



>House of Lords

Lords of Midnight was released to critical acclaim in August 1984, 20 years ago. In the first of a two-part feature, Chris Wild chronicles the original game and its sequels, and talks to Mike Singleton, the trilogy's esteemed author...

“Welcome to the world's first-ever Epic game,” begins the manual to Lords of Midnight, Mike Singleton's 8-bit classic. The author was keen to point out that this wasn't simply an adventure or a war game, but a new type of game that could only be described as ‘epic’. Indeed, the term ‘game’ could only be used loosely: “It more closely resembles a fantasy film than a computer game, but the main difference is that you are in control of the main characters and whether you lead them to victory or defeat, the story is written around your exploits. The game sets the scene, controls the forces of evil and independent characters which move in and out of the plot, and draws the landscape of Midnight and its people in a way never before seen in any computer game.” As Luxor of the Free, the player was invited to write a new chapter in the history of Midnight, while the game itself left an indelible mark on the history of gaming. Lords of Midnight really was revolutionary for its time.



Lords of Midnight



Lords of Midnight was conceived in September 1983, when Terry Pratt organised a meeting with Mike. "He was in the process of setting up Beyond Software for EMAP," remembers Mike, "and was keen for me to write a game for them. I talked about three different possibilities, one of which involved the idea of landscaping – I really can't remember what the other two ideas were. Anyway, the landscaping idea interested Terry the most, but it was still very much at the idea stage. The outcome of our discussion was that I would first implement the technique and then, providing it worked, we'd go ahead

with the full game – which I wanted to call the Lords of Atlantis. Fortunately for everyone, Terry wasn't particularly fond of the title and asked me to think of something else. After a month or so of experimentation – I seem to remember I began by drawing pyramids in BASIC – I had enough to show as a proof of concept and I signed a contract with Beyond. And thus Lords of Midnight was born."

Singleton created a technique that would display his game compellingly and originally. Adventure games of that era displayed the odd static image, which took a few seconds to draw, along with a textual description of what the character could see. Mike's technique gave the player a full 360-degree panoramic view that changed as things altered on the horizon. The functional graphics were an integral part of the game and the accompanying text provided the player with additional details. For example, you knew there was an army before you as you could see it through Luxor's eyes, and the text would confirm how many soldiers that army consisted of. Mike called the technique 'Landscaping'. As for the blue-on-white colour scheme, this came about when Mike was designing graphics to overcome the colour-handling limitations of the Spectrum. Blue and white worked well together, and the idea of a world covered with ice followed.



The landscaping and panorama technique demanded a grid-based, terrain-driven map rather than the usual location-based adventures of the time. Thus, Mike drew up his map and started inventing the world in which his game would take place. The previous year's biggest adventure game, The Hobbit, comprised 80 locations; Lords of Midnight had no less than 3,904. The Hobbit, along with most, if not all, adventures of that era, allowed you to control just one character; Lords gave you control of up to 32.

Myth making

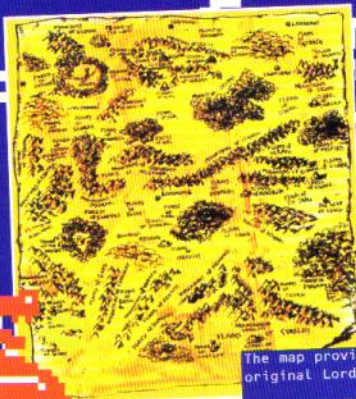
Lords of Midnight shipped with a 30-page novella that had a hand-drawn map on the back. Inside was a keyboard overlay to help the player with the one-key control method. The story and game plot were well written, if not particularly original, as Tolkien's Lord of the Rings was an obvious influence.

The story sees Doomdark the Witchking, a fallen counsellor of the Wise, draw power from the icy cold and use it to increase his hold over Midnight, a land ravaged by winter for thousands of years. Having conquered much of the northern territories, he unleashes his hordes on the remaining strongholds of southern Midnight during the deepest part of the winter, the solstice. He draws on the power of the magical artefact, the Ice Crown – fashioned from the purest, coldest crystals of ice and forged in the frozen wastes on the bleakest nights by Doomdark himself – to increase the mystical Ice Fear that grips the world.

Luxor of the Free discovers that he is the one true King, the last heir of the House of the Moon. By harnessing the power of the Moon Ring, given to him by Rorthron the Wise, he has the Power of Command and Vision. Luxor must attempt



That's right – over 32,000 views!



The map provided with the original Lords of Midnight



to unite the Lords of Midnight and take them into battle against Doomdark. To help with the near-impossible task, Luxor's son Morkin journeys north to seek out and destroy the Ice Crown. Thus, the War of the Solstice begins.

The story borrowed heavily from Lord of the Rings and there were many similarities in characters, landscape, and plot lines. It certainly wasn't coincidence – in fact, two years earlier Mike released the game Shadowfax, in which you played Gandalf riding his trusty steed against the Black Riders, and in 1989 he would go on to write War in Middle Earth, an official strategic war game for Melbourne House. It's safe to say that Mike had a desire to work with Tolkien material.

The fact that the story is typical fantasy fare matters little. For its time, Lords of Midnight was both beautifully crafted and thoroughly gripping, immersing the player in an extensive world with a complete history. Wayne Britcliffe, artist on War of the Solstice, a PC remake of Lords of Midnight, agrees: "I think the strongest draw is that Midnight, Icemark and all the characters were so strongly realised that they live on beyond playing the actual games themselves. All the great fictional places and characters of literature, films or games, at least where I'm concerned, do this. Midnight is no exception. Even when actually playing the games your imagination takes you beyond, especially in the case of the original's 8-bit limitations. I imagined swords clashing, men screaming, the plains filling with marauding enemy armies, and smoke rising in the distance as snow falls."

Forging ahead

Lords of Midnight was an epic undertaking, huge in scope and technique. Despite being designed and written by one person in under six months, the coding was extremely tight and very well tested. There

have only been a handful of bugs found to date. "There would have been some seven months between my first meeting with Terry Pratt and the final master copy of the game," says Mike, "but in actual flat-out work, I would say it was actually somewhere between four and five months of full-time effort, including writing the story and manual."



Luxor's prepares to ride into battle

>Race for the prize

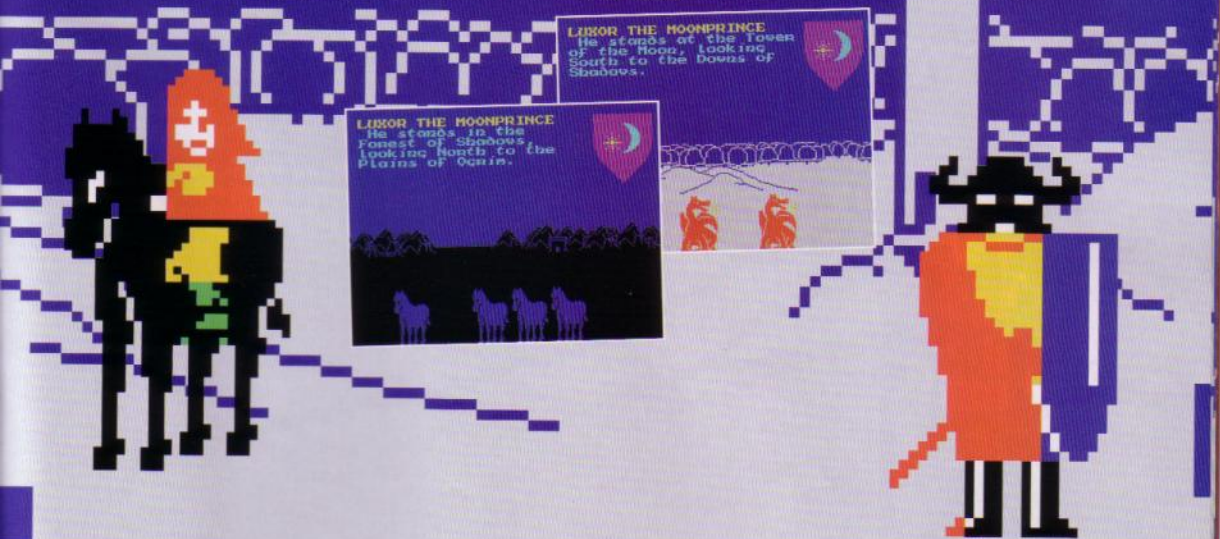
In a clever move, Lords of Midnight allowed you to print out every page of information while you were playing. Beyond used this for a competition, by offering to turn the campaign of the first person to complete the game into a novel – providing you sent in the printouts of course. "It ultimately depended on finding a book publisher who would run with the idea," commented Singleton. "Beyond, I know, tried hard to get a publisher interested – at one stage, Roger Kean and Oliver Frey, the guys who set up Crash magazine, were very nearly recruited to turn it into a graphic novel. But in the end, no willing publisher was found. The first person to complete the game had actually sent in his roll of thermal paper within about two weeks of the game hitting the shelves, which amazed us all – especially me. It had taken me nine solid hours to test the game to victory and I had the complete map and all the inside information to help me. I know Beyond gave him some sort of other prize but I really can't remember what that was."

