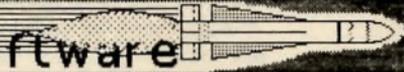


Skaritten
Origin of **T**he **A**dventure



Joe Earls.....System Design and Innovation
Stephen Phelps.....Executive Producer

Balistic Software 

This was a very interesting project. It was done in the basement of a house where one could occasionally find three computers running simultaneously—two on the program and an occasional visit by the one wandering transient with the manual. We would like to stress that this is a game written for the 64 on the 64. Most games are either written for another computer and then modified to work on the 64, or some big mainframe system and then translated to a language that the 64 can use. It was not a translation from another game or computer, and because of this the program takes advantage of the whole 64 system, requiring only a little load time and fitting the whole program on only one floppy. All of the game code was written by use of a monitor on an Educator 64 which is essentially a 64 in a case from a Commodore PET line. Most of the graphics sets and map data were entered on an SX-64, the portable with a built-in disk drive. The only part not made by the 64 is the words you read here. The manual was done on an Apple Macintosh Plus (sin! sin!) for the simple reason that it (and I) were available, and we did not have a copy of a good word processor that could incorporate graphics for the 64. With this setup, I had a 64 sitting beside the Mac, and I copied the screens using only what was shown in the program. There were some occasional setbacks—trying to figure out why the SAVE option wasn't working properly and blowing up the main program, how to make the bumper that checks for objects in the buildings work, redöing the sound that Joey blew away before supper and guessing the SID settings, removing the floppy from the internal drive that the Macintosh ate (Quote the Apple Technician: '... It's in his hand?!?!?'), and other little quirks, but as you will tell, these problems have all been taken care of and you can look forward to an adventure of the highest quality and excitement level ever to hit the market. . . .

Balistic Software

presents

SKARITEN[©]

ORIGIN OF THE ADVENTURE

*A journey into the Realm of the Quest
for the Commodore 64 and 128*

Joe Earls . . . Program Design and Conception

Stephen Phelps . . . Graphic Design; Producer

Charles Earls . . . Technical Assistant, All Areas

Paul Mains . . . Graphics Assistant

Ross Roberts . . . Manual Conception and Design

Mark Mitchell . . . Dragon

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Credits

- Joey Earls *the one person who had a concept for an adventure game, and pursued it in order to delight the world and also make some cash. Just be glad that you never had him for an ancestor . . . what's this about 'brain death'????*
- Steve Phelps *Oh wise one who worships the mighty Aviation God (that's Mr. Yeager to you, pal!!), and all of his suggestions (that's cool, but what if . . . ?)*
- "Chuck" Earls *Great game, but what about the sequel??? I mean, you have to lead into a sequel . . . now come on, boys!! Get yer crap together!!!*
- Judy Earls *The best mother that a game creator and a bunch of delinquents could have . . . considering it was her basement. . . .*
- Paul Mains *Who, me??? Do that?? I can't do this!! I've got no experience, I never worked on a computer before . . . uhh, I did what? ALL THAT!??*
- Ross Roberts *Manual!?! I can do the manual!?! Hooray!!! . . . Wait a minute . . . how the hell do I make a manual??? O'tay, just me, my Mac, and my CD collection . . . we'll blow'em all away!!!! Joe, where's my Ferrari?*

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The spirit of adventure. The thrill of the quest. The knowledge of our surroundings, and wisdom as to how to use these things to our own advantage. These are the things that heroes are made of, for without the skill, spirit, and wisdom that one needs to survive, all could possibly be lost—quest, thrill, and life itself. And survive one must, for the quest is within and around us all. To endure the quest, one must have strength, bravery, and yet still contain the gentleness and compassion as any other human. Our actions should not be in haste, for we may soon regret that which we cannot overturn; and yet we should still be able to rely upon instinct and powers of judgement in order to make decisions in a split second and execution of that action as rapidly. All of these things and more are necessary in order for the adventurer to complete his quest and live to see tomorrow. These things must be remembered in the completion of this task, for this is not just a game, but an adventure; an escape from reality. It may even be someone else's reality. All that's required is that you do the best you can do. And if worse comes to worse, pray occasionally... after all, it can't hurt...

Loading instructions:

To load the game, simply place the Skariten disk in your disk drive. If you have a Commodore 128, then place the computer in the 64 mode by simply typing "GO 64" and press RETURN. After the disk is in the drive and you are ready for the thrill of a lifetime, use the command 'LOAD "*", 8' or the equivalent if you have any fast load device installed, type RUN, and away you go! This game also requires that you have a joystick, and it should be plugged in to Port 2.

