

# PROVENANCE

by  
Corey W Arnett

COPYRIGHT © MMV



# Instruction Manual

## For *PROVENANCE*

---

Welcome to *Provenance*. Get ready to experience a unique and exciting work of interactive fiction set in an imaginary world that only exists inside your computer. *Provenance*, a word that means 'place of origin', takes place in a fictitious town of the same name in the early 1900's. You have inherited a large estate in the country from a man who claimed to have been your father. His name was Isaac Rourke, a reclusive and eccentric man who preferred to keep to himself. Raised by strangers, you never even knew you were adopted until you were contacted by a mysterious man claiming to be the executor of Mr. Rourke's will. It seems your father had his secrets. You, as his only living heir, are about to find out what they were.

This manual will teach you all you need to know to get the most out of your experience. Even if you are experienced with interactive fiction (text adventures, as they are sometimes called) it is a good idea to read this manual anyways. It will point out some of the finer details of the game and may also give you some game play tips. Newcomers to interactive fiction should read this manual in full before playing the game to get the most out the experience. The end of the manual contains an introduction giving some background into the main characters in the game. Keep in mind that this game is intended for beginners. The difficulty level is low but increases towards the end of the game. That said, however, experienced players may find parts of the game challenging as well.

Thank-you for your interest in playing *Provenance*. Prepare for an interactive journey...

# Table Of Contents

---

## An Overview

- What is interactive Fiction?
- Moving around from place to place
- Turns and scoring

## Tips For Beginners

- Useful information about interactive fiction
- Where to get help

## Commanding Provenance

- Basic sentences
- Complex sentences
- Talking to characters
- Vocabulary limitations

## Starting and Stopping

- Starting a game
- Saving and restoring games
- Quitting and restarting

APPENDIX A : Quick Reference Guide

APPENDIX B : Commands

APPENDIX C : Sample Transcript

APPENDIX D : Technical Support

APPENDIX E : Author Biography

APPENDIX F : Copyright Information

APPENDIX G : Provenance – Introduction

## An Overview

---

Ah yes...the age old question: What is interactive fiction? Ask ten different people that question and you would probably get ten different answers. But, essentially, IF or interactive fiction is a wonderful blend of game and story where you play the main character. It is your own actions and imagination, cunning and guile, grit and determination that drives the story from beginning to end.

In general, each work of IF presents you with a series of locations, objects, characters, and events. Your interactions with these elements will affect the outcome of the story in a variety of ways. Moving from one place to another simply involves typing in the direction you wish to travel. At the beginning of your adventure it is always a good idea to explore your surroundings and read each description carefully. It is often a good idea to draw a map of the geography as you explore to make it easier to get around later in the game.

Puzzle solving is an important element in most works of IF. Locked doors or growling guard dogs should be thought of not as impassable obstacles, but as puzzles to be solved. Solving puzzles often involves recognizing the obvious use of certain items (like keys for example) and using them in the appropriate situations. Other puzzles will involve a little more ingenuity.

In *PROVENANCE*, time only passes when you hit the ENTER key. Feel free to take as much time as you feel you need to solve each puzzle and think about each situation. It is possible to perform actions that will not only make the game unwinnable, but may also get you killed. A good indication of how well you are progressing is by keeping an eye on your score. You will receive points for solving puzzles, collecting certain items, performing certain actions and visiting certain locations.

Remember to save your game often. And try not to do anything in the game that may get you killed. There may be a penalty for death.

## Tips For Beginners

---

1. Draw a map. When you visit a new location make note of it on a blank piece of paper. Join locations with lines indicating the direction to adjacent locations. See the small sample map with the sample transcript. There are ten possible directions (n,s,e,w,nw,ne,sw,se,d,u) plus in and out.
2. Not all the objects in the game are important. It is up to you to discover whether an object is useful or not. Most important objects will be referred to in other parts of the game.
3. Save your game often. If you get killed or make a mistake you will be able to get back close to where you were.
4. Read EVERYTHING. And read it carefully. As this is an entirely text based adventure, the clues are in the words.
5. Although the goal is clearly defined for you there is more than one way to complete the game. Some puzzles have more than one way to solve them, while others do not need to be solved at all.
6. Tell your friends about *PROVENANCE* and suggest that they play it. Two heads are better than one.
7. Read the sample transcript provided to get an example of what it looks like to play interactive fiction. You may get some ideas.
8. If you are really stuck you have several options. Sleep on it and you may have an idea in the morning. Or visit the ADRIFT Forum at <http://www.adrift.org.uk> and post for help there. There is a remarkable community of helpful people that frequent the forum regularly. As a last resort you could email the author for a clue at [coreyarnett@hotmail.com](mailto:coreyarnett@hotmail.com). He won't solve a puzzle for you but he may give you a hint. Maybe.
9. Commands can be worded in different ways:
  - light lamp
  - turn on the lantern
  - turn the lantern on
  - light the lamp

