...

The general class of person who plays a MUA is the first influence on the overall atmosphere in it. If the user base is mainly composed of teenage males, you can expect a more volatile game than one which draws its players primarily from bored managers in the business community. Price is a factor here - people who are playing effectively for free from work will be more cavalier than little Johnny who has to save up his pocket money to play and consequently does NOT want to be killed and start again from scratch.

How one individual sees a game and how another sees it are two different things entirely. You may think it's fun to collect treasure and give it to a novice, others may prefer to push novices off cliffs.

.../...

With the continual arrival of new players and slow departure of old ones, the way the game is played gradually changes in character. When MUD first started in the USA, some players complained that they didn't like all the fighting. I told them to stop playing for 3 months and try again. Several of them did, and at least one is now a wizard; when they came back, the fighting phase had turned into a more peaceable one (although, of course, it could instead have got even worse!).

The main dictators of the way the game is perceived by its players are, of course, the wizards and witches (or gods, or starfleet admirals, or whatever else those at the top of the pile are called in different MUAs). This is for several reasons, the fact that they tend to play longer hours being not the least of them! Mainly, however, it's the powers they possess to shape the game to their will, and to coax(!) mortals into behaving in certain ways. So long as they don't contravene a basic set of guidelines (MUD's is called "Good Wiz Guide") they can do pretty much what they want, so they do..!

The jump from mortal to wiz is profound, and some players cannot adjust. They feel alienated from their old friends because they are now of greatly superior status, and yet they don't feel "one of the gang" yet with the existing wizzes. This can be an awkward time, but it is normally helped by a strange phenomenon of MUAs whereby wizzes tend to come in batches of around 3 within a few days of one another. Thus, they can cling together for support!

Within the ranks of mortals, there is usually a loose structure imposed by the game, and generally based on the idea of "levels", as in normal fantasy role-playing games. Players gain an instinctive idea of what it "means" to be a certain level. In MUD, for example, players are usually classified as "high-life" or "low-life", depending on the level they have managed to achieve, and the understanding of the game which this implies. High-life levels are sorcerer/sorceress, necromancer/necromanceress, warlock, and mage (beyond which is wizard/witch).

If you see a sorc, your impression is that this is someone who is a serious player, but doesn't necessarily know more than a few of the main ways of getting points. Sorcs tend to go for the little stuff lying around rather than the big treasure that takes a while longer to reach. A necro, however, is someone who knows most of the ways of getting points, and will regularly try for at least one high-scoring treasure hoard. Necros also tend to have a good idea of how to fight... Warlocks normally go for the big points, have been killed at necro several times, and know maybe 95% of the game. Mages are wizzes in training.

The way players view levels is the final key to how the game feels to them. The atmosphere at necro may be hunky dory, but warlock is high enough to attract legions of killers. Mages must prepare to be attacked every time they play, and to be pestered continually by low-life to cast trivial spells for them.

So MUAs provide a constantly changing kaleidoscope of experience, with no two sessions ever feeling quite the same, and the whole game evolving as time goes on. Not everyone's cup of tea, perhaps, but strong enough to capture the hearts and minds of many others for months, even years. Variety is, after all, the spice of life!

The 3rd National Adventure Convention took place at the Sutton Public Library on Saturday 22nd October, largely unnoticed by the majority of adventurers. Press releases had not been sent out by the organisers, advertising had been kept to a minimum (a few leaflets handed out at the PC show, and some mentions on Bulletin Boards and MUAs), so learning about the event was more a matter of luck than careful planning (I personally heard about the convention 10 days before it took place, and only because the organisers asked me to be a guest speaker at one of the seminars!).

This is a great shame as the convention could (and probably would) attract thousands of adventurers, instead of just the hundred or so who were lucky enough to hear about it on the adventure grape-vine. Following the format of the previous shows, exhibitors and seminars were roughly divided 50-50 between MUAs and SUAs interests. This is another mistake as I understand that less than 2% of adventurers (themselves a minority) actually play MUAs, and more emphasis should have been given to the single-user aspect of adventuring.