By the end of the project there was very little of the Spectrum's memory left, at least not enough to do anything with. In order to save memory, Mike removed the bottom three rows of the map, which saved him a whopping 384 bytes, because each location required 2 bytes. That would only just store the paragraph you've just read, but it was a huge amount to Mike. Towards the end of the project, memory became such a problem that it was streamlined four times to make it fit and even then a few features were still lost in the process. The manual states: "The Utarg of Utarg may be persuaded to bring the Targ into the war against Doomdark, especially if the armies of the Witchking are tempted or forced to trespass on his lands. If the Ice Fear grows too strong, however, he may lend his loyalty to Doomdark." Sadly, deadlines and memory restrictions meant the feature was nothing more than an item in the manual.



LUXOR THE MOONPRINCE He stands at the Tower of the Moon, looking South to the Domes of Shadows.

LUXOR THE MOONPRINCE He stands in the Forest of Shadows, looking North to the Plains of Genn.



Doomdark's Revenge



February 1985 saw the release of the second part of the saga, Doomdark's Revenge, on the Spectrum (as with Lords, versions were also released for the Commodore 64 and Amstrad CPC). The game used the same visual techniques as the original but the design was rationalised to allow greater scope. With the game engine in place, Mike obviously had a head start. Still, despite a complete new back story, new graphics, new game mechanics, and the required changes to the engine, the game was finished in less than six months.

Doomdark's Revenge was set in the Frozen Empire, north-east of Midnight's Icy Wastes. Shareth the Heartstealer, desperate for revenge for the defeat of her father Doomdark, kidnaps Morkin and takes him into the Icemark. Luxor must travel north to find his son and crush a possible uprising within the Frozen Empire.

In light of the memory problems at the end of Lords, Mike had to make a number of programming refinements to cram the new game into the Spectrum's 48Kb RAM. The map was now 64x96 screens, resulting in a staggering 6,144 locations. This alone would take 12Kb, so the engine was optimised, making each location just 1 byte. In this way, the bigger map was stored in less memory. Lords had 32 characters, each taking up 32 bytes, whereas Revenge needed 128 characters, but Mike managed to store each in just 15 bytes. Many changes like this had to be made for the game to fit.

Although written with almost the same game engine, Revenge felt like a very different game, and wasn't necessarily better for it. The artificial

intelligence in Lords was simplistic – to some extent the game played on a set of rails. A large number of armies were set to stream down the map, visiting strongholds in an almost predefined manner, before finally making an assault on the Citadel of Xajorkith. Although this often led to a very similar game experience every time, it did help the game fit within the storyline. In Revenge everything was less predetermined, which in turn made the game seem much more random.

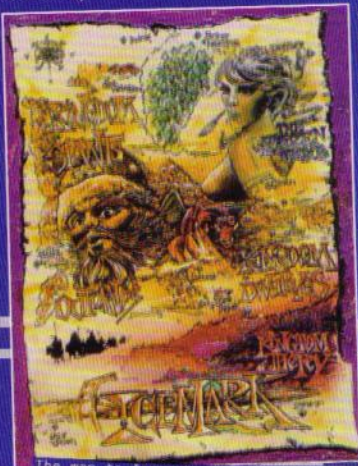
"I bought Doomdark's Revenge but the same wonder was never there," says Gaz Bell, author of Psion Midnight, a handheld version of Lords. "Maybe it's because there was no need to draw a map and discover the world as the lords usually found you one way or another. I did play it a lot and the first victory was sweet if somewhat unexpected, but the whole game was just too big and too random, and well-thought out strategies didn't really pay off like they did in Lords. In the end I went back to the original."



Second nature

Mike seemed to lavish more attention on Lords, and this was probably due to new time pressures. The map in Lords was hand drawn with every place and character individually named. In Revenge, Mike used a generating program, tweaking the seed numbers until he found a map he liked. The code that generated much of the map content and the names in the game was required to keep the memory usage down. This technique was the start of the fractal generation later used in his 16-bit games. The name generator made all the characters very similar, robbing them of personalities. They never felt like they had the history of the previous game's characters and the rationalisation of the language made the descriptions less colourful.

To be fair, Revenge also introduced a number of new elements, such as magical items, a female character, tunnels, mist, lieges and foes, character traits, and NPCs with a purpose. Problems aside, the game



The map to Icemark, the Frozen Empire



By Mike Singleton

Doomdark's Revenge

© Beyond Software



Luxor the Moormance
stands at the Gate of
Dunwoden looking
Southwest to the Hills of
Kahadonod.



Tanjebel the Fay stands
on the Plains of Vansilum
looking North to the
Hills of Glisak.



in the Moormance
as at the Gate of
Dunwoden looking
West to the Hills of
Kahadonod.



The sequel featured improved graphics

was still very good. As a sequel, it was more Jaws 2 than Speed 2.

Looking back, Mike himself prefers the original. "With 20/20 hindsight, the way the characters in Doomdark's Revenge made and broke alliances of their own accord, and moved about the map on their own quests, made things too unpredictable for the sort of

story of Morkin's search for a magical jewel that he could use to look into the future.

The story is set some years on from the events of the first two games, in the lands south-west of Midnight. Luxor

"The third part of the trilogy, possibly the most exciting yet, is still to come, when Mike will send Morkin down to the warmer lands which lie below Midnight itself, to find The Eye of the Moon."

The manual to Doomdark's Revenge teases the reader with talk of the third game

strategic planning a player could do in Lords. Perhaps some better feedback – in the form of news or intelligence information – to the player on what was actually going on in the (largely unseen) background between the other characters would have made this feature really work. At the time of release, though, I was convinced that Revenge was a significant improvement over the original."

Eye of the Moon

Just like Tolkien, Mike planned his story as a trilogy and Eye of the Moon was to be the final chapter. The game was always intended for release; it was even mentioned in the very first game as the

is dying and wants to see what is going to happen to Midnight after his death. So that Luxor can rest in peace, Morkin goes in search of the magical jewel, the Eye of the Moon, which enables people to see into the future.

After Lords and Revenge, Mike became very busy on numerous projects, so Eye became partly a hobby for him. He rewrote his graphics routines to enable full-colour graphics in the landscape panoramas – green trees, golden castles, red roofs – that didn't suffer from the Spectrum's dreaded colour clash. To achieve this, the engine would add extra black shading dynamically to the scenery graphics to mask any clash, a process that Mike would later premier in Dark Sceptre. The scenery graphics were runtime modifiable, allowing the engine to draw various versions based on the same graphics. For example, all the castles in the game would be unique – Mike would be able to specify the number of towers, shape of the tower, shape of the tower roof, colour of the tower roof, number of walls etc. Similar principles would be applied to all the scenery graphics allowing for more varied landscapes. Each character in the game would have a unique large-scale face generated by a similar identikit-style process.



The game's map would be four times larger than Lords, mainly generated rather than stored using an advanced version of Revenge's compression techniques. Mike also wrote a new name generator that provided more convincing names.

To prevent the vastness of the game hurting game play, the map was split into 12 realms and the player would have to complete quests in each kingdom before moving on. Although there would be more characters, the player would be able to take control of a commander and have characters follow his lead. The quest for the Eye of the Moon would make up the main thread of the game and it would have been unlikely to have had any military campaigns, apart from dealing with an enemy hindering the player's progress.

During one interview, Mike even hinted that he had been playing with linking two Spectrums together through the ear and mic ports, allowing for multiplayer games. "I did try it. And I made it work," says Mike, "but there were certain limitations that meant it wasn't very useable. The ear-mic socket connection was absolutely full of noise, so I had to do a ridiculous amount of handshaking, re-transmitting, and re-receiving to exchange correct data. The actual rate was something like two characters per second – a magnificent 16bps compared to the 5,600bps of a slow modem."

