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
"" "" """" "" "" """""""""" """" """"
```

d'Argent

(A Mediaeval Graphical Adventure Game)

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Version 1.2 - April 1995

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?"

"Welllll...." 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 waggling!

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

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-raaa!

                              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.

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 l)og 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
(i.e., you just say "/l") the game assumes the default filename
of "AVVY.LOG".

/p<device> This switch p)rints 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 œ1 (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. Avaricius 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!

(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 Cwytalot 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
------- ----   -----
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:
                    Pounds sterling   U.S. dollars
Avalot   20 +P&P (=S&H)   30 +P&P (=S&H)
Avalot and Avaricius   25 +P&P (=S&H)   40 +P&P (=S&H)
        (the first Avvy game)

P&P is two pounds in the U.K., or five dollars (three pounds) outside.
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 1995.

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.

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:

 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]