Ken Gordon of Magnetic Scrolls started the first seminar of the day, and outlined to the audience the step-by-step developments involved in the creation (from designing to publishing) of an adventure game. The talk was very informative and interesting, and Ken's approach was refreshingly down to earth and candid. I was particularly interested to learn that a good adventure title (backed by national advertising and handled by all the major distributors) will sell between 10,000 and 20,000 units; the programming company gets about 10% of the selling price in royalties (e.g. £2.50 on an ST title), so one can easily see that whilst there is money to be made from writing adventures, one will never become very rich in this line of business. I am sure that the same deduction also applies to publishing adventures, especially after the costs of packaging, printing, duplicating, advertising, art-work, and basic overheads have been taken into consideration.

My own seminar took place after lunch, and I gave my personal views on how I saw the future of SUAs developing over the coming years (increasing influence of the role-playing aspect in 16-bit adventures, and the essential role that the small, independent software companies will play in the 8-bit market). The other two seminars were MUA-orientated and were fairly technical - albeit very interesting to the MUA-players who are as addicted to their hobby as we are to ours!

More importantly, the convention was an opportunity to see old friends and make new acquaintances. I met a few Club Members who, until then, had only been anonymous voices over the telephone help-line, and I eventually managed to persuade Jon Thackray (of ACHETON's fame) to write an article for a forthcoming Dossier explaining his views of why the EXAMINE command should not be included in any adventure!

.../...

Richard Bartle presided over the MUD stand (with on-line, free access to this very fine MUA to tempt potential customers) and was demonstrating the awful powers of the Finger Of Death magical spell (which may unfortunately backfire on you!). Incidentally, it gives me great pleasure to announce that, following his work on artificial intelligence, Richard was recently awarded his PhD (not just anyone is a regular contributor to the Club Dossiers!). Well done, Dr Bartle!

The actual lunch-break proved an adventure in itself as Tony Bridge and myself endeavoured to locate a hostelry-cum-purveyor-of-fine-ales (also known as a pub in Sutton). I was aimlessly wandering along an endless and dusty East-West road when Tony, with an uncanny sense of timing, resorted to the now-familiar RUN TO INN and led us unerringly to a Cheerful Tavern in a well-hidden alley.

It is nice to see that Tony is once more very active on the adventuring scene. His regular column in the new weekly magazine "Computer Gamesweek" is essential reading for the serious adventurer, and whilst I am not generally very impressed with the magazine in itself (which is aimed at the "younger" readers), Tony's regular two pages on adventuring are informative and serious - a definite must, even at 60 pence just to read his pages!

Apparently, there is now a question mark hanging over the future of the National Adventure Convention for 1989. As I already wrote, this event has great potential and, with better organising and advertising, it could well become the adventuring event of the year to attend (together with the "Golden Chalice Awards" presentation ceremony, that is!). Let us hope that an opportunity to meet friends in an informal yet informative atmosphere will not be wasted...

BUGSY.

Available from C.R.L. for the Spectrum 48, Commodore 64, and Amstrad CPC (£7.95 each).

* PANDORA's Review: Okay, so dere's dis cute little blue rabbit, name of Buggy Maroon, three feet high but as tough as dey come. All ya has to do is ta help him ta take over all de mobs in Chicago. He don't ask much, just a bit of theft, extortion, murder an' corruption. See, all he wants in life is to be Public Enemy No. 1 instead of dat fat wimp Capone. Da goils from St Brides have wrote dis advencha in two parts, wid some swell pitchers an' a menu driven conversation system. So, youse can expect some heavy action an' some smart lines in chat wit' da various characters in da game. I guess I'll regret sayin' it, but dis ain't really my kinda advencha. Still, I gotta confess it made me laugh, an' dat can't be bad. Anyways I reckon most of youse ud find it amusin' and entertainin', so if ya got da cash, dat bunny sure needs ya!