"This rather restricted the sort of game you could apply it to. I suppose it could actually have worked with the Lords model, which isn't particularly data heavy. I did actually use it in a game I wrote for C&VG. This was a mixture of a board game (the board was the centre-spread of the magazine) and a computer game about spies and spying. The Spectrum kept track of who was really who and who knew what about what. Normally, in a two-player game with one Spectrum, only one person was allowed to look at the computer screen at a time and would have a password to enable his display. But the facility to link two spectrums with the tape leads was there and you could each watch your own screen, with the two machines talking to each other – very slowly."

The third eye

Mike was working on Quake Minus One for the C64 and planned to start Eye after its release. However, by the time Quake Minus One shipped, Beyond was in the process of being bought out by Telecomsoft. Mike started work on its Star Trek licence, and then Dark Sceptre, so Eye of the Moon slipped into the shadows of history. Some of his later games, such as Midwinter, Flames of Freedom and Ashes of Empire, no doubt used many of the ideas that he was planning for Eye.

"Quake Minus One was a joint project with a friend of mine," Mike recalls. "Originally I was going to do mostly design and just a little

Speaking in tongues

Fredrik Ekman, author of the article "Ancient Tongue of the Wise", talks about Lord of the Rings as a major source of inspiration for Singleton, and reveals that The Citadel novelette contains an intriguing introduction. "Tolkien's influence is particularly obvious in the first game in the series, but can be clearly seen throughout the three games. In Tolkien's case, the driving motivation was the love of language. He just wanted to find out who were speaking the languages he invented, and thus he came to develop one of the most influential literary worlds ever. For Singleton it was different. He did not start with the languages. In fact, most names of places and persons from the first two games are all too typical of the sort of thing you will find in most hack fantasy novels. There appears to be little or no conscious thought of phonology, morphology or etymology, or any of the other 'ologies' which form the linguistic science."

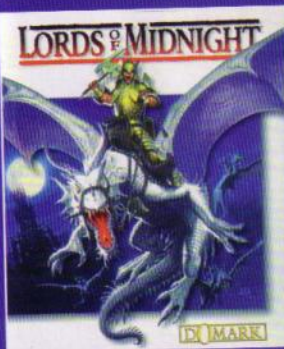
"Therefore it is all the more surprising and fascinating to find, in the novelette introduction to the third game, The Citadel, a few phrases of what appears to be a constructed language, the ancient tongue of the Wise. Not only is there a constructed language, but it seems to be elaborated at least to the level of being a fairly complex sketch, complete with some simple grammar rules and a vocabulary of some 20 words. Either that, or Singleton did a brilliant job of fooling me."

programming but the project turned out to need more programming on my side than I'd anticipated. This in turn meant I had less time to devote to Eye of the Moon. By the time Quake Minus One was finished, Beyond had changed hands and was part of Telecomsoft. The new management wanted to change the terms of the agreement for Eye of the Moon – same advance fee but two versions instead of one. Since this was originally a gentleman's agreement rather than a written contract, it was a question of take it or leave it. Feeling somewhat aggrieved at the proposed change, I decided to leave it. I always intended to find another publisher, but setting up Maelstrom Games and getting more and more heavily involved in its projects kept pushing Eye into the background.

"I'm afraid there's now fundamentally zero Eye of the Moon material in my possession. If screenshots were ever published (and I honestly can't remember if they were), they must have been mock-ups of what was intended, because I was still working on the rendering code when Telecomsoft and I parted company on the project. I do remember making some mock-ups, so maybe screenshots do exist."



Lords of Midnight 3: The Citadel



In 1993, Mike was finely given the chance by Domark to work on the final part of his trilogy. "Domark had contacted me about releasing a retro pack with (amongst others) Lords of Midnight and Doomdark's Revenge. This was duly published and this in turn led to Maelstrom and Domark talking about doing a new Lords of Midnight game."

For some reason, the new PC game wasn't to be Eye of the Moon. It was to

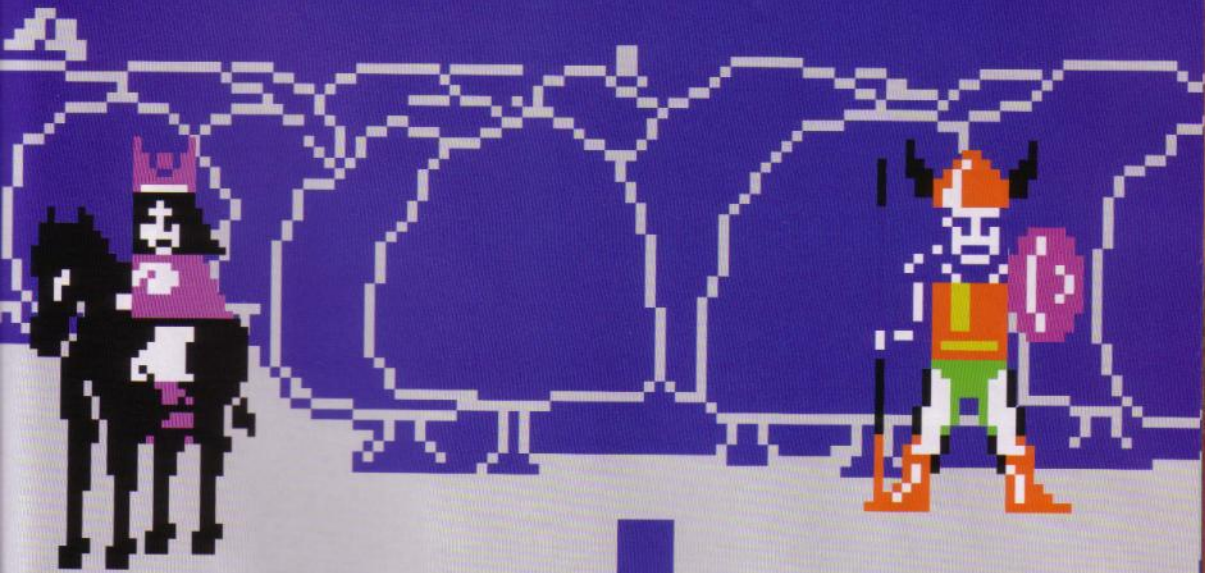
take place in the Blood March, south-east from Midnight, and therefore to the east of where Eye would have taken place. In the game, Morkin must enter the Blood March to rescue his father and defeat Boroth the Wolfheart. But despite these changes to the story, Mike still introduced the game as part three of the trilogy in The Citadel's manual: "...I had always planned to write part III of the saga, but changes of publisher, demand for other projects, and new technology conspired against this for many years. Finally, with the advent of 32-bit processing power on the PC, with a highly skilled team at Maelstrom already deep into 3D technology, and with the enthusiasm of Domark fizzing over, the time seemed ripe for part

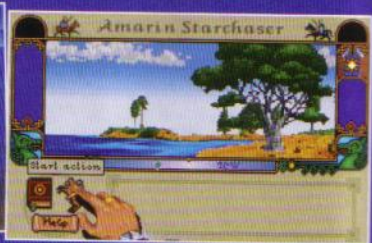
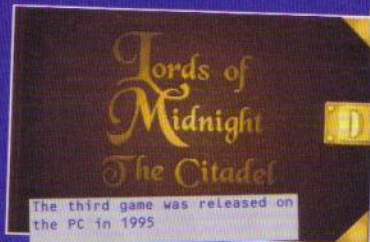
III of Lords of Midnight, The Citadel. Now we could have real-time 3D action, we could deepen the personalities and relationships of the characters, we could have full sound and music, we could... it was irresistible."

So maybe Mike had finally abandoned the original concept, or Eye had turned into The Citadel, or more likely, Midnight had turned it into a trilogy in four parts. "Largely, it was a good way of keeping personal intellectual property rights open on Eye of the Moon, the real part III of the trilogy in my own mind. The Citadel was exclusive to the publisher for two years after publication and, of course, Maelstrom was involved in the rights to it as well. But I also felt there was room in the Lords of Midnight world for an in-between storyline. I had actually talked to Beyond (when it was still owned by EMAP) about extending the series to seven games (Eye of the Moon plus four subsequent episodes), which they were very happy with. All this fell through when Beyond changed hands, but the idea of more than three in the series wasn't completely new."

The Citadel took place in a timeline 20 years after Morkin's kidnap by Shareth. It seems Eye would take place later than that. Still, The Citadel does have a few interesting links to Eye, as Mike explains: "When we were developing The Citadel, I still had a printed list of all the place names that my Eye name generator had created, so quite a few of these made their way into the game (hand-selected). Likewise, the Blood March and the names of the 12 kingdoms were taken straight from what I had planned for Eye. Of course this meant I would have to start afresh with Eye when the time came, but that seemed a distant prospect at the time."