## Commanding PROVENANCE

---

Communicating with PROVENANCE is easy. At the beginning of every turn you type your sentence, or command, into the command bar at the bottom of the RUNNER in plain English. When you are ready, you press the ENTER key and let the computer interpret your command. If it didn't understand you it will let you know by responding with "Your intentions are unclear...". If it understood but could not perform the action the computer will tell you that too. But, most of the time, the action should be performed and the result will be displayed on your monitor, ready for another action.

To move from location to location you simply type in the desired direction and press ENTER. The directions that are available to you are NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST, NORTHEAST, NORTHWEST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTHWEST, UP, DOWN, IN, and OUT. These can be abbreviated to N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW, U, D, IN and OUT respectively. You can find out what you are carrying by typing INVENTORY or simply I for short.

PROVENANCE will understand many different kinds of sentences. Here are several examples. Note that some of these objects do not actually appear in the game.

- go southeast
- in
- take the key
- tie the rope to the tree branch
- unlock the door with the key
- take the knife and the apple and drop the salt
- put all but the axe in the wooden box

As you become more experienced you will intuitively know what sentences will work and what won't. Don't be afraid to experiment. Sometimes getting the phrasing right can be a puzzle too! Often, two word commands, a verb and a noun, work best. Remember the old adage KISS: Keep It Simple, Silly.

## Commanding PROVENANCE

---

You can include several sentences on one input line if you separate them by the word THEN or by a period. However, this will increase the likelihood that the RUNNER will not understand your command. If PROVENANCE does not understand your command it will let you know.

You will meet other characters and creatures as you explore the world of PROVENANCE. There are two main ways to interact with them. You can "talk to" them or you can "ask" them "about" other characters, objects, places, events, or themselves. For example:

- talk to butler
- ask butler about the garden
- ask butler about provenance

PROVENANCE will try to make sense of just about any command you try to give it. If you use a word that the game does not understand you are probably trying to do something that is not important to your quest. Here is a sample of some, but not all, of the command words used in the game:

Ask	Enter	Kill	Pick	Sit	Touch
Attack	Feed	Kiss	Press	Sleep	Turn
Break	Feel	Lift	Pull	Smash	Unlock
Clean	Fight	Light	Punch	Smell	Wait
Climb	Fix	Listen	Push	Stab	Wash
Close	Get	Lock	Put	Stand	Wear
Cut	Give	Look	Read	Take	Whistle
Drink	Hit	Move	Remove	Talk	Inventory
Drop	Jump	Open	Shake	Throw	Score
Eat	Kick	Out	Shoot	Time	Quit

## Starting, Stopping, And Setup

The first thing you need to do is set up your computer to be able to run games made with ADRIFT. When you unzipped **provenance.zip** you should have noticed a few files called **setup.exe**, **setup.lst**, and **run400.zip**. These files are necessary to setup the ADRIFT RUNNER on your machine. Begin by double clicking **setup.exe** and installing the ADRIFT RUNNER to the default location c:\Program Files\ADRIFT. You may or may not need to restart your computer depending on whether your machine had all of the required Visual Basic files already.

To begin *PROVENANCE* just double click the **provenance.taf** file and the RUNNER will automatically start the game. If it does not, start the RUNNER by selecting it from the START menu. Then select ADVENTURE from the pull down menu and select OPEN ADVENTURE. Then simply navigate to where the file **provenance.taf** is located and select OPEN. You will be asked for your name and gender and then be presented with the title page. If you would like to read the story behind the game then simply type INTRODUCTION into the command bar at the bottom of the screen. Typing INSTRUCTIONS will give you a brief introduction to playing the game. Type MANUAL to read this manual within the RUNNER itself. Be warned that it is long however and will span several pages of on screen text to cycle through.

It is unlikely that you will finish *PROVENANCE* in one sitting so you will likely need to use the SAVE feature during game play. It is also a good idea to save your game from time to time to avoid having to replay from the start if you make a mistake. During play simply type SAVE into the command bar and a window will pop up allowing you to give your current session a name. You can save the resulting .tas file anywhere you like. To restore a saved game simply type RESTORE or LOAD. You can also begin the game anew at any time by typing RESTART and to give up on a game you can type QUIT and you will be asked if you would like to save your progress.



