

First there was Avaricius...

Then, over a thousand years later, there came

Lord

```

  oO"Oo  "OO  "OO  oO"Oo  "OO"      oO"Oo  O"OO"O
OO  OO  OO  OO  OO  OO  OO      OO  OO  OO
OOoooOO  OO  OO  OOoooOO  OO      OO  OO  OO
OO  OO  OO  OO  OO  OO  OO      o "Oo  oO"  OO
""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""  ""

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d'Argent

(A Mediaeval Graphical Adventure Game)

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Version 1.3 - December 1995

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*****
***
* NB: Read the legal stuff at the end soon. Quick synopsis: Not to be
*
* hacked up or sold without our written consent. To be freely
distributed. *
* Don't blame us for anything this program does. *NO WARRANTY!*
*
*****
***

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Background

Jupiter had had a hard day. Being head of the Mount Olympus Associate Group PLC was no picnic. In the morning, he had overheard the Naiads talking of going on strike again. Jupiter sighed- another drought. Then Pluto had come up to his office again to ask him if he would consider selling out, and when Jupiter refused, had gone off shouting that he would get Phoebus Apollo to print the story. Finally, Pan had told him that he had invented a sort of flying machine, and asked whether he could start an airline company on Mount Olympus. "You could call it the Jupiter-Pan-Olympian company." he had said.

Jupiter said that he didn't see anything wrong with materialising in a puff of smoke, whereupon Pan went off in a huff. He had left a note: "Will not set up company on Olympus; have gone to America instead. Your name will not be included on the headed notepaper."

Jupiter sighed again. At least he was off-duty now. The job wasn't that bad and it did have its perks. Omnipotence had had to go years ago, but you still got the executive flat in Docklands and the sports car. He'd taken to driving it around London recently. Being immortal certainly had its benefits.

Another benefit of the job, he reflected, is the technology. That was the best thing for years. It was only in a few days' time that he had gone down to the end of the twentieth century and bought himself a laptop (his time-travelling wasn't what it used to be.) He had been rather annoyed that the installation program wasn't in Greek, but you couldn't have everything.

The dryads, who were, of course, greatly in favour of the paperless office, had typed in all the records from the old ledger filing system for him only a day or two before. He decided to play around with it.

> Enter number of record:

said the screen helpfully. Jupiter frowned at the screen; it was all English to him. At least he could remember how the numerals worked. He chose a number at random:

> CLXXVII

he typed. Nothing happened, so he waited for a few minutes and then remembered he hadn't pressed Enter.

> Non-numeric characters in response, please try again

announced the screen. Jupiter had never been much good at English and this was beyond him, but after a few minutes he realised that he was supposed to use the Arabic number system. He picked another random number and typed it in.

> 17417

This time, he remembered to press Enter. The screen said:

> Report no. 17417: D. Avaricius Sextus

> Killed: while fighting as gladiator.

> (Had, in fact, killed 17 lions previously,

> in self-defence.)

Jupiter stared at the screen as the text slowly scrolled up it. Of course! It

was all coming back to him now. He called on the intercom for Neptune.

There

was a splashing sound, water flew everywhere, and Neptune appeared. The computer, having been hit by several stray drops, fizzed and exploded, obviously without hurting anyone.

"Do you remember this chap?" asked Jupiter. "Quite tall? Red hair? Lived in

Pompeii? Name of Avaricius?"

"Hmm... it was a long time ago..." said Neptune. "Hang on a sec, yes, I do

remember him. I set him up with that pretty little mermaid... what was her

name, now..."

"Never mind that," said Jupiter, "I've just remembered something. Do you know

who warned him about the disaster?"

"I heard on the grapevine it was a soothsayer named Quicphingus." said Neptune.

"On the grapevine?"

"Yeah, Bacchus told me."

"Oh, right. Look, Quicphingus never existed! It was me! In disguise!"

A slow smile began to spread itself across the sea-god's features. "You? You

crafty old god!" he chuckled. "You dressed up as a soothsayer just to save

him from the volcano?"

"Oh, you know, I just felt like helping someone..." said Jupiter. "Well, actually, no, I'd promised to find that mermaid a husband. Vowed to on

the

Styx. Silly of me."

"It's amazing." said Neptune. "I never realised it was you."

"Did this Avvy chap have any children by this mermaid, then?" asked Jupiter.

"I forgot to find out."

"Oh, yes, lots. They spread all over the earth. D'you know something?"

"Yes, everything. What in particular?" asked Jupiter.

"Genetics. A lot of his descendants turned out exactly like him. I mean, totally. Even talked like him. Amazing."

"That sounds interesting." mused the king of the gods. "Could I see one of them?"

"Wellllll...." said Neptune, "there's one... no, he wouldn't do, the game'd be banned, there's another... yes! There's one in 1189. Look."

A huge puddle had spread across Jupiter's desk from the dripping hair of the ocean god. Neptune pointed at this and a shaky image formed, which grew steadily clearer. It seemed to be a picture of a bedroom in a mediaeval castle.

Both the gods craned forwards and peered closer into the screen...

Getting started

Assuming you've already installed Avvy (if you haven't, use the INSTALL program or just run AVLT100.EXE), you can start to play. To do this, you must type:

AVALOT

at the Dos prompt (something like C:\AVALOT> or C>.) The game will then load and you're ready to have fun. A sort of blue whirly thing will appear; if you don't want to sit and read all the credits, press any key. The whirly thing will then vanish, to be replaced by a menu. Soon, you'll see what you can do from this menu; for now, just press Enter. The game proper will then load and you'll see Avalot fast asleep in bed.

The first thing you must do is to wake him up! Just type WAKE UP on the keyboard and press "Return" or "Enter" (usually marked with an arrow with a quarter turn in it.) Avvy will then wake. Typing GET UP will get him dressed

and on his feet, and you'll be ready to progress to the next section of the manual!