It is advisable that if this is your first time through the game, you should read the whole manual before you attempt any type of game play. The creators of this game are also avid game players, and we are guilty of not reading past the loading instructions before we dive in to a new game that we've just received. If you want to understand the game fully then read the manual. Otherwise, the game itself might get confusing after a while because you don't understand, and if you're not pleased then we're not pleased. Please take the time to sit down and read the manual, and you will better understand and enjoy the game.

THE LEGEND

A Proclamation from the King of Averoan to his Royal Son, the Prince.

It is about the trouble. The terrible plague of fear and terror that has struck our great continent of Avantiac. Many have known about the real cause of it all, and yet there has been very little suggested as to how such a problem can be solved. What is the problem, you ask?? Why, the problem is the one being that can cause even a minute action on his part resulting in great amounts of destruction. It is the result of the mighty dragon Skariten, which is rumored to be the most worst of beasts by manner of virtue and deed, having a hide of scales that is utterly impenetrable to all weaponry of our time. In the last two hundred years, the dragon has reigned over the whole continent with fear and terror as its tools. Many representatives of each race, the finest of their warriors and fighting men, tried at first to rid the land of this loathsome creature, but they all failed. Each race created its own weapon to gain an upper hand on the wicked beast, and yet they all still failed because they did not combine their magicks when they went out to do battle with the beast. This can be the only way to defeat the dragon, and so this is to be your task.

Who are you? You are but of royal blood, a... immediate descendant of the King

of Avantiac; his son. By order of necessity, you have been called upon by the King, royal family, and the continent itself to remove the evil Skariten from the land and restore tranquility to the countryside. The crown is depending on you to return feelings of good cheer and faith to the countryside, for all of these things have left with the courage to fight the dragon. Many of the continent are losing faith in the present monarchy because all of the other warriors are fearful to engage in battle with the dragon. For this reason, the people are no longer fully assured that the King is doing his best to resolve the problem. This is to be your task: to remove the dragon and restore faith in the crown, your own family, and bring honour to yourself.

Your first and foremost important part of completing your quest is acquiring the necessary equipment in order to complete your goal. To kill the dragon, you must collect all of the weapons and other items that the other races devised in their attempts to do the same. One such item is a spear forged by human fire and magic. Known as the Spear of Slaying, it is the one weapon believed to be able to possibly kill the beast. It is not known to be fact, for all attempts to wound the beast have resulted in the users own untimely demise. The dwarves have made a mystical helm of Lion's Courage, which when worn it gives the bearer a pure morality. It has been written of in legend and lore, and worthy of noting, that the Elves may have created a single pair of boots called the Boots of

Striding. If the legend is true, then these so-called boots allow the wearer to traverse great distances in the same size step, thereby reducing ones factors of fatigue. Another legend is the legend of the existence of armor that will prove to be resistant to dragon's blows and breath, but it is not known how long the armor will last or where the armor is kept. Once again, this is legend, so it is not known if they actually exist. There are other legends, myths, and stories of other magical items such as magical swords, bows, and other interesting items that could exist, but those will be left to be found.

In order to complete your quest, you must choose a character appropriate to your needs as to how to exterminate the dragon. You are given a choice of two types of characters to choose from. These are the form of the fighter and the mage. The fighter is able to use any type of weapon known to the continent. The disadvantage of the fighter is that he can use no magical items or spells except for the items that are necessary to kill the dragon. These items must be found in the course of the quest. The mage, on the other hand is able to use all the spells available to him, as long as he has the necessary magic points to cast the spell. Mages, however, have been forbidden to either make or use weapons. This is because way back in Avantis's history, the mages of the land all came together and designed their own powerful weapons.

When there was a disagreement between their race, their ensuing battle was so destructive that they turned over half of the countryside into wasteland, taking hundreds of years for vegetation and wildlife to return to them. Today, these areas are completely recovered but for one place which still shows these scars, and the mages of the land have since been banned from creation or use of all weapons except for a single mystical spear, also the Spear of Slaying. Both the mage and the fighter are the son of the King of the kingdom Averon, which is the primary kingdom of Avantis. Since your descent is of royalty, you should act accordingly, and strive to be as virtuous you possibly can be.