ATMOSPHERE: 16/20 - VOCABULARY: 15/20 - GRAPHICS: 14/20
PSR: 12/20.

* GETTING STARTED: Can't get any cash? 69-200 from 178 and 54 the 92.

POLICE QUEST. Available from Activision/Sierra on disk for the Atari ST and Amiga (disk: £19.99 each).

* SAM's Review: Ever wondered what it's really like to be an American policeman? Well, Sierra hope to show you with their latest graphic adventure, POLICE QUEST. The game is set in Lytton, a small town which has a big drug problem due mainly to a crook known as "Death Angel". In POLICE QUEST you start as an ordinary patrol cop and if you perform well are promoted to the narcotics division and put on the "Death Angel" case.

Your character is represented graphically in third person perspective. The graphics (ST version) are colourful and effective but not nearly as sophisticated as Magnetic Scrolls' or Level 9's. However, there's some nifty animation and a few sound effects.

Although a joystick or cursor keys are used for movement more complicated actions are input verbally. The parser is very simple with a limited vocabulary. Most of the time this is not a problem, but on a few occasions I experienced extreme frustration in finding the correct phrase to do what I wanted to.

Sierra have tried to make the game as realistic as possible right down to showering before you change your uniform. Unfortunately such attention to detail does get a little tedious as the game progresses. Throughout most of this adventure conventional puzzles have been replaced by following orders and adhering strictly to the printed police regulations included in the package. While this may add to the realism it doesn't make for much of a challenge.

Despite this there's a lot to see and do in POLICE QUEST and the game does work well as a simulation if not a 'true' adventure.

ATMOSPHERE: 16/20 - VOCABULARY: 8/20 - GRAPHICS: 15/20
PSR: 13/20.

* GETTING STARTED: Have a look at the 'walk through' introduction in the manual. After this remember to follow police procedure to the letter and you shouldn't go far wrong!

THE ADVENTURER'S GLOSSARY

We are presently compiling "The Adventurer's Glossary", and we need your help in compiling definitions of the most common (as well as esoteric) objects found in adventures. The glossary is intended as a humorous dictionary and wit, irony, and/or cynicism should be part of your definitions! So, if you can think of an appropriate definition for a Key, a Lamp, a Maze, a Troll, etc... please send it to us! The best definitions will be published in the Dossiers, and an ACL Voucher of £10.00 will be awarded to each Member whose definition is entered in the glossary.

Publication Date
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* MDs Nos 37-38:

Third Week of January 1989

CASTLE BLACKSTAR (Part 8)

NorthWest from the Warm Junction leads into a Wet Passage. West takes you to the River Bank, so go North instead in the Throne Room. Go to the Northern part of the Throne Room, and you have just found two more treasures (257 and 79)! An ominous-looking Skeleton is manacled to the Throne by its hands and feet - is there anything to be done with either the Throne or the Skeleton? (170! Hint: 267. Solution: 73-267). Go Down into the Secret Passage, and explore West. You have reached a Dead End, so the next problem is how to escape from this set of locations. As you will soon discover, you cannot climb back up the Smooth Pit, and the only way out is on the river (you did not forget to bring your Boat with you, did you?!).

SAIL BOAT, then DOWN to the River Entrance. You are now South from the Still Pool and it is as good a time as any to go back to the Oily Cave to refill your Lamp (directions from the River Entrance are: South, SouthEast, NorthEast, NorthEast - do not forget to EMPTY BOAT along the way when you reach the Island). Return to the Cove once you have obtained a fresh supply of oil.