(NB: Since you need to do this whenever you start the game, there's a short-cut: press f5 twice to get him on his feet.)

Moving Avvy around

OK, so you've woken Avvy up and he's ready to explore the world. But... how

do you move him around? Well, there are four ways:

- 1) For real traditionalists. This method involves using the arrow keys on the right-hand side of your keyboard. Press any arrow to make him walk in that direction (eg, left arrow makes him walk left.)

There can be up to two sets of arrow keys on your keyboard. There's a set with numbers on (like 7 Home, 4 <--, 1 End, etc.). This is called the Numeric Keypad. If you have a snazzy new-style keyboard, there will also be a cluster of (probably grey) keys which only have arrows on. Some people prefer using these, but I've never lost the habit of using the numeric keypad for control (hey, I started out on an XT- and Avaricius was written on it.) But use whichever arrows you prefer, I don't mind. Right. If you choose to use the numeric keypad, bear in mind that Num Lock must be *off*, otherwise you'll just get a string of numbers on the command line.

Another point in favour of the numeric keypad: The keys in between the arrow keys (Home, PgUp, PgDn, and End) make Avvy walk diagonally (so Home = up + left, etc.) It's faster to walk using these (sometimes). One other point: DON'T hold arrow keys down. It's POINTLESS! Press once to start him walking, and he's off.

OK, you're asking, so I've made him walk, how do I stop him? Well, apart from running into a wall or similar, the usual way of stopping Avvy walking from the keyboard is to press the arrow pointing the way you're going. So to stop him walking up, for example, hit Up. I know it sounds weird, but it's simple in practice. Trust me. The other way of stopping Avvy only works on an enhanced keyboard (the Bios isn't really up to it on the older ones.) Just hit the 5 in the middle of the keypad and he'll stop straight away.

That was the ONLY practical method of control in Avaricius. However, time and computer hardware wait for no man, let alone Avvy, so we now support three other methods...

2) Using the joystick. All you hardened games players out there, stop drinking cement and listen. You'll have to configure the joystick before you use it, using the Setup program (see below.) This is firstly because it's annoying to have to set it up every time you play (like in some other games- mentioning no names) and secondly because the Bios is frequently untrustworthy on the question of joysticks. So it's much more reliable for you, the user, to set it up than for me, the programmer, to check using the Bios. If you *don't* set it up, Avvy will ignore your joystick, so don't forget to. Whenever you run Avvy, just press ctrl-J to enable the joystick, and the cursor keys will be ignored. Press ctrl-K to switch them back. One button will then stand for "open door", and the other for "look". You'll still have to use the keyboard for most things, though. Happy wagging!

support 3) Using the mouse and the toolbar. (I know Avaricius DID

the mouse, but did *you* use it? The mouse control was unworkable- it was sort of bolted on after I'd finished the keyboard routines. Not So With Avalot.) There's a colourful thingy second from the left on the toolbar (to the right of the space saying "Avalot".) This is called a compass. Click on the arrows to make Avvy walk around, and the octagonal "STOP" sign in the middle to make him... um... STOP.

4) Less fiddly and more FUN! Click on the picture area of the screen. If you click to the left of Avvy, he'll walk left. If you click to the right, he'll walk right. If you... well, do I have to tell you about all eight points of the compass? You get the idea. If you click on our hero himself, he'll stop walking.

A Shorter Avvy Vocabulary *****

OK, I'm not going to tell you ALL the words that Avvy recognises. It would give the game away. (Yes, I know you're supposed to give shareware games away. Never mind.) But here are a few verbs to start you off:

LOOK gives you a description of the room you're in. VERY useful. In fact, so useful that it has its own key. Just press f8 instead.

EXAMINE tells you about an object you're carrying, a person who's in the same room as you, or part of the scenery. For example, EXAMINE GRAFFITI. Commonly abbreviated to EXAM or just X.

INVENTORY gives you a list of everything you're carrying. Commonly abbreviated to INV, Ctrl-I or just Tab.

OPEN opens things. Useful for doors. You can press f7 instead.

PAUSE pauses the game. f6 works too.

GET takes something lying about. For example, GET LASER (just to let you know I'm not using a real example.)
(Also called TAKE.)

EAT ...drink and be merry.

DRINK ...to me only with thine eyes.

LISTEN tells you what Avvy can hear.

LOAD loads a game in from disk. If you already know the filename, add it after the command, eg LOAD HELEN1. (You don't need to add ".ASG".) If you don't know the filename, just type
LOAD
and you'll get into the filer. See below.
(Also known as RESTORE.)

SAVE does the opposite of Load- saves the current state of the game.
You may add a filename after the command.

RESTART begins the game all over again.

WEAR puts something on. It must be a real item of clothing.

BOSS Just in case S.W.M.B.O. turns up, this puts up the boss screen.

Of course, you can use words other than verbs, plus several verbs that aren't listed here. But I'm not telling you what they are! You'll have to find out for YOURSELVES! <laugh of anticipation>

The start of the game...

OK, just to get you started. You're asleep in your bed; type WAKE UP and you'll be awake. Type GET UP to get out of bed (good start.) Now practise walking around your bedroom with the cursor (arrow) keys.

At the bottom of the screen is a sort of black trapezium with a white top. This is a standard adventure game symbol for "door in near wall" (you wouldn't be able to see it otherwise.) If you walk into this trapezium you'll find yourself on the other side of the door.

A rather revolting serf named Crapulus will walk up and greet you. If you want, you can talk to him, or you can return to the door and type OPEN DOOR

to go back into your room. When you've finished talking to Crapulus, he'll go off to the pub, leaving you alone in the room. Try walking to the left, then in the next room to the door in the near wall. This leads into Spludwick's room.

Talk to Spludwick. Ask him about things. He can tell you a lot about the game. While you're in his room, try looking at all the things there. For example, on the floor you'll see a message. Typing

