

QUESTRON

Strategic Simulations
High resolution fantasy role-playing game

Description

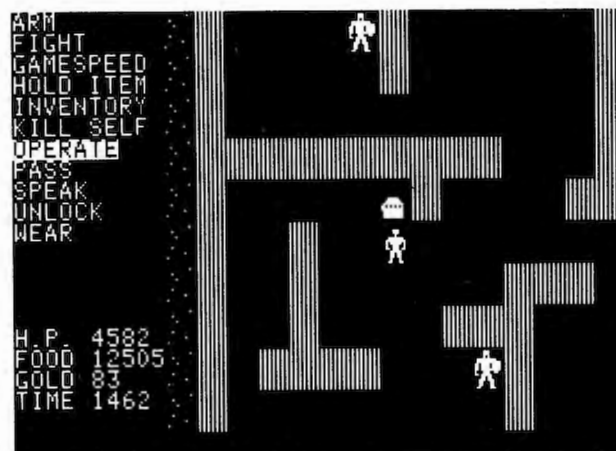
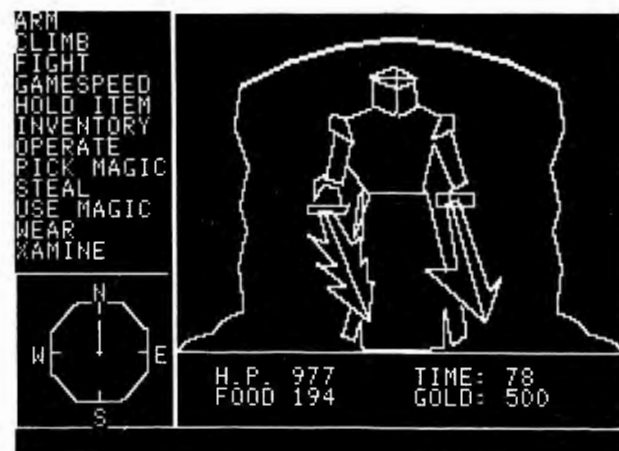
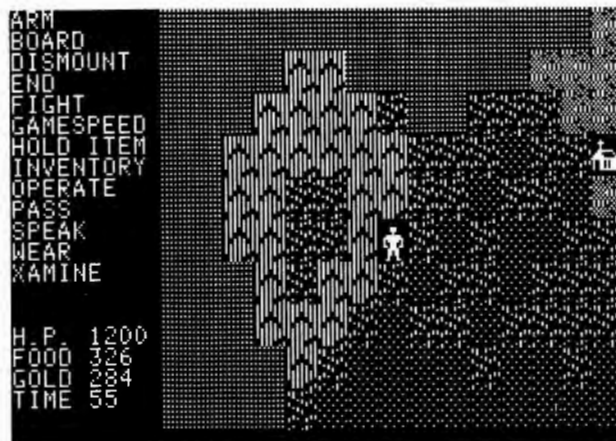
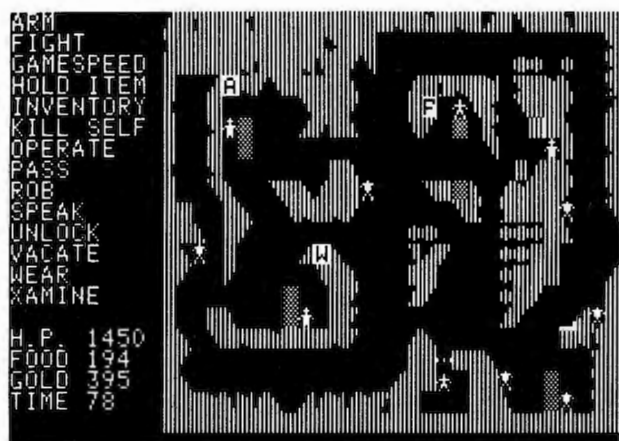
This *Ultima* clone pits you against the evil wizard Mantor, who has unleashed monsters on your land, virtually imprisoning the king and the good wizard Mesron in their castle. You'll do a lot of gambling, monster whomping, and exploring in the villages and dungeons of your homeland before you amass enough power and strength to take on Mantor. Your quest focuses on collecting keys that open doors that lead you to nastier monsters, more keys, and treasure. If you succeed, you'll be made a Baron and decked out for the promised sequel, *Questron II*.