Do you remember a treasure that you originally saw but that you were unable to pick up? (the 228). Well, you are now in a position to obtain it (Hint: 190. Hint: 167-110. Solution: Make sure you that you 33 the 257 and that you 55 the 79 before attempting to pick it up). To go back to where you first saw it, go NorthEast, North, then Down. Having obtained this treasure, return to the Low Building (where you have piled all your possessions), then make your way to the Temple to cleanse the 79, the 257, the 228, the 143 and the 131 (score: 181/250 - very respectable indeed!).

Go back to the Chapel underground as a last section of the game has yet to be explored. Proceed NorthEast into the Cell Block (west), then West to enter a Winding Passage. North will take you to the western end of a Fissure, and a Troll is preventing you from crossing the Bridge to the East. How to deal with the Troll? (Hint: Use 230. Hint: 28 something. Solution: 28-186). Having done so, go East until you reach a Dead End where you will see a star-shaped Button on the wall and a star-shaped Gem on the ground. You will naturally wish to READ LETTERING (under the Button). FREEZE your position, then PUSH BUTTON. Nothing happened, so what is next? The answer lies in another location...

Return to the Junction SouthEast from the Chapel, then go East and Up to the second Duel Room. Go Up once more. Aha! A star-shaped indentation on the wall! The obvious command is 26-265, so do just that and return to the Dead End where you saw the star-shaped button. PUSH BUTTON...

You now find yourself in a Hexagonal Room. You will not be able to climb up through the Trapdoor, but there are several features of interest in that location. EXAMINE DRAWING first, and note the pattern. Then EXAMINE CLOCK; make a note of the time (6.30) and the engraved letter "N" above the 12. You will now wish to do a little exploring on your own, so visit the surrounding locations. There is a nearby exit from one of the Complex Junctions (to find it, go NorthEast twice from the location where you first saw the Clock).

To Be Continued in MDs Nos 37-38.

IN THE CAULDRON...

* Rainbird have just released FISH, Magnetic Scrolls' latest adventure (review in MDs Nos 37-38). Life as a goldfish can be pretty boring, but when the existence of the entire planet is at stake, it is a humble goldfish (you!) who is called upon to save the Earth. FISH is presently available on disk for the Atari ST, Amiga, and PC (£24.99 each). Other versions will be released in the new year.

The Amiga version of LEGEND OF THE SWORD is now available (£24.95). A PC version is planned for early 1989.

The following disk versions of CORRUPTION are now available: Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC and Apple II (£19.95 each), Amstrad PCW and Archimedes (£24.95 each), and Apple MacIntosh (£34.95).

* Mandarin Software have released LANCELOT, Level 9 Computing's adventure based on the Arthurian legends (see page 39 for details of prices and availabilities - a review of LANCELOT will appear in MDs Nos 37-38). LANCELOT is a 3-part adventure spanning the complete Arthurian saga, from the foundation of the Round Table Order to its finest hour - the quest for the Holy Grail.

* Level 9 Computing have released INGRID'S BACK, the sequel to the 1987 Golden Chalice award-winner GNOME RANGER (see page 39 for details of prices and availabilities). This 3-part adventure follows the accident-prone Ingrid as she battles against the odds to prevent Jasper Quickbuck, insider-dealing Lord of Ridley's Manor, from steamrolling the gnome-belt in order to develop yuppie housing (see page 5 for review).

Level 9 Computing's next adventure will be SCAPEGHOST, to be released in the New Year. The player will take the role of a ghost; his human form was killed in unfortunate circumstances and he will have to uncover the crooks and clear his name.

* Activision will soon release PARISIAN KNIGHTS, the second adventure written by Abstract Concepts. The player takes the role of a French secret agent who has returned home from a disastrous mission in London. The agent is given three fresh assignments to prove himself and clear his name.

Activision have moved to new premises: Blake House, Manor Farm Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 0JN, tel: 0734-311666.

POLICE QUEST (see page 31 for review) is now available for the Amiga (disk: £19.95). The PC version will be released in the New Year (price to be announced).

Infocom's ZORK I will be released early in the New Year on tape for the Commodore 64 (£9.99).