```
        LOOK AT MESSAGE
or      READ MESSAGE
or      EXAMINE MESSAGE
or just X MESSAGE
```

(X short for eXamine) will tell you about it in more detail. If you want, you can type

```
ASK SPLUDWICK ABOUT MESSAGE
```

and Spludwick will tell you about it. This is where I'm going to leave you for now. See if you can work out the rest of the game for yourself!

(Who said it doesn't pay to read the documentation?)

Some important hints to help you get more information:

- 1) Whenever you go into a room, type LOOK (or press f8.) This will give you a description of the room. Look around. Anything you can see, you can ask about. Mostly, you should get an answer. For example, in your bedroom at the start of the game, you'll see the bed, the fireplace, and your wife, Arkata. Typing EXAMINE or X and then the name of any of these things will give you information about it. For example,

```
EXAMINE FIREPLACE
X ARKATA
LOOK AT BED
```

(Look At is the same as Examine, by the way.)

Examining a object you're carrying or a person will cause a picture of it/them to appear in the toolbar.

- 2) Ask characters for information. Ask Dogfood about Ibythneth, for example, and vice versa. Some characters may not be very good at answering questions, though. Oh, yes... if you just want to chat to somebody without any particular subject, try using the Talk command. For example,

TALK TO DOGFOOD
ASK SPLUDWICK ABOUT DOGFOOD
SAY "SPLUDWICK" TO CRAPULUS
TALK TO AYLES ABOUT IBYTHNETH
TALK TO YOURSELF

- 3) There's a limit on how much you can hold. If you reach this limit, consider how else you can get rid of things you're carrying that have become useless, given that you're not allowed to drop them.

Keys

(The kind you find on keyboards.)

Here's a list of all the keys that are valid in Avalot:

Key	What it does
===	=====
f1	Gets you context-sensitive online help! See "Help", below.
f2	Switches the sound on and off.
ctrl-f2	Saves the game. If there's no filename, you'll be asked.
f3	Restores the last line you typed.
ctrl-f3	Invokes the filer.
f4	Restarts the game.
alt-f4	Quits the game.
f5	Gets up, lies down, sits down, etc.
ctrl-f5	Invokes the DOS shell.
f6	Pauses the game. (=PAUSE command.)
f7	Opens a nearby door. (=OPEN command.)
ctrl-f7	Redraws the screen.
f8	Puts up a description of this room. (=LOOK command.)
f9	Tells you your score and your rank. (=SCORE command.)
f10	Quits the game (again.)
shift-f10	Puts up the About box.
f11	Synonym for ctrl-f2 (save).
f12	Synonym for ctrl-f3 (load).
alt-B	Puts up the Boss screen.
alt-X	Quits the game (yet again.)
ctrl-R	Switches on Running.
ctrl-W	Switches on Walking.
alt-R	Repeat last clock chimes.
Tab	Puts up an inventory list.
ctrl-I	The same.
Enter	Performs current command, or banishes a scroll.
Arrows	Move Avvy about.
Numeric 5	Stops Avvy walking (but ONLY on an enhanced keyboard.)
PgUp, PgDn,	
Home & End	Make Avvy walk diagonally.
ctrl-Home	Moves the cursor to the START of the line.
ctrl-End	Moves it to the END of the line.
ctrl-Left	Moves it one space backwards.
ctrl-Right	...forwards.
Backspace	Its usual function.
Del	Ditto.

ctrl-J Switches on joystick support, and disables the cursor keys.

ctrl-K The reverse: disables joystick, enables the cursor keys.

Escape Gets you in or out of the drop-down menus, or does the same banishing trick as Enter.

Plus (+) Usually just adds a + sign, but also banishes scrolls.

Pause Pauses the entire computer until you press a key (as usual.)

Just about anything else gets added onto the end of the command line.

The drop-down menus

Here's a short guide to playing Avalot single-handedly: in other words, how to use the drop-down menus to speed things up.

There are six menus:

File	Game	Action	Objects	People	With
New game	Help	Do...			
Load...	Boss key	Pause			
Save	Untrash \	Open door	(these three vary)		
Save as...	\ screen	Look			
DOS shell	Score+rank	Inventory			
Quit	About Avvy	Walk or run			

And here's what they do:

File | New game (short cut: f4)

This restarts the game from the beginning. If you haven't saved your game so far, you'll lose it. You're given a yes/no box to make your mind up.

File | Load... (short cut: ctrl-f3, or f12)

This brings up the filer.

File | Save (short cut: ctrl-f2, or f11)

This saves your game, provided that it has been saved before (because otherwise it doesn't have a filename, and then this is synonymous with File | Save As).

File | Save As... (no short cut.)

This asks you for a name for the game and then saves it with that name.

File | DOS shell (short cut: ctrl-f5)

You can suspend your game and run other programs using this. Please try not to run any TSR (terminate and stay resident) programs while using this (like SideKick, KEYB, GRAPHICS...) because you'll cause no end of problems with the memory arrangements.

File | Quit (short cut: alt-X, alt-f4, f10, etc...)

This lets you out of the game. (I think you could have guessed that.)

Game | Help (short cut: f1)

Brings up the help system.

Game | Boss key (short cut: alt-B)

Brings up the SWMBO protection screen (it looks like a spreadsheet).

Game | Untrash screen (short cut: ctrl-f7)

Makes the program redraw the whole screen. I wish more games had this option- it's very useful when crazy TSRs draw weird patterns of red dots on the screen, or when Windows doesn't *quite* get the full screen back again.

Game | Score and rank (short cut: f9)