Playability

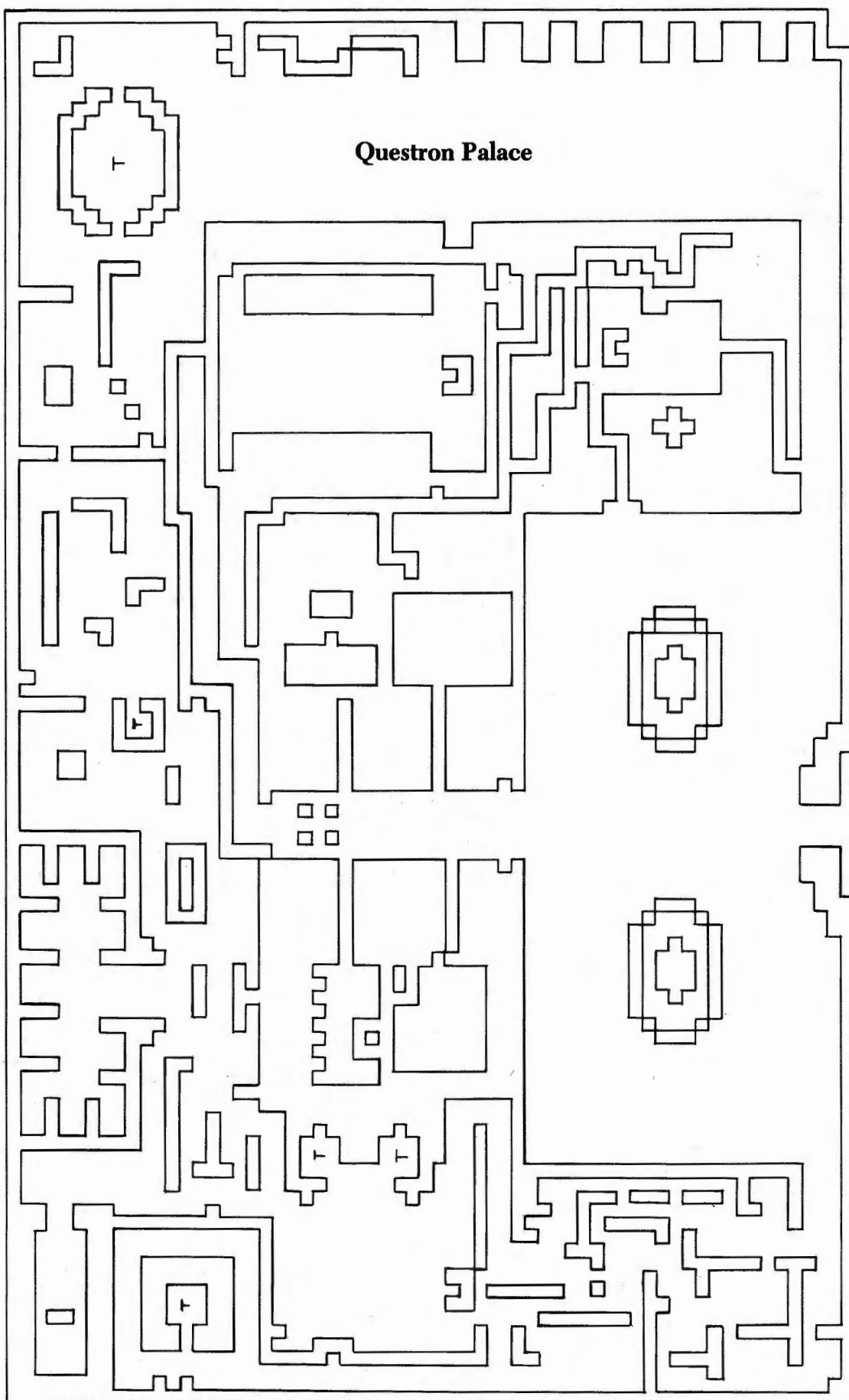
The scrolling, graphic map is very much like *Ultima's*. Available commands are listed to the left and invoked by pressing the key corresponding to the first letter. The puzzles are not complex since the real challenge of games like this is to build strength and take on the supervillain. You can save a number of characters, but you can't move them to a new place in the game, or start over with them. So if you leave a character in a bad spot, you might just as well start over.