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Infocom will soon release BATTLETECH, their first role-playing game. The scenario takes place in the 31st century, and the player must defend Chara IV, a small planet, against invasion and destruction. BATTLETECH boasts over four million locations (!) and, true to Infocom's reputation, is rich in storyline and plot.

Infocom are due to release three new adventures in 1989:

1) ZORK ZERO (written by Steve Meretzky) is the prequel to the ZORK trilogy and chronicles the collapse of the Great Underground Empire (G.U.E.). The adventure has over 200 locations, and has as many puzzles as the ZORK trilogy combined. It also features, for the first time in Infocom's history, graphical puzzles, and has a new parser, a mouse interface, on-screen hints, and an on-screen map. What was Dimwit Flathead's castle like? How did the G.U.E. collapse? Where did grues come from? Who built the white house in ZORK I? All the answers will be revealed in ZORK ZERO!

2) SHOGUN (written by Dave Lebling) is the adaptation of James Clavell's novel. The adventure takes place in 16th century Japan, and the player is thrust into the upper echelons of the feudal Japanese society just when a political power struggle is erupting between two Japanese regents who aspire to be Shogun.

3) JOURNEY (written by Marc Blank) is billed as a Role-Play Chronicle. The player is plunged into a graphically illustrated world of dwarfs, elves, nymphs and wizards, featuring several characters who will help or hinder the quest. The player controls the action of the party and must be combat strategist, physician, magician and character judge while pursuing the defeat of the evil which has infested the land.

* Topologika will release a double-adventure pack in the New Year featuring AVON, a brand-new adventure from Jonathan Partington, and a rework of Jon Thackray's MURDACH (price to be announced). AVON is based on a Shakespearean theme, and draws on most of the Bard's works for puzzle ideas although in-depth knowledge of the works themselves is not required to solve the puzzles.

Topologika have also announced that they are currently working on the Atari ST, Amiga, and Archimedes conversions of their existing adventures.

* River Software have released THE DOMES OF SHA for the Spectrum 48 (£3.95). The tribe of Sha have been living for centuries in a secret valley where six massive domes have protected them from possible intruders. But times have changed, and it is now up to you to pierce the secrets of the domes and find a way out of the valley... The tape contains a bonus letter-game called LETTER BOMB.

* Mastertronic have released THE QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGG CUP (programmed by Smart Egg Software) for the Spectrum 48, Commodore 64, and Amstrad CPC (£1.99 each). When your friend loses his egg cup, you may laugh. When your king loses his egg cup, you may fake some sympathy. But when a God loses his Golden Egg Cup there is nothing to do but go and find it...

Mastertronic Ltd have moved to new premises at 2-4 Vernon Yard, Portobello Road, London W11 2DX, tel: 01-727 8070.

* Mirrorsoft will release in January 1989 KAOS STRIKES BACK, the sequel to DUNGEON MASTER, for the Atari ST (price to be announced). The game will consist of an extra 5 levels which will be accessible after completing the original DUNGEON MASTER.

* Atlantis Software will release the Atari ST version of D.A.A. early in the New Year (price to be announced).

* Gilsoft's next version of PAW will be for the PC (price to be announced).

* Eighth Day Software have just released WEAVER OF HER DREAMS for the Spectrum 48 (£3.99). This text-only adventure takes the player into a "Middle Earth"-type land of fantasy where magic and spells have to be used in order to survive.

Eighth Day Software have released ICE STATION ZERO - MARK II for the Spectrum 48 (£2.99). As with FOUR MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT, the mark II versions of Eighth Day's original adventures feature extended text, graphics, and RAM Save/load facilities.

* Electronic Arts have released a number of role-playing games:

1) MARS SAGA (Commodore 64 - disk: £14.95) takes place in 2055 A.D. on Mars and features 21 skill levels, auto-mapping and animated combat-routines.