This gives you your score, a "ranking" based on this, and the (rough) time you've spent playing the game so far (which is saved in the file and continues when it's re-loaded).

Game | About Avvy (short cut: shift-f10)

This brings up the About box, which includes version information.

Action | Do... (short cut: f5)

Actually, this isn't called Do, unless it doesn't work. At certain points in the game, some action is important. When you reach them, this option will take on a different form. A good example is right at the start where you're asleep in bed: the f5 key and this menu option both mean "wake up". Because of this, you can control more of the game with the mouse.

Action | Pause (short cut: f6)

Very, very self-explanatory.

Action | Open the door (short cut: f7)

There are two actions which people spend most of their time typing in games such as this, and so they have been given their own menu options, and an unshifted function key each. One of them is this one, opening doors (which is also used to mean "enter town" on the map), and the other is...

Action | Look around (short cut: f8)

...this one. It's equivalent to typing LOOK.

Action | Inventory (short cut: Tab or ctrl-I)

The time-honoured command to check your rucksack. Actually, Avalot doesn't have a rucksack. Nor does he carry a flickering lamp, a bottle of water or any of the other Colossal paraphernalia; however, to prove the intellectual geanology of this game, GET INVENTORY works just as well.

Action | Walk slowly (short cut: ctrl-W)

or

Action | Run fast (short cut: ctrl-R)

These adjust Avvy's walking for precision or speed, respectively. Only the relevant one is displayed (the one *not* currently in force).

Objects | ... and People | ...

These vary depending on your inventory (for Objects) and the people in the room at the time (for People). (Of course, there will always be at least one of each.) Selecting one of these makes Avvy think about whatever it was, and his thoughts are reflected in the "Thinks" space on the toolbar. Why is this? Well, read on...

With | ...

This varies depending on what Avvy's thinking about. Whatever you can do with it, him or her will be listed here, and you can then select it and it will be done.

An example: Examine the bell.

Select "Objects | Bell" and then "With | Examine".

Another example: Talk to Spludwick.

Select "People | Spludwick" and then "With | Talk to him".

Notes on this:

- 1) To give something to somebody, select the person, then the object,
then With | Give to <person>. If you get it the wrong way round,
you can still select the object and carry on. If it's going to work, the "Give to" option will be enabled, and won't end in an ellipsis ("...").
- 2) The pictures of the people have their signatures underneath.
- 3) The fastest way to examine somebody (or something) is this: when their (or its) picture is on the toolbar, just click on it and it will be examined. Ta-raaaa!

The filer "*****"

If you type LOAD with no parameters, or press ctrl-f3 when you're playing the game, you will enter the filer. It should be fairly straightforward. There are four "panes": (N)ame, (D)rives, (F)iles and (S)ubdirectories. Use Tab and Shift-Tab to cycle through these, or press Alt + the first letter of the name of the pane. On the Files and Subdirectories panes, you may use Home, End and the up and down cursor keys to move through the names. You may also press, say, J to cycle through all filenames or subdirectories beginning with J.

To change the drive, move to the Drives pane and press the letter. If the drive is not ready (e.g., if you've left the door open) then it will say "no files found", because it couldn't read any.

The Name pane allows you simply to type the name of the file. The file will be loaded when you press Return. The Files pane scrolls according to the initial letter as you type. By the way, you cannot search for or load any file whose extension is not .ASG.

A minor problem with the filer at the moment is this: if you're listening to a CD and you invoke the filer, the music will stop. The reason for this is that the program checks each drive between C and Z to see if it exists (A and B are found by using Bios calls) and since CDs on PCs double as data drives, reading it as such makes it think: "Oh! I'm a data drive and not a CD player. Well, in that case, I'd better stop playing music!" If this

is a problem for anybody, let me know and I'll try and fix it.

The main menu

There are six options on the main menu:

- 1) play the game. You can also press Return or Space to do this.
- 2) read the background to the story (who *are* Geida and du Lustie anyway?)
- 3) see the preview. This is a picture from the next game (well, actually, it's *like* one: the next game will be 256-colour).
- 4) read the documentation (as you're doing now). Avalot has a built-in doc lister.
- 5) Same as 4), but jumps straight to the part about registration.
- 6) Exit back to DOS, if you changed your mind. ("Oh no! I really wanted to play spacewar, but I've loaded Avvy instead! How can I quit in a hurry?")

Command-line options

Normally, you just have to type AVALOT to run the game. However, there are also some switches and so on that you can use to make the program behave as you want it to. Add the switch after the word AVALOT. Don't forget to put a space in between them! For example,