There are many things that one must be cautious about during the course of the quest. One of the most important things to remember is to watch your level of fatigue. If this raises very high, then you must rest. If you are in a combat situation when your fatigue climbs, then you could be condemned to certain death because one cannot fight a creature when one does not have the strength to wield a sword, hold a shield, or utter a magical chant. One must be constantly aware that his fatigue does not increase to a intolerable high number. In order to assure such an occurrence does not happen, the warrior should occasionally set up camp and rest for a period of time. Another fact to keep in mind is the level of morale of the adventurer. If the morale level is low, then you may fight

without conviction, and ultimately lose the battle. Be aware of these two factors constantly.

Your quest may take you through uncharted lands and may also prove that things aren't always as they seem. You must be constantly on your guard for surprise ambush and unprovoked attack. Never take any situations lightly, for they could lead to doom. Just remember to be constantly watching and do your best to remain in the best shape possible in case of combat situations.

May the Gods smile upon you on this perilous journey you are about to undertake, and may you return safe, sound, and with good tidings of the death of the evil Skariten. We shall anxiously await your triumphant return to the castle of Avron.

II. Game Proceedings

A. Stats Description

After completing the loading instructions, depending on whether you have a fast loader of some sort, the drive will run for a little while. When this is done, you will be presented with a title screen. At the bottom, after the load, you will see a small message:

C TO CONTINUE SAVED GAME

N TO START NEW ADVENTURE

If you have been involved in a previous adventure that is not yet complete, then you would want to continue your game, providing you saved it to disk. If not, then select 'N' on the keyboard. This will bring you to the character creation screen.

ENTER NAME
(UP TO 7 CHAR)

ENTER CLASS
(MAGE/FIGHTER)

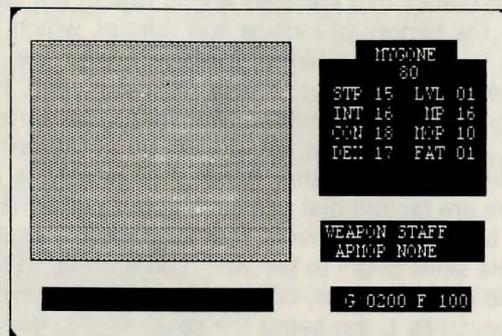
Creating a new character does not necessarily mean that your previous character has been wiped out of existence. The only way that this is done is if you save your new character on the game disk.

Decide upon a name for your character and enter it where the cursor is at. Do the same to decide if you would rather use a mage or fighter to complete your quest. If you wish, a simple 'M' or 'F' is sufficient for selection. If you like another name than the one you first

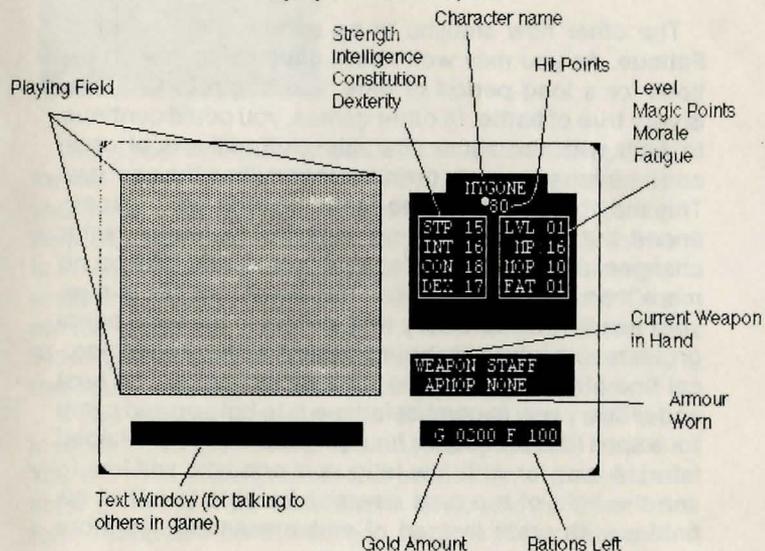
had, then choose 'N' after the program asks if the selections were satisfactory. This will mean you will have to go through the process again, but it also allows correction of any mistakes that might have been made.