Compatibility and Price

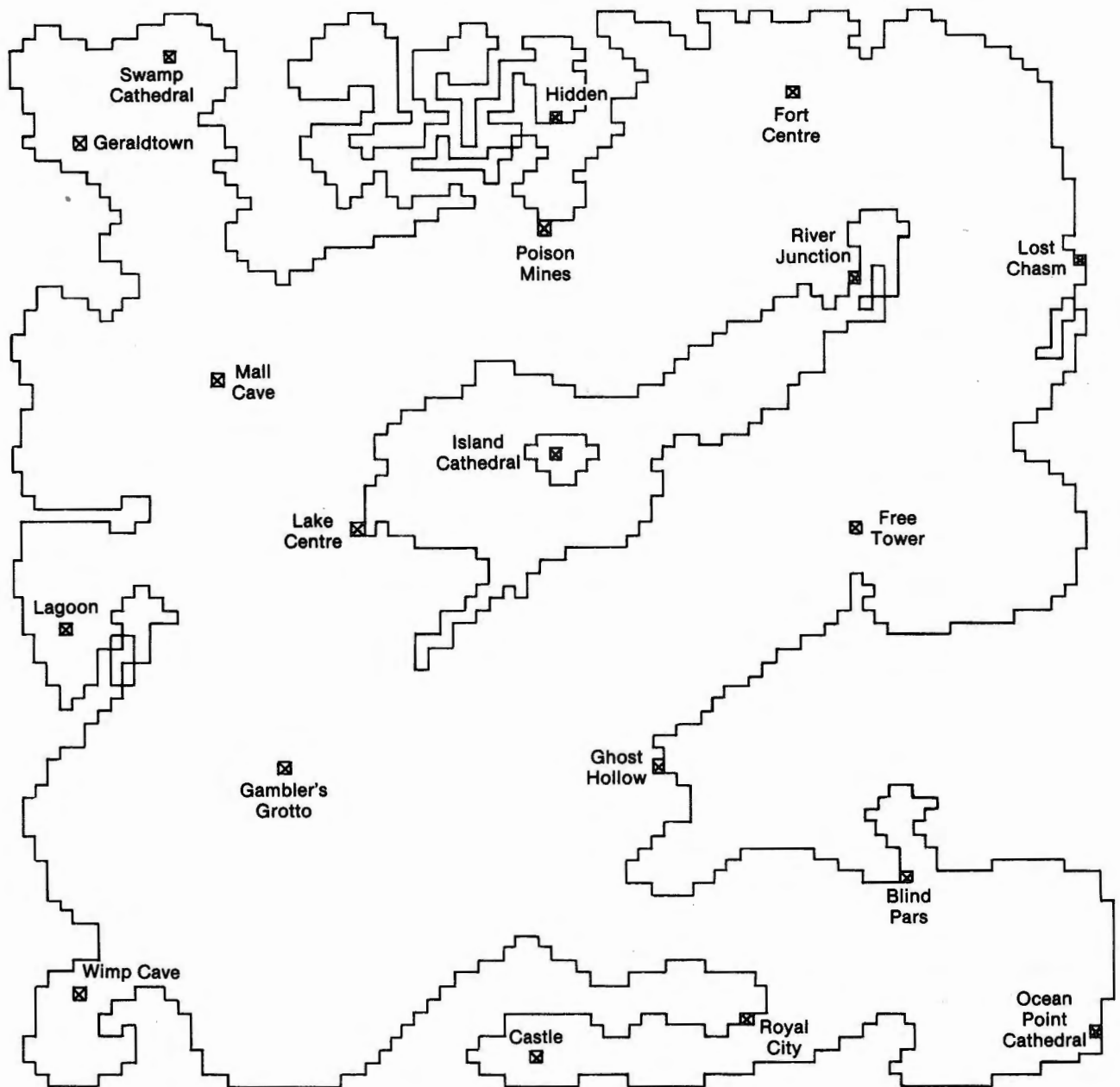
\$39.95 Commodore 64; \$49.95 Apple II series, Atari 800, 800XL, 1200, 1200XL, 130XE