```
avalot /q
```

would start the game with no sound effects. You can specify several switches at once; for example,

```
avalot canary /o /p
```

would start the game, ignoring the graphics adapter in use (/o), load in a file called CANARY.ASG, and give you a p)rinted log of your progress through the game.

Notes on the switches:

- i) Instead of a slash, you can use a hyphen (if you're a Unix freak.)

- ii) Each switch must have a space before it. Thus you must type
avalot /o /p instead of avalot/o/p.
- iii) You may also use AVALOT.INI commands instead of switches, if
you prefix each one with a star. Thus:

```
avalot *soundfx=false *loadfirst=fred
```

does the same as

```
avalot /q fred
```

. These options override the AVALOT.INI ones, and have equal
priority to switches.

Here's a list of all the valid options:

```
/? This displays a list of the most important valid options,  
so you don't have to read this part of the docs again  
if you're in a hurry...
```

```
<filename> This will load the game you specify. You must give a path if  
it's not in the current directory, but you may leave out  
the .ASG extension if you want.
```

```
/o (Override.) This ignores your graphics adapter. Use this as a  
temporary solution if Avvy tells you you don't have an EGA  
and  
you do. (But... don't bother using this if you REALLY don't,  
because it still won't work!)
```

```
/l<filename> This will log your progress around the game to a file, so  
that  
you can read it back later. A similar feature is found on  
many text adventures, but this has a few refinements to work  
with the graphical environment. If you don't specify a  
filename  
filename  
(i.e., you just say "/l") the game assumes the default  
of "AVVY.LOG".
```

```
/p<device> This switch prints your progress to a printer on LPT1:.  
You can select some different kinds in Setup so that Avalot  
can do italics or bold here. A kludge for simple TTY is  
/lPRN.
```

If you don't specify a device, the default is PRN. You can
also use a filename here, if you want to "print to disk."

NOTE!: You cannot have *both* /l *and* /p switched on at
once!