In fact, there's a high probability that The Citadel borrowed a lot more from the Eye than just names. The opening chapter of the novella shipped with the game tells of Luxor travelling to the Blood March to get the Eye of the Moon back from the King's Tower in Coromand. Luxor is old and would like to use the jewel, as well as returning it to its rightful place. Up until the point that Luxor makes the Journey to the Blood March, the story could well have been the opening for Eye. Sounds plausible, but Mike disagrees. "The Eye of the Moon story hadn't even been started. But lots of people knew about the intended part III and I did still intend to do Eye later on. So the first chapter was designed to keep the Eye of the Moon theme alive as well as to lead the way into this





new interlude. And the Citadel story as a whole really builds up the baleful power of the Eye of the Moon, in preparation for that game. Or so the thinking went."

Problem child

The Citadel was beset with problems before it had even left the drawing board. Domark started to publicise The Citadel early, with adverts appearing in the specialist press. Midnight fans were excited – a new Midnight game was in the works. Would it be the infamous Eye of the Moon? Then the adverts dried up and everyone started to wonder where the game had gone.

The main programmer left the project after a year. This is always a problem in development, as new programmers generally don't like picking up the pieces left by another. This still holds true, even though most code is now written in high-level languages like C or C++. The Citadel, however, was 100% assembler. It would be another 18 months before the project was finished with a new coder at the helm. However, none of the original code was rewritten, which led to continuity problems and bugs. The project was probably overly ambitious for the allotted timescale and number of developers. Mike had many ideas about how the third part of the series should be developed, but developing a 3D game in 1995 for the PC was a much bigger task than writing the originals.

As before, Mike wrote all the stories, drew all the maps, designed the artificial intelligence, and even managed to do some 3D model animation. As much as he wanted to, he was never able

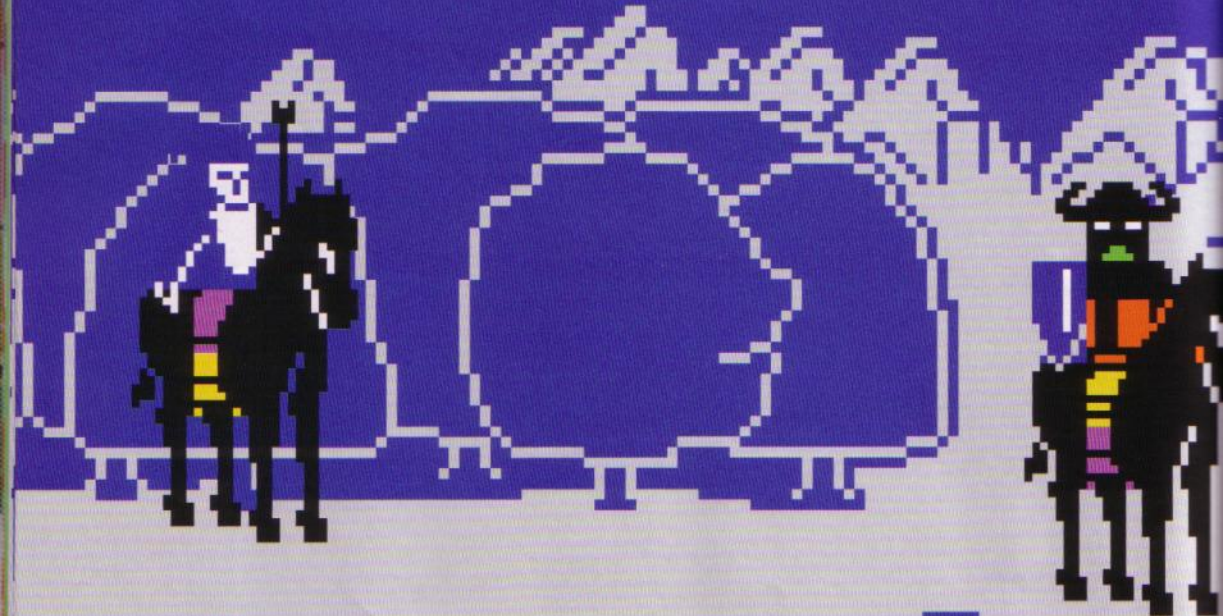
to program the whole game. Running Maelstrom and its other projects, like the Ring Cycle for Psygnosis, was just too time consuming. But in a link to his pioneering debut in the series, Mike did manage to write the original version of the 3D landscaping engine.

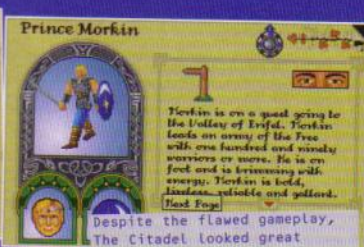
The game was released a year late and although the relationship between developer and publisher had initially been good, by the end it had badly deteriorated. Lords of Midnight 3: The Citadel, slipped out to an unsuspecting world. The press didn't like it, PC gamers didn't like it, and worst of all, the Midnight fans didn't like it. "I wasn't completely satisfied with it but I wasn't totally unhappy with it either," says Mike. "Another six months work on it could have made it a lot better but, at the time, that wasn't feasible. In the event, both the interiors and the exteriors ended up very much more sparsely populated by characters, creatures and objects than we had originally intended, and consequently opportunities for real player interaction were diminished."

Time waits for no one

The game had many bugs and needed patching almost immediately. It was a DOS product and didn't work well with the newly emerging Windows 95. Even now, the game doesn't work particularly well with any version of Windows, which prevents it being revisited and enjoyed for what it was.

Lords of Midnight and Doomdark's Revenge were technically





excellent. Firstly, there was the revolutionary landscaping technique that afforded the player a level of realism never before experienced. It's hard to appreciate that now, but back in 1984 Lords of Midnight really was breath taking. Secondly, Mike managed to cram the games into a small amount of memory, achieving so much with so little code. In comparison, The Citadel failed technically. The new 3D voxel landscaping technique may have been relatively new during the design phase, but by the time the game hit the shelves, it was old hat and rather plain looking.

A major achievement with Lords of Midnight was its simplicity. The game was easy to understand and easy to play; the interface was a marvel. Being turn based it gave you the leisure to think through what you were about to do – a bit like playing chess on the open battlefield. The Citadel tried to be too complex. During key moments of the game you were forced to take real-time control of your lords, actually fighting a one-on-one battle with them, moving them over dull landscapes to touch other moving lords in an attempt to communicate with them. You even had to suffer watching your lords travel long distances and wait for something to happen that warranted an intercept.

Plainly and simply, The Citadel suffered from evolution. Mike had been heading to this point since the moment he started coding Doomdark's Revenge. Midwinter, Flames of Freedom, and Ashes of Empire, all previewed many of the techniques used in The Citadel and in the context of these games, they work. However, with a Midnight game, the Midnight community were expecting something more like the original games. Although it

replaced the keyboard overlay with a nice icon-driven interface, and the landscaping technique was improved, in hi-res and hi-colour, fans of the series wanted a strategy adventure, not a third-person fighting game.

It's interesting that Mike would later tell Andrew Leonard in an interview that reviews for the original games always praised their immersive qualities: "Immersion can be many things. The degree of perceived immersion was very great, despite the fact that the graphics were chunky, the soundtrack was often nonexistent, and [in some cases] there was absolutely zero real-time animation. Immersion does not necessarily require photo-realistic rendering at 60 frames per second and Dolby Surround sound." Yet with The Citadel he appeared to be striving for these things and veering away from the immersion-led originals.

The eye reopens

Mike is currently in Switzerland, working on a multiplayer online RPG for Komodo Entertainment. "If our plans come to fruition, we should be launching in two years time and after that we start work on the sequel, so that's my medium-term future fairly well tied up. I plan to do quite a lot of skiing." Despite these projects, and the attraction of the Swiss slopes, he still hopes to make The Eye of the Moon one day, perhaps as a collaborative project with the Midnight community. In the meantime, you can always play the various remakes of the original games, and we'll have a round-up of the many faithful fan projects in the next issue of Retro Gamer. For now, Luxor the Moonprince lives on.



