## IF notes

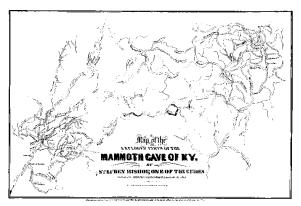
based on *The Craft of Adventure, 2nd ed.*, Graham Nelson and *Twisty Little Passages*, Nick Montfort

Geoffrey Matthews

November 20, 2017

# **Prehistory**

- ► Stephen Bishop
- Explorer, Mammoth Cave, 1820-1857



## History, 1972-1981

- Will Crowther
- Explorer, Mammoth Cave
- Dungeons and Dragons player
- ► About 1972, wrote ADVENT for his children

#### At End of Road

You are standing at the end of a road before a small brick building. Around you is a forest. A small stream flows out of the building and down a gulley.

### Crowther was a caver

You are in a splendid chamber thirty feet high. The walls are frozen rivers of orange stone. An awkward canyon and a good passage exit from east and west sides of the chamber.

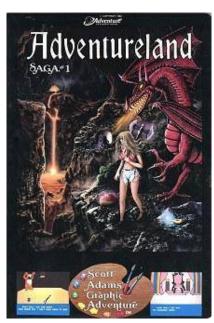
# Parser Prehistory

- Hunt the Wumpus
- ► SHRDLU

## History, 1972-1981

- ► About 1975, Don Woods gets ahold of Crowther's ADVENT
- Adds puzzles, pirates, vending machines etc.
- ADVENT circulates on the ARPANET
- ► The Soul of a New Machine, Tracy Kidder: ADVENT epitomizes the geek culture
- Scott Adams, many titles, simple games
- John Laird's 'Haunt'
- MUDs

### Scott Adams



Adventureland 1978

I'm in a dismal swamp.

Obvious exits: North, South, East, West, Up.

I can also see: cypress tree — evil smelling mud — swamp gas

- floating patch of oily slime
- chiggers

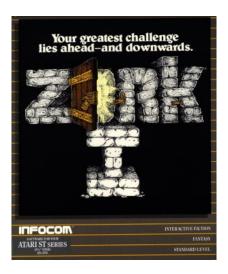
#### Game assemblers

#### JUMPHOLE:

SKIP UNLESS R(CHAIR)R EQ HOLEROOM SKIP UNLESS H CHAIR PLAYER PRINTRET HOLEHIGH MOVE PLAYER WITH TO UPROOM PRINTRET CHAIRJUMP

- MIT students built Zork
- ▶ 1979, Started Infocom
- ► Huge commercial success by 1985
- Ran on over 20 different personal computer types
- Business software never successful
- Dozens of successful titles

## Infocom



- Enchanter, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker
- Deadline
- Suspended
- ► Infidel
- Planetfall
- Wishbringer
- Leather Goddesses of Phobos
- ► Trinity

## Sierra Online



## The Golden Age

- Amazon, Michael Crichton
- ► The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Douglas Adams
- Mindwheel, Robert Pinsky (US Poet Laureate)
- ▶ I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream, Harlan Ellison
- Gateway, Frederik Pohl

- Computer graphics improve
- Market dries up
- Infocom collapses, bought by Activision
- ► Community grows ftp.gmd.de

- TADS and Inform
- Activision releases Lost Treasures of Infocom
- Newsgroups and the web
- Annual contests:
  - ► GAGS (AGT) contest
  - XYZZY awards
  - SpeedIF (write a game in two hours)