After the character selection is complete, you are presented with the main playing screen, where all of the action takes place and your character's statistics are also shown. If you have any experience at role-playing games, the stats will look familiar. If not, then this is a brief lesson. 'STR' is the amount of strength possessed by a player, being a factor between 10 and 18 with the highest at 18. 'INT' is the amount of intelligence possessed by a player, and also uses the same scale of 18 as strength. 'DEX' is a player's dexterity, or agility. A low dexterity means that a player may not be as well coordinated as a person that has a higher dexterity. 'CON' is for constitution, or the character's ability to withstand physical and mental pressure or trauma. Constitution affects the amount of endurance and stamina of a character, which could decide the victor in any battle. It also affects the total amount of hit points that a player has. Your **Hit Points** are directly related to constitution. They show the total amount of damage that the character can take before he dies. This is your window to the distant continent of Avantiae, and it is also the way that you control the actions of your character. The playscreen looks something like this:

I. Playing Screen



II. Playing Screen Description

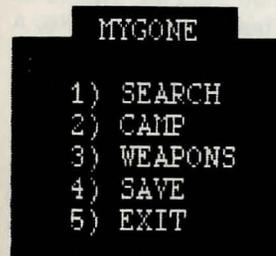


The two interesting stats that are not usually found in adventure games that can play a vital role in the game itself are the factors of morale and fatigue, which is a deciding factor in any battle. Morale is your feelings toward your surroundings. If your morale is high, then you feel good about the things that are happening around you, and any actions that you do will be at the best of your ability. If, on the other hand, your morale is low, then there are factors that can inhibit your performance as to the best possible action. Your performances suffer, your battle skills begin to fail, and if not corrected then you could end up stone, cold dead. Morale runs on a scale from 10 to 1; ten being the best morale, and one being the worst.

The other new statistic to be added is the factor of Fatigue. As you may well know, after doing certain actions for a long period of time, you begin to tire. This is very true of battle. In other games, you could continue to fight with the same character, kill millions of orcs, and be fresh enough to do in another million the next day. This may be a nice feature for some who are inexperienced, but it is far from being realistic. The fatigue factor changes all of this, stressing that you should take on no more than you think you can handle. If you get in over your head, you could very well end up in the local burial grounds with your only hopes of glory as an archaeological find after decomposing for a billion years. The best and primary way to combat fatigue is to hole up and camp for a spell (the procedure for doing this will be explained later). A warrior with low fatigue is one who will live to see the light of the next day, and be able to tell of his battles with pride instead of embarrassment. It's more fun that way.

B. Menu Selection and Items

How do you select which weapon you want to use? How do you set up camp to rest? Where the heck is this nice save feature that allows you to continue after supper and that one favorite television episode? Fear not, mighty adventurer. If you are not in a city, then the way to get to these utilities is to simply press the button. In place of your statistics, you get a nice menu of options that are available:



Selection screen
(appears when button
is pressed)

This is your selection screen. You are given four options for the game and one to leave this menu and return to your stats display. When you call up this menu, the top item **SEARCH** will be highlighted in blue, showing that it is selected for use. If you want to search, then simply press the button. Why would you want to search? One reason would be if you want to look for the Spear of Slaying. The search function is necessary for locating the equipment that is vital to completing your quest.

If you want to camp instead of search, then pull the joystick down until **CAMP** is blue, then press the button. You will then see a graphic representation of your character camping. Your character is done resting when his form reappears on the screen. Why is it necessary to camp during the game? Simple: the better rested you

are, the lower your fatigue and the higher your morale. Therefore, keep rested at all times.

Weapons allows your character to change the weapon that he is currently holding in his hand. Select this item and press the button, then watch the **WEAPON** column under the stats board as it changes to the weapon of your choice. The selection is done by moving the joystick forward until the weapon desired appears in the column. Your choice depends on what weapons you buy and find while on your quest. Choices range from the traditional two-edged sword to the bow to the huge battle axe. A total of six weapons are to be chosen from depending on what you have in your possession. However, you can only have one set of armor at a time. This is the only out of common sense, because how many armor sets can you wear at one time? Also, how many armor sets can you carry around at one time? The only thing that extra armor contributes to is a hernia and rapid tiring. Since the extra armor isn't necessary, then you don't (and can't) have any extra sets. When you have the weapon you want, press the button again and you return back to the selection screen.

The last two items are rather apparent and are rather simple in execution. **SAVE** just saves your current position and condition of your character along with any item gains or losses. **EXIT** returns you to the stats display.

C. City/Building Entrance

How is it possible that you can enter the cities? The method is quite simple. All you have to do is place your character over the city and the words '**PRESS BUTTON**' appear in the text window indicating that it is possible to enter the structure, whether it is a city, village, or tower. There will be a short load time as the village data loads in to the computer, and then you will see the en-

trance to the structure itself. You will see the buildings and other things that are in the town, some of which you may be able to enter. All you ever have to watch for is the words '**PRESS BUTTON**' to appear in the text window, and then you know that it is possible to enter a building. If you do not wish to enter at a particular time, simply walk on by the front door/gate, and the message will disappear. It is usually a good idea to enter a structure when it has been discovered for the first time in order to try and locate an item that may be necessary in order to complete the quest, to raise your level of food, or just to get some information. Therefore, use the cities to your advantage, for they can hold the key to the solution of the quest itself.