The War of the Solstice

Mike Singleton's LORDS OF MIDNIGHT The War of the Solstice

In April 1998 the Midnight community came into possession of a design document by Mike Singleton for a remake of the original Lords of Midnight. The document clearly shows Mike's ongoing vision for his saga. It also shows his struggle with rationalising modern technology and expectations against the original simplicity of his games – an issue that he would raise in person in 2003: "I think the real problem if I do start on any remake is going to be how best to update the games. Bringing the graphic quality up-to-date is relatively easy, but the real problem starts to arise when trying to update the gameplay. That's the big question mark area as far as I'm concerned."

There are some questions raised by the existence of the document. In places it reads like an overview of The Citadel. Is this a modified document after The Citadel didn't turn out as expected? It also names the saga as a trilogy, and as the document is meant to be post Citadel, it's odd that Mike should so clearly ignore Eye of the Moon. It is also strange that Mike would be thinking about going back to part one before finishing off the saga.

One excerpt reads: "The War of the Solstice is Book 1 of the Lords of Midnight trilogy and the new game uses the same storyline, game map and characters as the very first Lords of Midnight game. The original game was a unique blend of strategic war game and adventure-style exploration, with navigation relying on a full 360° first-person view of the landscape from any point on the map. Quite deliberately, there was no in-game map the player could refer to; forcing him to use the panoramic landscape views to steer by sight. This

gave a tremendous feeling of being there in a real place. Instead of seeing enemy armies as icons on a map, you could see them arrayed across the hills and plains in the distance, their flags flying. You were not a general leaning over the map table in your office, miles behind the lines; you were a warlord on your horse, at the head of your troops, leading them to battle. The War of the Solstice takes that same concept of being there and gives it the audio-visual power of late 1990s game technology. The aim throughout is to make The War of the Solstice look like a film but play like a game." This section quite clearly places any new idea in the

context of the original, with the requisite visual sheen.

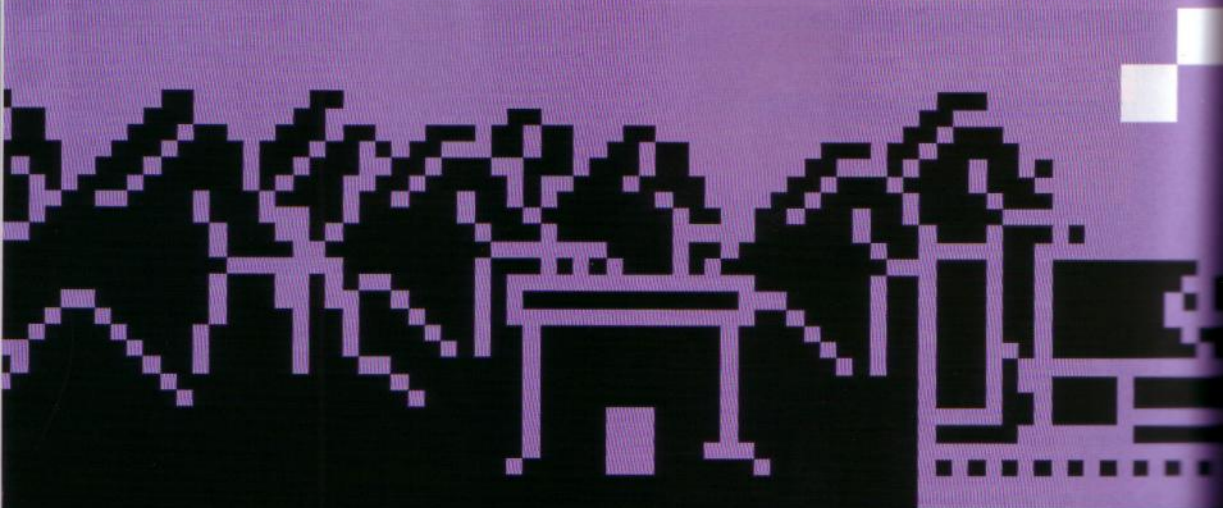
The next excerpt talks about the proposed decision-making processes and the user interface: "Strategic decisions are made during decision scenes. Here, for example, the hero stands gazing at the panoramic landscape he stands within. When he turns left or right, the panorama scrolls before him and the distant places beyond the horizon come to his mind. A small inset picture shows a view of the citadel, or tower or keep. A small inset map shows its location. If the hero stops turning, he speaks the name of the place he is thinking of. At a button press, he will speak its distance and how long such a journey would take. At a different button press, he will announce his intention to go there and set off on the journey. This visual method of journey selection maintains the sense of being there in the decision-making as much as in the action. Other pure decision-making is done in a similar fashion. Always, you are standing at your hero's shoulder, seeing the world as he sees it." This user interface would be unique and would fit well within the confines of the original Midnight games. It allowed the player to feel like they were interacting with the characters without having to control a real-time movement.

Pacemaker

In another excerpt, Mike talks about controlling the pace of the action: "The important thing for the player is deciding where his heroes and their armies are to go. The journey itself does not matter. You are a warlord, not a sight-seeing tourist. But what happens at the end of the journey matters a great deal. Consequently, once you have decided where a hero is going and what road he is to take, you see him set out on his journey and see him next when he arrives at his destination, where battle may be joined or other heroes recruited and further decisions made. You do not watch him march for mile after weary mile through the countryside.

"Some journeys, however, are eventful. The hero may be ambushed; he might spot enemy armies ahead in the distance or come across the smouldering ruins of a lonely farmhouse or village. When this sort of unexpected event happens, the computer interrupts the journey and puts the player in direct control of the hero again. By intelligently interrupting the unwatched journeys of the heroes, the computer automatically moves the on-screen action and decision-taking from one moment of drama to the next moment of drama. With four or more heroes on different journeys, the action scenes switch from one hero to another according to events, just like the scenes in a film or TV drama switch from following one thread of events to following another thread of events. So, as events unfold, the player takes on the role of whichever hero is engaged in action. All the ordinary minutes and hours and days of waiting or journeying are cut out. Time races ahead until the next extraordinary, exciting event and the next moment of decision, the next hero of the hour."

By the end we can see that Mike is still looking to create a real-time experience but seems to acknowledge that the player does not want to control a man moving around a landscape. "Time racing ahead" was a process that could happen within The Citadel, but the player still had direct control over certain actions. Maybe Mike is accepting here that direct control has no place in Midnight. However, he kills it with the following revelations: "There are no interactive map screens, no god-like look-down views of the battlefield, no inventory screens, and no pop-up menus of weapon or magic selection. All the gameplay and decision-making takes place immediately, in real-time 3D, at the heart of the action. Then, between action scenes, a blend of FMV and non-interactive real-time 3D sequences tell the unfolding story, linking together every interactive scene you take part in. The emphasis of the gameplay is on action. The War of the Solstice is a unique blend of action-adventure (such as in Tomb Raider), single combat (such as in Tekken) and real-time command-and-control (such as in Warcraft), but all focused on the hero the player controls." RG*





>House of Lords pt 2

In the second part of our in-depth Lords of Midnight feature, Chris Wild looks at the many remakes - including his own - and talks to fellow members of the thriving Midnight community

It's nearly 10 years since Lords of Midnight 3: The Citadel was released, and while there have been no official sequels since then, there have been numerous ports and remakes. Some keep the same look and feel of the original games while others attempt to bring the world up to date in a way that The Citadel failed to do.

Author Mike Singleton says he appreciates these faithful fan projects. "I think it's great that people are doing this. I have no problem with remakes or emulation in general. It's as though they've become a historical item and most of the people who download them to their PC are probably people who once upon a time actually bought the original, but whose Spectrum has long since gone far beyond the attic. However, if it was something like a mobile phone version, for example, where they might actually still outshine some of the other apps available, that would be slightly different."



Below the moonprince
he stands on the ruins of an ancient looking
northwest to the gate of moonbeet.



WORK IN PROGRESS

Below the moonprince
he stands in a tunnel looking east.



WORK IN PROGRESS

Below the moonprince
he stands in a tunnel looking north.



WORK IN PROGRESS

The Midnight Engine

My own personal interest in the games was rekindled in 1991. I'd just bought myself a Spectrum +3 and was reverse engineering some old Spectrum games. I came back into contact with Lords of Midnight and as a programmer, the game had always fascinated me. I decided to reverse engineer it and work out how Mike had programmed it. I disassembled it to a file on my PC and worked my way through the assembler documenting the code.

While working on it, I had a real urge to start replaying it, but I didn't really want to use my Spectrum. The Spectrum scene wasn't officially dead yet – even a few dedicated magazines still existed – and emulators weren't openly available, if indeed there were any at all. So I did the only

thing any respectable programmer would do in that situation: I ported both Lords of Midnight and Doomdark's Revenge to the PC. I fixed a few bugs, added some little interface features, but on the whole, the games were the same.