```
/n Num Lock hold. If you use /n, the computer will check every so  
often whether or not you have Num Lock switched on, and if  
you
```

do it'll switch it off again. Num Lock is *not* useful AT ALL in this game. It's good for calculators and things, though.

/q Quiet! This switch turns off sound effects, so that you can play

Avvy all night long and not wake up your parents/girlfriend/boyfriend/wife/husband/children/dog.

/k Keyboard clicky noise. If you choose this, every time you press

a key, the program will bleep at you.

/z Zoomy start. This throws you straight into the game without the startup sequence.

Pounds, shillings and pence!

For reasons of historical accuracy, Avalot uses the pre-1971 system of Lsd

(pounds, shillings and pence.) The pound sterling was divided up into twenty

SHILLINGS. Each SHILLING subdivided into twelve PENCE. The more than 1000-year

-old system was dropped in the early seventies as being inefficient.

(It's

interesting to think that this could have been to let the calculating machines of the day perform arithmetic faster. If they had only waited twenty years, the machines would have had no problem at all... bear in mind

that to a digital machine, 1 pound to 100 pence is a daft system (it would

be much more logical to have 256 pence in the pound), so it wouldn't really

matter either way. Moral: look before you leap!)

One pound is written £1 (that probably won't print properly on your printer.)

One penny is written 1d. Two pence is 2d. One shilling is written 1/-.

One-and-six (1 shilling + 6 pence) is 1/6. Three-and-a-penny is 3/1, etc.

Other interesting points to note:

TUPPENCE is 2d. (Still often used nowadays to mean two new pence.)

THRUPPENCE (or THREPPENCE or THRIPPENCE, depending

where you come from) is 3d. (Occasionally still used.)

a GROAT is 4d. This is a mediaeval coin which later dropped out of use.

It comes from dividing the shilling into three parts.

a SIXPENCE is (surprise!) 6d. This and the thruppence were the more usual

later divisions of the shilling. (As in "I love sixpence, jolly jolly sixpence...")

a GUINEA is 21 shillings. The guinea was another mediaeval coin, which,

although it passed out of use long ago, remained in use until decimalization for calculating prices (just to confuse people).

a FLORIN is two shillings. It's one tenth of a pound, and so was sometimes thought of as a sort of halfway decimalization idea.

a CROWN is five shillings.

HALF-A-CROWN is 2/6 (as in the rhyme "Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe...")

AVALOT.INI

INI is short for INItialisation. As you saw above, there are several things

you can tell the program to do, or not to do. For example, Num Lock can be forced off by putting /n on the command line. However, if you always want that to happen, it can get a bit boring typing it every time.

The FIRST way to make it permanent is using Setup. This is explained elsewhere. But there's another way...

When you tell Setup what to do, it saves the new configuration in a file called AVALOT.INI. Avaricious Setup saved its config in a file called AVVY.CFG.

What's the difference? (apart from its being a different game.) Well, AVALOT.INI is a text file. You can load it into a text editor and make changes.

It's the same sort of format as WIN.INI, SYSTEM.INI, SSTOOLS.INI and so on

(but note that there are no [header]s.) Each line consists of the following:

```
foo=bar ; comment
```

"Foo" is the name of the field you want to change. "Bar" is what you want to change it to. This can be:

- * "Yes" or "No", e.g. for Num Lock being forced on or not.
- * A string, e.g. "MYGAME.ASG" for the default filename.
- * Nothing at all, meaning "not applicable."

Any spaces before or after the "foo=bar" part will be ignored. Also, any semicolons (";") in the line will be ignored, together with anything after

them. (Just the same as in assembler programs.) This is for adding comments,

so you can write