2) DEATHLORD (Commodore 64 - disk: £14.95) features 157 dungeon levels, 128 different kinds of monsters, 84 magic spells, and 16 separate continents to explore.

3) WASTELAND (Commodore 64 - disk: £16.95. PC - disk: £24.95) was written by Interplay Productions, creators of the THE BARD'S TALE series. This is a futuristic RPG set in the south western deserts of the U.S.A which challenges the player to survive in the post-nuclear, radioactive year of 2087.

Electronic Arts have released the PC version of THE BARD'S TALE II (disk: £24.95).

Clue-books for THE BARD'S TALE (I to III), WASTELAND, MARS SAGA, and DEATHLORD are available (£5.00 each) directly from Electronic Arts Consumer Service Department (see below).

All Electronic Arts' products are available directly from their Customer Service Department at Langley Business Centre, 11-49 Station Road, Langley, Near Slough, Berkshire, tel: 0753-46465.

KAYLETH (Part 6 - Final Part)

You will wish to EXAMINE ANDROID to get the satisfaction of a job well done! Since you are human again, you may leave the cartridges behind you.

Do you remember the locations accessed by the Azap Code EPO? You were not able to do much because you were an Android but, as Yurek, things are now different. Accordingly, go to the nearest AZAP Chamber (which is on level M1), and use the AZAP CODE EPO to access the Southerly Corridor. As the description indicates, go South. Things are happening very fast! Go Down (twice) until you reach a Small Chamber. You are now in a different universe, and the central feature is a golden Icon. What should you do in order to progress? (Hint: 189. Hint: 85 of the 189. Solution: 59-98-16-189). EXAMINE (the Asterion) TECHNICIAN to be informed about the goal of this adventure (at last!). Pick up the Bulb from the clearing, then go North and Down to return to the Azap Chamber. Use AZAP CODE ELY to teleport, then make your way above ground to the edge of Zymoria.

You now know that Kayleth's life blood must be poisoned with the essence of Tae, and that the Bulb provides the means to do so. As the Technician advised, you should nurture the Bulb, and this is indeed your next step. How does one nurture a Bulb? As any amateur gardener will know, you will need some 237 and plenty of 80.

Go South (twice) then East and get the 237. Examine it for instructions. Fortunately, you already saw some 121 (in the 247), so collect the 247 and 71-121-9-237. Everything seems to be going according to plan, so 39-220-16-237. Success! As you are told, the small Flower needs to mature in the right place. You are in the ideal location (greenhouse), so what should you do next? (Hint: The 262 needs to 162. Solution: 47 about 62-113). At last! You now have the Seeds, but what should you do with them? (Hint: You need the 213 of the 262. Hint: 201. Solution: Put the 30 in the 232).

Wow! You now have Kayleth's death warrant! (Type INVENTORY to make sure, then 23-213). As the last prompt told you, you should now "zap the rat", but where can the rat be found? Do you remember that 140-176 off the 111? Return to the 111 by going to the nearest Azap Chamber, then using the AZAP CODE DHT.

Kayleth is very near indeed (in fact, just beyond the Door!), so OPEN DOOR. Nothing happened? (Hint: 210. Solution: 210!). Yes, the key to the door is the 240 of 19 the 244 but 235. Try all the 206 and you will soon discover that the key is 31-146-176.

You are now confronting Kayleth! There is only one thing left for you to do, and this is 30-213-16-193. WELL DONE!!!

PERSONAL SUBJECTIVE RATINGS

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The Personal Subjective Rating (PSR) of an adventure means exactly what it implies and does not purport to be an objective mark of an adventure. It is not based on the average of the three other marks (Vocabulary, Atmosphere, Graphics), but reflects the overall enjoyment of the reviewer who played the adventure.

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We are pleased to offer you a comprehensive selection of adventure titles. Please note, however, that discounts are not available on budget software.