The games weren't released to the public until I got permission from Mike Singleton in 1993, but two years later, the ports became the first of my games to be released when they were shipped with The Citadel. My link with one of my all-time favourite games was firmly forged.

In 98 I started work on Windows ports. I had intended to update the game graphically, keep the same landscaping technique, and add icons and other Windows-type user interface

elements. However, during the coding I decided to remove all the hard coding that the originals had and make everything data driven and changeable. I soon realised that I wanted to write an engine that could not only run Lords of Midnight and Doomdark's Revenge, but that would allow people to create Midnight-type scenarios. At first I used graphics from The Citadel, but then Jure Rogelj produced all new graphics and The Midnight Engine was born. The Lords scenario has been finished for some time and Jure and I have recently given the graphics engine an overhaul in order to accommodate our new graphical ideas for **Doomdark**. One of the main features is

A sneaky peek at the new graphics used in the latest version of Doomdark's revenge

Below the moonprince
he stands in a tunnel looking north.



WORK IN PROGRESS

patched graphics, similar to Mike's concept for Eye of the Moon.

Today, the engine is fully configurable, allowing people to create new scenarios via data or adding code if they wish. It can also be plugged into other engines, enabling programmers to write their own version of Lords, Doomdark, and scenarios without needing to concentrate on the AI side. During the process I also set up my website (www.icemark.com) as a nucleus of all things Midnight and a Yahoo group for the Midnight community.

The Midnight community

The Midnight community is still pretty active. There is a mailing list that allows enthusiasts to get together and discuss all things Midnight – not just about the games but also the world they took place in. It's a testament to Mike's work that exactly 20 years after the release of the first instalment, people still care not only about the games, but the world he created.

"I feel very flattered, although it's the games themselves of course that are the real focus of interest," says Mike. "And it's great to know that something I've done has brought so much enjoyment and inspiration to so many people."

The campaigns of Midnight also remain an area of great interest. To this day, players still attempt new and improved techniques for either completing the game or pulling off heroic and near-impossible tasks. It's believed that nine days is the fastest that anyone has managed to destroy the Ice Crown. And then of course there's the question of whether you've got what it takes to defeat Doomdark without losing the Keep of Blood.

Some of the community's members have devoted much of their time to writing history time lines for the world of Midnight. David West has mapped out a history and written chronicles about the world, the places, and the people within it. This information goes far beyond what Mike originally intended, but like the Tolkien enthusiasts, the fans care enough to want to know.

Andrea Hawkins has also been working with the world's history and is currently writing her Midnight-inspired novel, *War of the Solstice*. In it she follows the characters through the war that takes place in the game. "I found the whole history behind the games to be rich and enticing," she says. "I want to not only provide some great reading but I hope to make a definitive history for the game as there appear to be multiple histories and beliefs. I have recently been in contact with Mike and he has been helping me to iron out some of the more tricky and unknown issues with the backstory. I keep finding myself drawn back to the games of old of which *Lords of Midnight* is just one of many. With my vision for my novel, every time I play it I seem to get inspiration for continuing my work."



Andrea Hawkins is working on a novel based on the *Lords of Midnight* history

War of the Solstice

Andrew Smart has used the Midnight engine to drive his version of *Lords of Midnight*, *War of the Solstice*, allowing him to focus on his graphics engine. The results are superb. Wayne Britcliffe is producing all the art, David West is writing new background information, and between them they are crafting the ultimate version of *Lords*.

Andrew has managed to circumvent many of the issues of a 3D engine by still keeping the game turn- and grid-based, although you wouldn't really know it as you seem to have direct control over your characters in the beautifully rendered 3D terrain.

"I've attempted to bring the game into the 21st century by using rich 3D graphic techniques in place of the traditional landscaping," says Andrew.

"Shortly before I announced the project, I approached Chris, and he offered to release the source code for TME so that I could incorporate it. That has saved me a lot of time getting something playable together. I intended to use a billboard-style display until Wayne offered his help. He's provided me with 3D mesh and texture maps of a quality that I could only have dreamt of.

"The game mechanics remain the same as the original, the most important being turn-based

gameplay. But I have also added some new gameplay options. For those who want to play a more head-to-head approach, I have allowed them to take control of Doomdark's forces. There are also changeable climates and weather effects such as snow to enhance the playing atmosphere. The goal now is to take the playing experience to a new level.

"Ever since I played the original and got the flavour for programming, I dreamt of being able to wander around the land of Midnight in true Technicolor, being able to get a richer experience of living in the land, being able to wander through forests in real-time, and to listen to the sounds of the environment. I suppose the story pulled me in so much that I just yearned to be there! From that, the project began."

Fulfilling a dream

Thanks to the work of Wayne Britcliffe, the remake looks amazing, but the graphics artist knows that gameplay and atmosphere are key. "War of the Solstice is an attempt to present the Midnight games with an up-to-date fascia while maintaining the same game mechanics as the originals and, most importantly, the



These are the graphics you can look forward to in the upcoming version of War of the Solstice



same atmosphere and feel. Other enhancements being provided around the unaltered core mechanics include detailed battle statistics for a whole campaign and numerous environment customisation and selection options.

"I personally have been a fan of the Midnight games since they appeared on the Spectrum. The backstory, atmosphere and the personalities that my young mind projected onto the characters in the game have lived in my imagination almost as strongly as Tolkien's characters. So much so that a chance to re-visualise the Midnight realm was basically an event I couldn't pass up on."

Wayne and writer David West were best friends at school and

used to play the games together, sharing the armies out between them and working out strategies. Twenty years on, David remains a firm fan: "For me, no other game before or since has managed to convey the same level of depth and feeling of just being there, immersed in a fantasy world that is at the same time believable. I reckon the Midnight games are simply the best ever games written for any platform and I dread to think how many hours I've put into them. Being able to contribute in any way is very rewarding for me and I enjoy writing, which makes this the ideal opportunity for me to work on something Midnight related, especially as my programming skills are about 15 years out of date."

MORKIN

He stands at the Tower of the Moon, looking North to the Downs of Shadows.



Mobile Midnight

Matt Davies, Simon Bradley, Gaz Bell, and Quirky have put Lords of Midnight onto the Pocket PC, Palm OS, Psion3a, and GameBoy Advance. Now everyone can enjoy Midnight, wherever they are!

Matt Davies is responsible for the Pocket PC port. "I always loved Lords of Midnight; I have some fond memories of it. It's one of the few old games that still plays as well as I remember. I wanted it on the Pocket PC for myself, so rushed it in three weeks to get it done. The first version was a port of The Midnight Engine. The interface and graphics were from the Windows version, but the code was written in C++ and based on the original Lords Z80 disassembly by Chris.

Unfortunately, it only works on mine and similar models, so I'm currently trying to rewrite it to be more generic about the hardware it is on."

Simon Bradley talks about Masters of Midnight, his Palm OS port. "I intended it to be pretty much a straight port of the first game to the Palm OS PDAs, but I am also trying to allow a bit of flexibility so that certain elements can be changed. This was originally to cater for the different specs of PDA, but this might end up allowing complete alternative scenarios. In fact, since I am concerned about the legalities of the port, I might end up releasing it with an original scenario and graphics instead of the Lords scenario."

Simon touches on an interesting point here not only for Lords of Midnight but all remakes: the issue of copyright infringement. Mike Singleton addresses this point, echoing his earlier comments on remakes. "As long as my personal copyright remains intact and I'm being given due credit (which I'm confident is the case), I'm entirely happy with remakes being made. If there's a commercial aspect, then naturally I'd expect things to be more formal and contractual agreements made."

Gaz Bell's Psion Midnight is another handheld port that's born out of love for all things Midnight. "I played Lords of

LUXOR THE MOONPRINCE

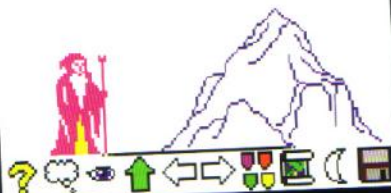
He stands on the Plains of the Moon, looking West to the Tower of the Moon.