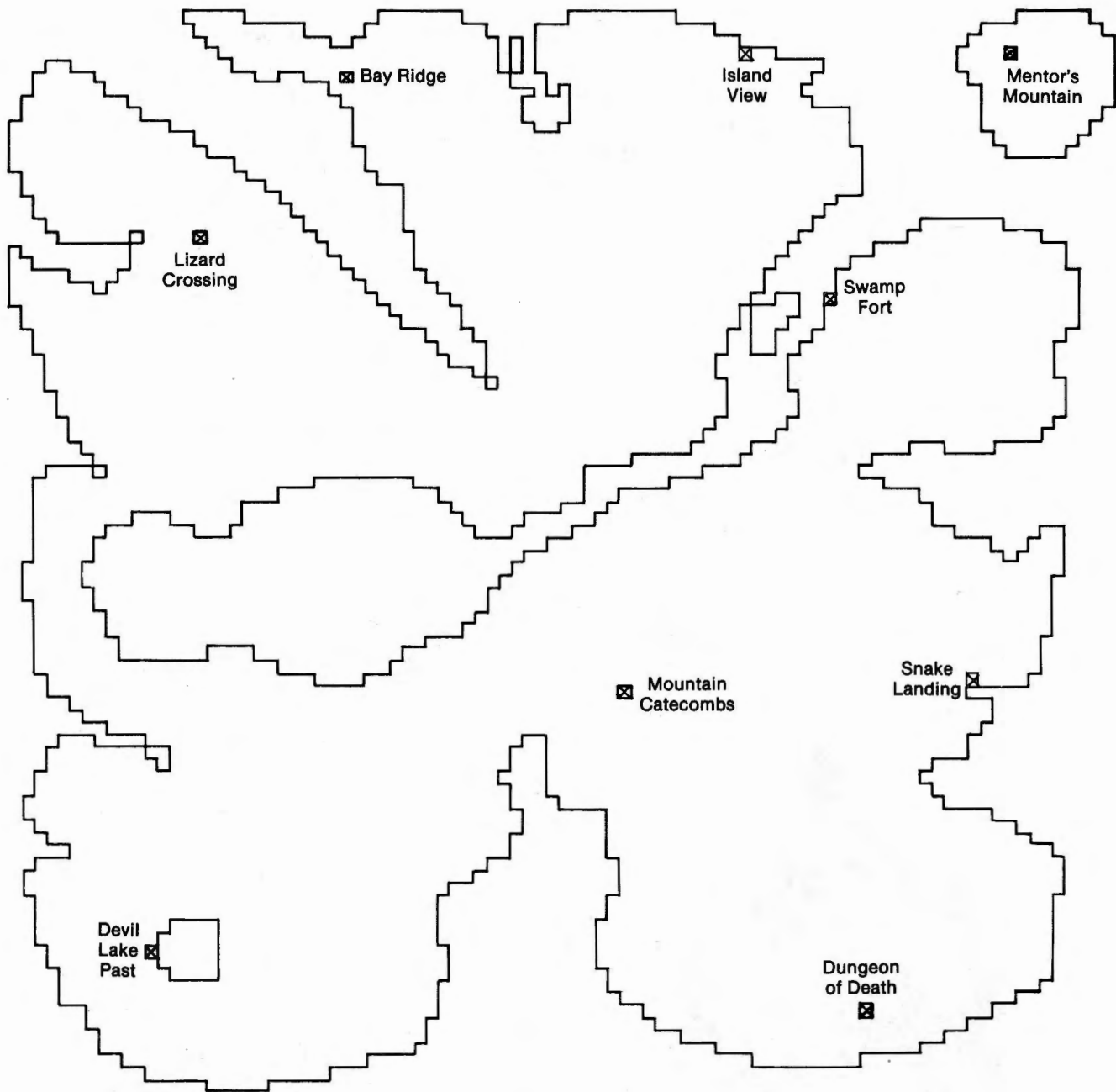
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Like most fantasy adventures, this game has no specific solution. There are, however, a number of time saving hints and specific approaches that can materially speed your progress in this otherwise rather long game. One approach is to cheat, sort of. Enter Geraldton and hit the gaming tables with your new and shiny bright character. Try to double your money. If you are successful, leave and save the game. Then reenter and try again until you have amassed about \$64,000, a total of six double or nothings. If you lose, well ... other new characters are easy to come by.

Arm yourself as well as you can. Generally, the more expensive the weapon, the better, but be sure to buy Rope and Hooks. Then head for the Swamp Cathedral to the Northeast. Speak to the priest, donate about \$2,000, and enter the cubile near the doorway. The vials, when Held and Operated, increase your hit points by 100 each time, up to a maximum of 500. Try the game in the far corner, it's an easy way to pick up a couple of points.

Read the clues obtained by speaking to the unknown creatures that approach you (most of which are listed below, to save you some money). Some will offer you various pieces of hardware, some are excellent buys (but you should know what the going price is). You'll need the Rope and Hooks to traverse the mountains and later to climb about the dungeons. Note that the Ghost Hollow is a neat place to play double or nothing as there are no guards to get bent out of shape if you break the bank. Try to amass about \$100,000 by the play-and-save (or restart) technique.

Head for the Castle to find the real action. By now you should have been notified that Mesron wishes to speak to you. Find him in the lower right corner area and get your first promotion and the powders. (The second purpose of the powders that he gives you is to kill Mantor, much later.) Go sit in the chair near him and be teleported to somewhere else in the Castle. With 500 hit points, find the treasure chests that are marked with a "T" on the map, as they are the ones with keys in them. As soon as you open the first chest, the guards will converge on you. It's time to run like crazy, as you're by no means strong enough to cope with them. Get out of the castle with as many keys as you safely can, maybe two. The Ruby Key will open many closed-off dead ends when you Operate it at those locations.