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- ROBIN OF SHERLOCK	AM	7.95	7.15
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#40

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#41

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	C64	C128	AM/PCW	PC	AG	ST
1) ZORK I.....	[0]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[2]
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3) ZORK III.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]
4) ENCHANTER.....	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]
5) SORCERER.....	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[0]	[2]
6) SPELLBREAKER.....	[0]	[0]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[2]
7) DEADLINE.....	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[0]
8) WITNESS.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[3]	[2]	[2]
9) SUSPECT.....	[3]	[3]	[3]	[0]	[2]	[2]
10) CUT-THROATS.....	[0]	[0]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]
11) INFIDEL.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[2]
12) SEASTALKER.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[2]
13) PLANETFALL.....	[0]	[0]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[2]
14) STARCROSS.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[2]
15) SUSPENDED.....	[0]	[0]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[0]
16) BALLYHOO.....	[3]	[3]	[3]	[0]	[0]	[2]
17) A MIND FOREVER VOYAGING.....	[0]	[1]	[0]	[0]	[1]	[0]
18) TRINITY.....	[0]	[1]	[0]	[0]	[0]	[1]
19) WISHBRINGER.....	[0]	[0]	[0]	[3]	[0]	[0]
20) HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[3]
21) LEATHER GODDESSES.....	[0]	[0]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[3]
22) MOONMIST.....	[3]	[3]	[0]	[4]	[3]	[0]
23) HOLLYWOOD HIJINX.....	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]	[2]	[2]
24) STATIONFALL.....	[4]	[4]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
25) BUREAUCRACY.....	[0]	[1]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[3]
26) THE LURKING HORROR.....	[4]	[4]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
27) NORD & BERT.....	[4]	[4]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[3]
28) PLUNDERED HEARTS.....	[4]	[4]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[3]
29) BORDER ZONE.....	[4]	[4]	[0]	[4]	[0]	[0]
30) BEYOND ZORK.....	[0]	[0]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[3]
31) SHERLOCK.....	[4]	[4]	[0]	[3]	[3]	[0]
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#42

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<u>* CENTRAL COMPUTING</u>			
- THE MYSTERY OF THE LOST SHEEP	C64,BBC	4.00	3.60
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- ROGUE COMET	SP48,C64	4.95	4.45

#44

Title/Software Company	Computer	RRP	Our Price
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	c) SE-KAA OF ASSIAH	d) RIGEL'S REVENGE
SP48:	a) HOLY GRAIL	b) JOURNEY'S END
	c) SINBAD & THE GOLDEN SHIP	
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#45

Title/Software Company	Computer	RRP	Our Price
<u>* RAINBIRD SOFTWARE</u>			
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	C64d,AMd,ATd,APd	19.95	17.95
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	C64d,AMd,APd,ATd	19.95	17.95
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* TOPOLOGIKA

1) COUNTDOWN TO DOOM	2) PHILOSOPHER'S QUEST
3) ACHETON	4) KINGDOM OF HAMIL
5) RETURN TO DOOM	

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Please use in conjunction with the hints given in this Dossier.