```
LoadFirst=AARDVARK.ASG ; load in aardvark.asg first of all.
```

instead of

LoadFirst=AARDVARK.ASG

because they both mean the same. Note that you can have a semicolon at the start of a line if you want the whole line to be ignored.

There are comments in the file to explain what all the fields do. Good luck!

(By the way, if you make a mistake in AVALOT.INI, the game won't run because of it, and you can't find the error in order to fix it, just delete the .INI file. You can always restore it from your backup later. (You kept a backup, DIDN'T YOU??? :-))

ASCII silly question, get a silly ANSI!

I saw that on a BBS the other week. Anyway, the point of this section is this: In the archive, there's a file called AVALOT.ANS. This is an advert for Avalot, drawn up with ANSI. Some sysops put up an advert for files on the board whenever anybody logs on. This is for them! If you want to see it yourself, just type TYPE AVALOT.ANS at the Dos prompt. You'll have to have ANSI.SYS installed, though.

(Note for sysops: this file is optimised as best I can. For example, it uses Cursor Forwards rather than printing spaces whenever that's smaller. What this boils down to is that it doesn't take very long to display: just over six seconds on a 2400 baud modem, and about one and a half seconds on a 9600. Less waiting around!)

Who's Edna?

DNA is a substance found in molecules of all living objects. It defines who or what the object is (the size of its nose, the shape of its leaves, etc.) When I wrote Avaricius, I called the save files DNA in the code, because they defined the state of the game exactly.

With Avalot, I made several changes, including rewriting the entire prehistoric DNA system. The new system I called Extended DNA. I then suddenly realised that E-DNA spells EDNA. So that's what I called it.

How does this affect you? Well, Edna is designed so that whichever Avvy game you're playing (Avaricius, Avalot, or any other one we write) it will say in the file which game it came from. If you play more than one Avvy game often, you'll probably build up a library of .ASG files. Every good

library needs a librarian, so here she is: Edna Bucket!

Edna Bucket is a program called EDNA.EXE. If you run Edna with the filename of an .ASG file, she'll find the game it came from, load that game, and load the file in for you. Easy as anything. If you use Windows, 4-DOS, or any other system that allows file association, associate your .ASG files with EDNA.EXE, and then they'll always be loaded into the right game.

To associate .ASG files with EDNA: Load File Manager (from Program Manager, select Window | Main and then double-click on the icon of a filing cabinet).

When File Mangler (oops, Manager) has loaded, click ONCE on an .ASG file somewhere, then choose File | Associate... and put the path to Edna (such as C:\AVALOT\EDNA.EXE) in the filename box.

The filenames of the games are stored in a file called EDNA.DAT. It looks like this:

Name of game
Path to that game
Name of another game
Path to THAT game
and so on

For example:

Avaricius
c:\games\avvy\avvy.exe
Avalot
N:\PUBLIC\GAMES\AVALOT\AVALOT.EXE

If an .ASG file belongs to a game that isn't listed in this file, Edna will ask you about it and then add the information. If you want to change it later, use a text editor (such as EDIT or EDLIN) to make the changes.

Edna has two switches:

/i prints some (I)nteresting (I)nformation about the game on the screen, but does *not* load anything.

/q stops the "Loading" message appearing.

So, for example:

EDNA /i TREE

gives information about the file TREE.ASG, and

EDNA /q elephant

loads the file ELEPHANT.ASG into the relevant game.

Warning for EGA users.

Avalot will run fine with an EGA, just as with a VGA or whatever.
BUT.....
we have decided that the next game (IF there is a next game... no
promises
yet) will run *only* on VGAs, MCGAs and above. So get an upgrade before
we
release it! (IF we release it, of course.)

Support Your Local Manticore!

Just testing.

Getting help with the game

OK, I admit it: Avalot is much harder than Avaricius to win. If you get
stuck and you need some help, you can try:

*** A GOOD IDEA ***

* Posting a message on CompuServe's GAMERS forum, library 2,
"Adventure Games". Almost certainly, many people will have
been stuck on the same problem. Maybe they even solved it!

You should make the subject header give as much information
about the problem as possible. Don't just put "Avalot...
I'm Stuck!" (or even "help!") A better solution is something like:

Avalot: Solution to Nim?
or
Avalot: Purpose of bell
etc.

* Emailing me and asking. Don't expect the entire solution!
I'll just give you HINTS.

my CompuServe address is 100021,3440
my Internet address is t.j.a.thurman@herts.ac.uk

(The Internet address should work until, oh, about 1997 at least.
If netmail bounces, use the CIS address. Be prepared for a long
wait if you send me netmail during the vacations! This is the
fastest way during termtime, though.)

Where to get the latest version

I will try to upload the latest versions of Avvy to the following places

at least. Copies will certainly make their ways to hundreds of other download sites.

- 1) Support BBS. Paradise City, Thorsoft support area. (0734) 786408.
Call +44 734 786408 from outside Britain. (*)
- 2) CompuServe. CIS:GAMERS. Library 2, "Adventure Games".

(*) WARNING: Oftel have decided to put a 1 at the start of almost all UK numbers, after the 0. BE CAREFUL. The old style numbers won't work after June 1995, so be ready to change over then.

For example, Paradise City will become (01734) 786408 from Britain, and +44 1734 786408 from outside.

This applies to all UK numbers you may know. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

Reviews *****

Here are some reviews of the first game, Avaricius:

"The catacombs hasn't been mapped; it hardly needs it."
- AVVY.SOL (a solution to Avvy discovered on a BBS)

(OK, just try the maze in Avalot and see whether you can do it without a map!)

"Uniquely funny and droll British humour here."
(Four stars plus a tick! Highest rating!)
- Shareware Marketing, Devon

Three stars (out of five)
- Shareware Solutions

To sysops, vendors, et al *****