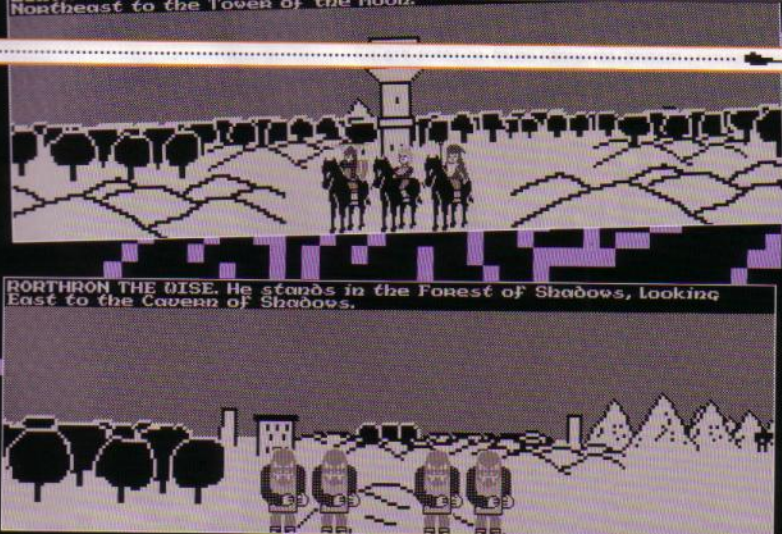
Midnight on the move. Screenshots from the various handheld ports

RORTHRON THE WISE

One hour of the day remains and Rorthron is very invigorated. The Ice Fear is cold. Rorthron is very bold. He thinks again...



Midnight probably more than any other game and really missed it and wanted the chance to play it again," says Gaz, "and what better way than on my little palmtop computer in the pub over a quiet pint? I'd written a few odds and ends for the Psion and fancied trying my hand at something more ambitious, and the built-in programming language had lots of commands for manipulating areas of the screen and graphics-bitmap files, so writing a landscaping engine seemed ideally suited to it... provided it could do it fast enough. And thus the project was born, with version 1.01 released in January '96."

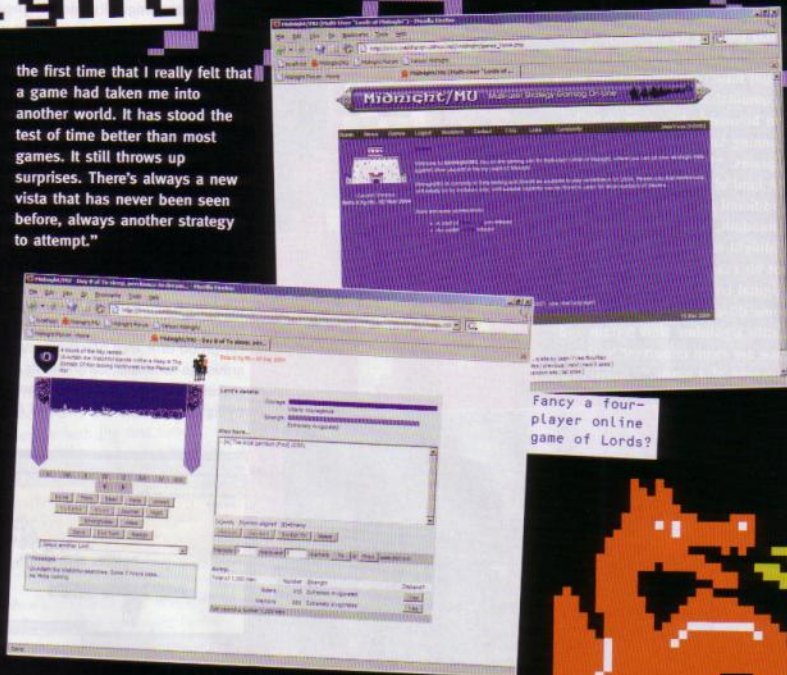


Online Multi-User Midnight

Jean-Yves Rouffiac has taken Lords of Midnight to a place where many would love to play it — online. Midnight/MU allows you to play against up to three players in the icy realms of Midnight. It uses a slightly modified map, new characters, new rules, new algorithms, and new features, but retains the original graphics.

"I was looking for a project to teach myself PHP and MySQL, and this fitted perfectly," reveals Jean-Yves. "It was my chance to recreate it with a multiplayer angle that I felt would add extra depth to the game." Naturally, he shares his enthusiasm with the other members of the community. "My earliest memories of Lords were the adverts ('The Lords of Midnight are coming...'), which sent my imagination into overdrive. Then I saw the pre-release screenshots in the computer magazines, and they exceeded expectations. Then finally playing the game; it was

the first time that I really felt that a game had taken me into another world. It has stood the test of time better than most games. It still throws up surprises. There's always a new vista that has never been seen before, always another strategy to attempt."



Fancy a four-player online game of Lords?



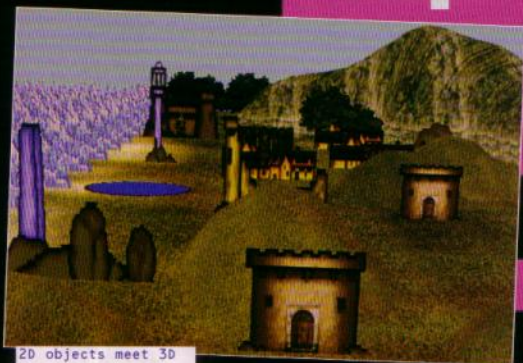
Java Midnight

Davor Cubranic has converted Lords of Midnight into Java. He says of jLOM: "I got into this with the purpose of getting Lords of Midnight to work on a Palm. I started off rewriting Lords from Chris's annotated assembly source in C, stalled, and then picked it up about two years later while I was playing with the Eclipse IDE. So it naturally morphed into object-orientated Java code. I wanted to

make a version that was easy to read and modify, whether to fit it with a different user interface (using the same game engine) or to play with game rules, the map, or the computer AI. I didn't give up on the small-devices idea, though, because I have a version working as an MIDP. It still needs a bit of work, but I hope by the time I buy a Java-enabled phone, I'll be able to play jLOM on it."

Midnight Flyer

Imtiaz Dharssi has developed his version of Lords of Midnight in Visual Basic. "Midnight Flyer uses a combination of 3D rendering and billboards to create visually stunning landscapes," he explains. "The player can explore the land of Midnight in a traditional campaign against Doomdark, or just fly around Midnight for fun. Midnight Flyer is not an exact remake of the original Lords. There are already some differences, such as the battle algorithm. Now terrain and race are more important to the outcome of a battle."



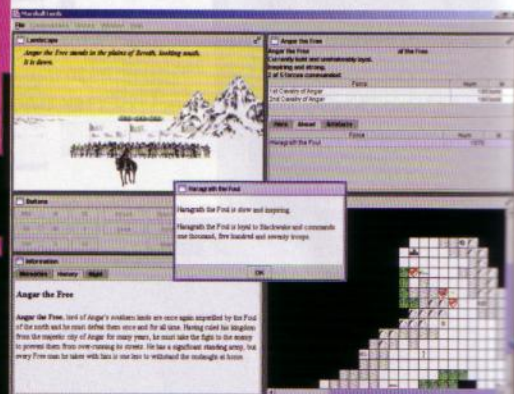
2D objects meet 3D landscapes in this take on Lords

Inspired by Midnight

Jonathan Alma and Ben Wright are working on Midnight-inspired games and engines – Legends from the Lost Realms and Marshall Lords respectively.

"Legends from the Lost Realms is an attempt to develop a Midnight-like strategy game," enthuses Jonathan. "While wanting to try to recapture the spirit of Lords of Midnight, the aim has never been to simply recreate the lands of Midnight, but try to create something similar in a new and original world. Whenever I play a game I'm almost more interested in understanding how it was created rather than actually playing it. When I played Lords for the first time I was completely spellbound as it did something I'd never seen before. However, when I finally started looking at the game as a developer rather than a gamer it was clear that the game was based on surprisingly simple (but incredibly effective) mechanics and there was always a feeling that this was something that I might, one day, be able to recreate."

Likewise, Ben Wright's Marshall Lords is an attempt to augment the original using new technology and modern design principles. "Marshall Lords is a reworking of the rules to make it closer to my tastes," says Ben. "Some aspects are there to make good limitations in the original caused by the limited memory, such as a much more detailed combat algorithm and a greater variety of troop types. Other aspects are ones I've introduced to try to make the interface easier to use, such as multiple windows and changing the way armies are handled. One aspect I'm proud of is that practically every aspect of the game, from lords to armies to locations, can have its own unique historical text. While it makes writing scenarios a lot more work, I think it pays dividends in trying to recapture the magic of the original."