Save the game, restore your hit points, and whomp a local monster or two to "reset" the guards to where they won't attack you as soon as you re-enter the castle. Dive in again for more keys. Check the chests that you already hit; one or more might be closed again and contains another needed key. The Silver Key will unlock the chest in the large room in the center, where you'll get \$2,000 for your trouble. Use the Lead Key to get in to see the man just to the left of center. For about 10 vials of Holy Water, he'll increase your strength. The Emerald Key gains you access to the Princess in the upper right of center. For a reasonable fee, she'll increase your charisma.

By now you should also have the Gold Key, which will open any door in the castle. Go to the upper right, above the Throne Room, and Operate the Gold Key. Speak to the King. As soon as you move, the guards will converge on you, but now you are tough enough to take them on. Get the Trumpet in the chest to the lower right of the Throne Room and leave the castle for essentially the last time.

Mesron may wish to see you again, to tell you that Lagoon has been wiped out. But it's OK to head onward and upward. Stop by one of the three cathedrals and this time buy your hit points (you can get close to, but not more than, 20,00—and you'll need them all). Note that in the Ocean Point Cathedral you can get a free Flute, with which you can get armor, weapons, gold, or hit points.

Head north to the city surrounded by fog. In fog squares, operate your Trumpet to dispel it. Buy a clipper ship, although a raft may work as well (at least it will circumnavigate the continent). Sail north to the second continent. Stay with your ship and avoid wandering around the land areas, as the monsters here are very tough compared to what you'll find in the sea. Visit Snake Landing and load up on magic and maximize your hit points. Get several hundred Stone Spells, as generally they are the most effective. (Once in a while they backfire, leaving you paralyzed for several moves while the monsters beat you bloody, but it's worth the gamble.) Just about all of the words of the guards and prisoners are the same ones you heard on the other continent.

Enter the Mountain Catacombs, saving your game just before you go in. Work your way to the Eighth Level as fast as you can, but it's OK to Steal the Coffins (they contain hit points) and boxes (they contain gold) as you go. Later on you'll find Urns, which generally contain manuscripts, but can also contain character point enhancers or detractors. If you have the rope and hooks, you can use them to Climb up or down a hole in the floor, otherwise Climb will cost you hit points. Triangular shapes on the floor are rope ladders which you may climb down. Somewhere on the Eighth Level you will find a safe; you'll need a Pass Wall spell to get on the other side. Now you can open it and find the Iron Key needed to gain access to the Dungeon of Death, your next stop after loading up on hit points and spells again.

Save the game again before you head in, as this place gobbles hit points. Head for the Eighth Level of the Dungeon of Death, where you'll find another safe, but this time with a fancy Diamond Ring in it. After getting it, get out, which is surprisingly easy, and restore yourself for the final onslaught.

The Diamond Ring will permit you to enter Mantor's Mountain. This time you have about seventeen levels to traverse. Fortunately, starting around the Third Level, the holes in the floor seem to always be near where you come in. You'll know when you get to the bottom of this dungeon as the screen display changes to a castle-like area, just loaded with grouchy guards. You'll have to clobber them all. This is the beginning of the lengthy finale. Use the Gold Key to gain access to Mantor's Room in the upper left. Move next to him, promptly, ignoring his Fireballs. Operate the Powder, which will efficiently do him in, and leave with his Book of Magic.

Move to the right and down a tad; stand next to the Machine and Operate the Book of Magic. Then sit back and watch the fun. Nah, you've still got a little to do, like speaking to Mesron and the King. The last message is to flip the disk, which will rewrite your character as a Baron with whatever you've got left in the way of hit points and possessions, so if you want to enjoy the ending without a lot of chasing around again, don't flip!

Sayings of the Guards and Creatures (at least most of them)

Many wandering creatures are friendly.
Search for Holy Water in the Cathedral.
Give the Priest a lot if you can.
The Holy Water is by the Cross.
You may find the Island Cathedral.
You should put money in the bank.
You can sometimes slip by one of the gamblers.
Only the Club kills the Piercing Pungie quickly.
The Mace kills the Irish Stalker easily.
The Morning Star best destroys the Strangler Fiend.
The Phasor Spiders hate the Whip.

Use the Flail on the Pit Screamer.
The Flute can keep you alive.
There are keys for every door.
The best treasure is far far inside.
The castle is full of traps.
A frozen treat is easy to beat.
Be rid quickly of the apparition.
The ghosts can be especially deadly.