D. Special Items

There are some special items that are necessary to the completion of the quest. All of the items listed below are these items:

Spear of Slaying: this is the only known weapon to be able to wound the beast . . . no one lasted long enough against the dragon to see if it would kill it.

Helm of Lion's Courage: when it is worn by the adventurer, it gives him an attitude of invincibility.

Mystical Armor: just that, an armor that can protect the wearer from the violent force of a dragon in combat, although no one is very sure how long it will last in combat.

Key of Opening: When found by the adventurer, this key leaves no door or chest locked. It is a mystical key that opens any obstacle.

Boots of Striding: If found (it is not known even if they exist, but since it is lore, we may as well tell you what they do), they help to reduce the fatigue of the wearer.

If these things are possessed by the adventurer, then they will be displayed in tiny icon form under the player's

statistics, according to what the player has found. All of these items are necessary if the completion of the quest is the goal. Without these items, you will not complete the quest, so the quicker these things are obtained, the faster the quest will approach the final battle.

E. Gathering Information

In order to obtain the special items that are needed to complete the quest, you must search the continent and the towns, cities, and villages. Occasionally you may stumble on a certain item that is vital to your task, but finding most of these will rely more on talking to inhabitants that live in the area. To do this, walk up to any person on the screen and press the button. Then simply type in what you wish to say to that person, but keep in mind—you can only use certain key words. For example, typing **NAME** means that you are inquiring about the name of the person. There are other key words that are available, but if we gave you those, then there would be no adventure.

F. To Battle!

You are taking a leisurely walk through the woods, doing ordinary things that any other experienced dragon killer does at the time, such as cleaning and caring for your weapons, keeping in top physical form, and other things to keep at your best. Suddenly, out of nowhere, three strange creatures leap out brandishing weapons and yelling unintelligible curses. What to do, What to do? Run and preserve your skin to fight less vile (and dangerous) vermin? Maybe, but then you would be ridiculed for being a coward, and these guys don't look like the type to spare a person who has turned their back on them. No, no my good friend. You must fight or die. Survival is not easy, but it is imperative. You may run

from your attackers, but in the end, they must be exterminated; for as long as they breathe, they will keep right on coming at you.

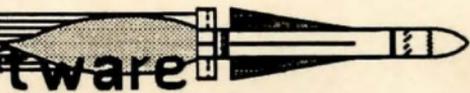
G. Spells and Spell Usage

NOTE . . . This information is imperative for the mage only.

There are four different spells available to the mage. They are listed in the order of power consumption and importance. The least powerful of these is the **magic bolt**. This spell fires a minimal bolt of energy toward your adversary. Not something to use on that huge orc towering over 15 feet above you, but able to slow more smaller annoyances. The next powerful spell is the **paralysis** spell, which as its name implies, paralyzes the opponent. This is a permanent spell, but the bigger the boogie man the lesser the effect of the spell. Onward and upward we have the **lightning bolt**. I'm sure you've seen one, and the effects are . . . well, let's just say that I would rather cast this spell than be on the receiving end. This is more effective on larger creatures, and capable of vaporizing those nuisances that you would have otherwise used the magic bolt on. Definitely fun . . . Finally, we have the **mind blast**. The mind blast spell is a final resolution to an attack. The theoretical concept is that it takes every synapse in the body of the attacking creature and creates multiple short circuits, resulting in the instant death of the attacker. No creature can withstand the attack. Since each of these spells use pure mental energy, they are very taxing on the caster in the terms of magic points. This shows a direct relationship between casting ability and intelligence. If you are as smart as a brick, then don't expect to cast the spell of a god, but those spells that are so special to bricks.

H. Final Prayers

Well . . . what else is left to be said? Don't take candy from strangers, don't go in dark places alone, say 'no' to drugs, and all of that other stuff you were taught when you were young . . . but seriously, folks. There are many secrets left hidden for you to find. Visit cities often, for they offer you the wealth of information that is necessary to finish the adventure. Carry all of the weapons you can find. And remember, Remember, REMEMBER . . . this game designer has a twisted mind: look for anything out of the ordinary. Good luck, bon voyage, and God help you . . . 'cause you're gonna need him.

Balistic Software 

SKARITEN

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Joe Earls

2086 Klondike Rd.
Delaware, OH 43015

Stephen Phelps