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1) A | 46) Press | 91) Ball |
| 2) The | 47) Wait | 92) Newsboys |
| 3) From | 48) Run | 93) Garlic |
| 4) To | 49) Squeeze | 94) Parsley |
| 5) My | 50) Board | 95) Battery |
| 6) Our | 51) Pull | 96) Lead |
| 7) It | 52) Follow | 97) Tent |
| 8) Under | 53) Make | 98) Ball |
| 9) On | 54) Protect | 99) Mist |
| 10) Together | 55) Carry | 100) North |
| 11) Without | 56) Take | 101) NorthEast |
| 12) When | 57) Dig | 102) East |
| 13) Where | 58) Search | 103) SouthEast |
| 14) Inside | 59) Put | 104) South |
| 15) Away | 60) Input | 105) SouthWest |
| 16) In | 61) Fuse | 106) West |
| 17) Out | 62) Twelve | 107) NorthWest |
| 18) Between | 63) Read | 108) Up |
| 19) All | 64) Cast | 109) Down |
| 20) Under | 65) Use | 110) Arthur |
| 21) Get | 66) Sit | 111) Bridge |
| 22) Love | 67) Squeeze | 112) Mattress |
| 23) Examine | 68) Brazier | 113) Times |
| 24) Eat | 69) Buy | 114) Never |
| 25) Cut | 70) Sell | 115) Note |
| 26) Insert | 71) Pour | 116) Wallet |
| 27) Climb | 72) Throw | 117) Silver |
| 28) Wave | 73) Push | 118) Wardrobe |
| 29) Attack | 74) Manage | 119) Closet |
| 30) Drop | 75) Going | 120) Neon |
| 31) Open | 76) Friend | 121) Water |
| 32) Smash | 77) Heart | 122) Sulphur |
| 33) Wear | 78) Eye | 123) Roof |
| 34) Remove | 79) Sceptre | 124) Tiles |
| 35) Go | 80) Water | 125) Soot |
| 36) Swim | 81) Glue | 126) Robots |
| 37) Hide | 82) Pot | 127) Hand |
| 38) Move | 83) Control | 128) Planted |
| 39) Plant | 84) Skip | 129) Star |
| 40) Blow | 85) Shape | 130) Combination |
| 41) Pierce | 86) Certain | 131) Nugget |
| 42) Light | 87) Drape | 132) Shovel |
| 43) Burn | 88) Old | 133) Teleport |
| 44) Awake | 89) Earth | 134) Pit |
| 45) Sleep | 90) Combustible | 135) Button |

Please use in conjunction with the hints given in this Dossier.

136) Probe	181) Terminal	226) Skull
137) Boots	182) Found	227) Flag
138) Lace	183) Flask	228) Sword
139) Cockpit	184) Brandy	229) Star-Stone
140) Closed	185) Bomb	230) Magic
141) Mountain	186) Staff	231) Locations
142) Sponge	187) Following	232) Mortar
143) Necklace	188) Cigar	233) Fork
144) Alcove	189) Hole	234) Shuttle-Craft
145) Crashed	190) Excalibur	235) Backwards
146) Kayleth	191) Pearl	236) Natuflow Mask
147) Planet	192) Drawer	237) Compost
148) Rugs	193) Pool	238) Worm
149) Star	194) Chase	239) Engine
150) Mine	195) Stranded	240) Combination
151) Somewhere	196) Bandage	241) Atmos Pod
152) Panel	197) Somewhere	242) Armour
153) Seeds	198) Shower	243) Maintenance
154) Gloves	199) Magic	244) Azap Codes
155) Air-vent	200) Mask	245) Space-Suit
156) Tube	201) Pestle	246) Elephant
157) Soldiers	202) Shock Cape	247) Bottle
158) Phoenix	203) Sword	248) Dormitory #2
159) Raisin	204) Dagger	249) Traditional
160) Ashes	205) Bracelet	250) Excellent
161) Object	206) Permutations	251) Blowpipe
162) Mature	207) Killed	252) Sun
163) Anything	208) Used	253) Disrupter
164) Shield	209) Handblaster	254) Frighten
165) Chalice	210) Help	255) Tube
166) Cubicle	211) 1	256) Carat
167) King	212) 2	257) Crown
168) Queen	213) Essence	258) Wall
169) Key	214) Curious	259) Cup Of Tea
170) Yes	215) Onion	260) Python
171) Medallion	216) Stick	261) Blue
172) Main	217) Frying	262) Flower
173) Bed	218) Table	263) Multi-Useful
174) Location	219) Footwear	264) Hamster
175) Grille	220) Bulb	265) Gem
176) Door	221) Static	266) Miniature
177) Lucky	222) Fur	267) Throne
178) Muscles	223) Medicine	268) Sharp
179) Rock	224) Computer	269) Blunt
180) Cockpit	225) Tablet	270) Jacket