Retro Midnight

Matt Glanville is retro fitting The Citadel into the Midnight engine. This will allow people to play The Citadel in the style of the original Midnight games. "I'm trying to recreate the excellent background and established storyline of the third game into the format of the much-loved earlier games," says Matt of this worthy pursuit. "I

have always felt, along with quite a few others I believe, that the game Domark produced was something of a disappointment. The atmosphere of the original games, especially Lords of Midnight, was outstanding and it kept drawing me in, wondering what lay around the next corner. I want to recreate this atmosphere."



Hopes and fears

If we look back at the history of the Midnight trilogy, the first two games will always remain in the hearts of the fans. The remakes cause a hunger for Midnight-related games, but possibly only in the style of the first two. Moving the saga forward is difficult, as our expectations for a new take on an old concept are always so hard to understand. Mike found this to his peril when he produced The Citadel. The brand was irreparably damaged within the industry following its release, making publishers reluctant to handle another new game. Unless Mike creates a company and funds the project himself, it is unlikely that a new retail Midnight game will ever be released.

Perhaps the future of the saga now rests with the Midnight community. And who knows, if the talented people working on Midnight-related products were to team up with Mike, then maybe the long lost Eye of the Moon could finally be produced. "I like your idea for a collaborative project," encourages Mike, "and I share your scepticism about War of the Solstice (the design document) bringing publishers running, but I'd like to have a much longer think about that. Designing it as a hobby would be great, but assumes that I have sufficient spare time - and at the moment I'm not very sure about that!"

Help at hand

"I think it's a great idea and would like to help if I have the time," says Simon Bradley. "The third game was not a great success, so I'd like to see it in the same style as the first two." Wayne Britcliffe echoes these comments. "Eye of the Moon was the equivalent of the Promised Land to those who had grown up with the first two instalments. I think very few of the stalwart players regard The Citadel as the true third part of the series for many and various reasons."

Others, like Ben Wright, are cautiously optimistic. "Like the various re-workings at the moment, in order for Eye of the Moon to be worthwhile, it must introduce new elements, but we want to make sure these elements don't smother the essence that made Lords of Midnight the classic it is."

Matt Davies is not sure either. "Mike's obviously the best man to keep the Midnight legend going, but I was rather dismayed by the third release, which did not have the same gameplay elements as the original games. Whereas Lords of Midnight and Doomdark's Revenge are one-man releases, it's difficult to write a game without needing a team as so many positions are more specialised."

Jonathan Alma still has full faith in Mike though: "I consider Mike to be up there with the other great game designers - his games have always been original and not just clones of the current best seller. He's never been afraid to try out new ideas, and while many of them are ground-breaking, sometimes (as is the nature of the beast) they are

not as successful in reality as they appear to be on paper. If Mike could be persuaded to work on an Eye of the Moon game then I feel that the project would have incredible potential, but at the same time it would really benefit from an editor - someone who could look at the ideas and the prototype code and say, 'Yes, this is great,' or 'No, that is not working.'"

War of the Solstice's author Andrew Smart also acknowledges that Mike's input is crucial. "It would be a great opportunity to take part in the final part of the trilogy, the icing on the cake. I think that between us all we have the capabilities, both code wise and graphically, and it's not such a far-fetched idea as it seems. However, the vital ingredient would be Mike's design. Without that, it would just not feel the same." Matt Glanville agrees: "If Mike is prepared to get involved with the project then it would be great."

Keeping it real

"It's potentially very exciting," says Gaz Bell. "The opportunity to create the final part of the trilogy as it should have been would be fantastic. But it would have to be turn-based and be in the spirit of Lords of Midnight and Doomdark's Revenge, not another real-time mess like The Citadel or what was proposed in the War of the Solstice document. If Mike provided the story, characters, map and how the game should develop, but one of the existing engines was used or adapted to actually run the game, that would be great. Citadel II wouldn't be so great."

"If Eye of the Moon is faithful to the originals, then I am very positive," says David West. "In my opinion, Mike could release Eye in the same format as Lords, with no changes whatsoever, and you'd have an extremely good game. Well I'd buy it that's for sure! In fact, I'd buy a Spectrum and play the damn game on tape if that was the only way! Seriously, it would be extremely cool if Mike were to work on Eye and took on board some of the comments and ideas that the fans of the earlier games have come up with. I understand that designing anything by committee is never really going to work, but throwing ideas around for the big man to look at and take on board can only be a good thing in my book."

Igor Bijelic doesn't even hesitate, exclaiming: "Let's do it - period!" As for me, I'm indebted to Lords of Midnight. From the very first time I sat and watched my brother play this astonishing game, it has had an affect on my life. It is the reason that I now develop computer games and it brought about my first job in the games industry. For me, doing anything that would mean Mike would finally develop Eye of the Moon would be enough, but to work on and contribute to it would just be something else.



Quick questions

...with nowhere to go!

CW: How long did each novella take to write?

MS: The first and second ones took about two weeks each. The third one was spread out over about six weeks – program a bit, write another few pages and then read back through them in the pub in the evening with Jim [Shaw], who was also programming *The Citadel*. I nearly gave Boro the Wolfheart a residual streak of goodness, but Jim actually persuaded me that he really ought to be irredeemably bad.

CW: What happened to Corleth the Fey between *Doomdark's Revenge* and *The Citadel*?

MS: He retired to the peace of his forests, away from the cares and worries of the wider world. Basically I wanted to focus attention on a new generation of characters, rather than just take all the originals again.

CW: To settle an argument, is Farflame actually a dragon or a person on a dragon?

MS: He is actually a dragon, in the same way that Gwahir, Lord of the Eagles in *LOTR*, is actually an eagle. I hope that doesn't disappoint too many people.

CW: What music, films, and books influence you in game design?

MS: Books – Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Herman Hesse's *The Glass Bead Game*. Music – Wagner, Beethoven, Holst, Carl Orff, Pink Floyd. Film, or rather directors – Kubrick, Eisenstein, Kurosawa, Bondarchuk, Ridley Scott, Coppola.

CW: What was the last game you really enjoyed?

MS: Generals. I would have said *Risk* on PS2 but that's really a board game. And I'd also have said the strategy part of *Wrath* – but that's unfair because I was working on it and had to play test the strategic AI into the early hours of the morning – I probably would have gone slightly bonkers if I didn't enjoy it.

CW: I heard that you produced a concept document of *Midwinter 3*. Is this true and what is currently happening with it?

MS: Yes, sort of. It wasn't actually *Midwinter 3* but a reworking of the entire story and game concept. It was provisionally (and grandly) titled *Skyfall Year Zero: Total Midwinter*, and was written in 1999 as a concept-approval document for Sony (who wouldn't at the time let you have PS2 devkit without concept approval). The concept did get approved by Sony Europe but the developer, Blade Interactive, subsequently decided not to carry it forward. I still have it in my files, but nothing is happening with it at the moment.



Web resources

Many of the remakes are included on this month's coverdisc. However, for more information, you may wish to visit the authors' own websites

Icemark

www.icemark.com

Chris Wild's website – home to his *Lords* and *Doomdark* PC remakes, and *The Midnight Engine*.

The Frozen Empire

www.frozenempire.net

Home of *War of the Solstice*, Andrew Smart's version of *Lords of Midnight*.

Lost Realms

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/lost-realms/index.html>

A brand new website to promote *Legends from the Lost Realms*.

Marshall Lords

<http://chthonic.150m.com/marshall/index.htm>

The website for Ben Wright's *Marshall Lords*.

Midnight Flyer

www.geocities.com/idharssi/10mexe.html

More information on *Imtiaj Dharssi's Lords Of Midnight* remake.

Java Midnight

www.cs.ubc.ca/~cubranic/jlom/jlom.html

Home of *jLOM*, the Java re-implementation of *Lords of Midnight*.

Masters of Midnight

www.pocketfuel.co.uk/midnight/index.html

Simon Bradley's website for his *Palm OS* port.

Psion Midnight

<http://www.princegaz.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk>

Visit this site for information on *Gaz Bell's* version for *Psion* handhelds.

Midnight/MU

www.westhaven.uklinux.net/vmidnight/games_home.php

The online gaming site for the *Multi-User Lords of Midnight*.

The Lair of the Dragonlord

www.tconline.org/~intruderzg

Tools and editors for use with *The Midnight Engine* and *Midnight/MU* are provided here.

Linux Midnight

<http://homepages.ge.ucl.ac.uk/~kmitchel/home/>

Karl Mitchell has made *Chris Wild's* PC ports work under *Dosemu* for Linux. Go to this site to take a look.