Everyone: please distribute in the original archive, with the filename AVLT120.EXE for this sfx archive. If you cannot distribute self-extracting archives, re-archive it as AVLT120.LZH, .ZIP, .ARJ, etc. The filenames AVLT12 and AVALOT are acceptable shortenings if the system does not allow more than six characters (as on CIS).

Vendors: there is an installation routine. It might be available from wherever you got this; if it isn't, contact me (addresses in the Getting Help section above) and I'll tell you how to get hold of it.

Both sysops and vendors: do us a favour and TELL us you're distributing Avalot! (Vendors, please send us the copy of your catalogue that has us in...

and updates, for that matter.) If you do this, we'll send you a copy of the sequel if/ when it's finished.

Also, please don't forget to add your name, etc., to the pedigree file. (BBSs and libraries are welcome to include a short plug for themselves in this file, as long as it's not more than about five or six lines long!)

If anyone can get this game reviewed in a magazine, go ahead. Even better, go ahead and then tell us about it, we'd love to know. Even better still, go ahead, and then send us a copy of the magazine!

Disclaimer

The part that's always written in CAPITALS. You *have* to read this!

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(RIGHT, NOW I THINK I'LL SWITCH CAPS LOCK OFF AND get on with the documentation...)

Wish Lists, Bug Reports

A wish list is a list of features that you wish a program had. A bug report is a list of "features" you wish it DIDN'T have (and so does the programmer). If you can't stand the fact that, say, Avalot doesn't run in a MULTICS Dos box if you are over 12,000 feet above sea level, or you would really like a

version that has a macro facility or imports .DBF files, or something, then let me know and I'll see what I can do, or try and find an excuse. You *might* even get an acknowledgement... :)

Coming soon...

Here's my own list of possible/probable enhancements to Avalot:

- * a version which is economical with disk space. This version is very wasteful of it. Some things are stored twice and there is no compression. Later versions will be optimised and there will be a transparent compression routine. (I have a trial version of this working, and some files are down to 1/4 their original size! (Mostly they are about 1/2 to 3/4.))
- * a "talkie" version-- see below...

Avalot - The Talkie

This is part of my own wish list. I'm working (vaguely) on a new part of the system which can play back sound files when scrolls and bubbles come up on the screen. For example, when Cwyotalot says: "I'm not here for a quiet chat", you'll hear him saying it through the PC speaker or over your 'Blaster. Obviously, this would take up a vast amount of disk space, and so would probably come in a separate archive. But it would be rather fun for when the game was supplied on CD-ROM. Watch this space, but not all the time, 'cos you'll get bored because nothing's likely to happen for a while yet...

The first winner of this game

Apart from the testers, nobody has ever won this game yet. I'll put the name of the first registrant who can tell me how to win here.

Revision history

ver.no.	date	notes
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1.3	Dec 1995	Changes in documentation, scrolls, etc. to record the reduction of registration fee to GBP 10 (USD 15) plus GBP 2 (USD 4) p&p (s&h). Registration fee still to include one free one-size Avalot t-shirt.

- 1.2 Apr 1995 Mended the shoot-em-up, which worked (I think) in
1.0 but went wrong again in 1.1. The toolbar now says "Avalot" instead of "the Avvy toolbar". Talking to some characters about certain things (notably Port) no longer crashes the game. And finally, the infamous Mouse Bug which caused the mouse pointer to leave flashing shadows all over the screen occasionally has been fixed at last. (Also a few other minor changes).
- 1.1 Mar 1995 Fixed the music files.
Made all the chunk files consistent. (This could have caused a system crash in older versions.) Also you can now give hex numbers in AVALOT.INI by starting them with a dollar sign.
- 1.0 Oct 1994 This was the first release.

*** Registration! ***

If you like it, please consider registering this game. More information is given in the file REGISTER.DOC, which you can print by typing PRINT REGISTER.DOC at the DOS prompt. Here's a quick synopsis:

You can order Avalot for 10 pounds sterling or 15 U.S. dollars.

P&P (S&H) is two pounds, or four U.S. dollars.

You also get some free goodies to thank you for registering (at the moment, this is an Avvy T-shirt and ruler).

OR you can probably pay in your local currency. See REGISTER.DOC to see which currencies we can accept, and for other details.

PRICES ARE VALID UNTIL 31st DECEMBER 1996.

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There are four ways you can register this game:

- 1) The traditional one... by sending a cheque through the post.

Here's our address:

Thorsoft of Letchworth,
71, Baldock Road,
Letchworth,
Herts. SG6 3JP.
England.

Please make cheques payable to THORSOFT.

- 2) Using PsL's shareware registration service. PsL-- Public (software) Library-- run a registration service that accepts major credit cards.

You can register over the phone on an (American) 800 number, a normal number, by fax, or by CIS email. Here's their advert:

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CREDIT CARD ORDERS ONLY -

You can order with MC, Visa, Amex, or Discover from Public (software) Library by calling 800-2424-PsL or 713-524-6394 or by FAX to 713-524-6398

or by CIS Email to 71355,470. You can also mail credit card orders to PsL at P.O.Box 35705, Houston, TX 77235-5705.

THE ABOVE NUMBERS ARE FOR ORDERS ONLY.

Any questions about the status of the shipment of the order, refunds, registration options, product details, technical support, volume discounts,

dealer pricing, site licenses, etc., must be directed to Thorsoft at the addresses or numbers above.

To ensure that you get the latest version, PsL will notify us on the day of your order and we will ship the product directly to you.

When you order, please quote Avalot's item number: ---> 11608 <---

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3) Via CompuServe. Type GO SWREG at any ! prompt, or in CompuServe Information Manager press Ctrl-G and type SWREG. Then follow the menus.

Enjoy the game!

[end of documentation]