## Quick Reference

---

The object of `PROVENANCE` is to gather together a list of items (you should find the list easily enough near the beginning of the game) and make your way with them to the centre of the topiary.

1. Install the `ADRIFT RUNNER` on your machine. It is the interpreter that reads the `.taf` file that contains the game data.
2. To start the game double click the **`provenance.taf`** icon or select it from within the `RUNNER`.
3. Commands are entered into the command bar at the bottom of the screen in the `ADRIFT RUNNER`. There are four kinds of commands you can use: direction commands, actions, commands to characters, and system commands.
4. **IMPORTANT!** After typing a command don't forget to press the `ENTER` key to register your command.
5. At the bottom of the screen, under the command bar, is the status bar. It will show your current location.
6. To find out what you are wearing and carrying, type `INVENTORY`, or simply `I`.
7. To find out your current progress, type `SCORE`.
8. To find out what time it is, type `TIME` or `READ WATCH`.
9. The `TOUCH` or `FEEL` command play an important role in this game.
10. Don't forget to talk to other characters to gain more information.
11. Read `EVERYTHING`. At least once.
12. For complete instructions, read this entire manual.

## APPENDIX A

## **Important Commands**

---

There are a number of one word commands which you can type instead of typing a complete sentence. You can use them over and over again as needed. Some will add to your turn count while others will not. Here is a brief summary. Abbreviations are in parentheses:

**Again (g)** – `PROVENANCE` will respond by executing your last command.

**Inventory (i)** – You will be presented a list of all the items that you are currently wearing and/or holding.

**Look (l)** – Typing this will give a full description of your current location as well as any visible objects.

**Quit** – This will end your current session. You will be asked if you would like to save your game first.

**Restart** – This command will stop your current game and let you start over from the beginning.

**Restore** – Allows you to load a previously saved game.

**Save** – This will make a snapshot of your current game, saving your progress up to that point.

**Score** – You get points for meeting certain requirements or acquiring certain items. This command will show your progress.

**About** – Will tell you about the author of the game.

**Clear** – This command clears all the text from the screen.

## **APPENDIX B**

## Sample Transcript

---

### On The Veranda

You are standing on the front porch of a beautiful, upper middle-class Victorian style home.

In pure Victorian style, this elegant and spacious veranda is constructed from the finest oak boards - scored and then painted to resemble intricate stonework. The asymmetry of the architecture is apparent in the columns supporting the roof; gradually become more spaced as the veranda circles the front of the house to the west. The facade is dominated by large shuttered bay windows. A stylish rocking chair on the left and a mailbox on the right flank the front door to the north. Down the stairs to the south is a brick walkway that leads off in several different directions. Further off in the distance, you can see the front lawn and orchard.

open the front door  
The door is locked.

unlock it  
(the front door)  
You don't have a key to unlock the door.

sit on the rocking chair  
You sit down on the stylish rocking chair.

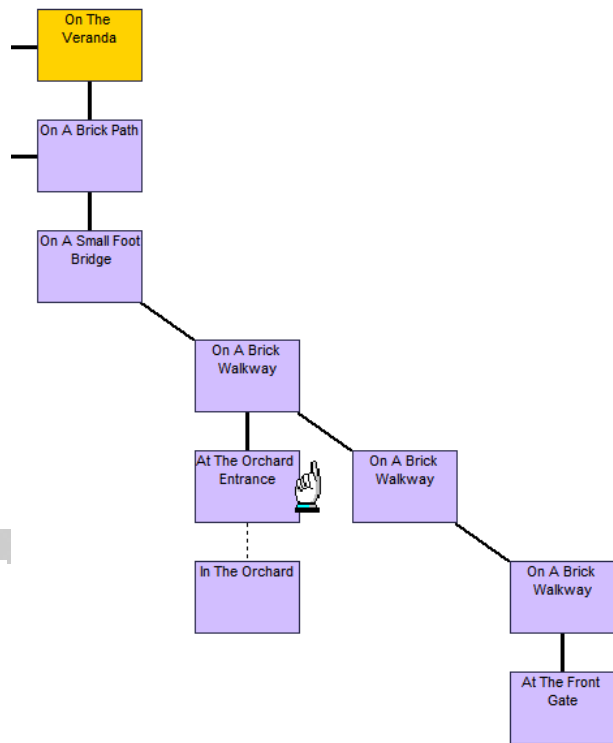
rock in it  
(the stylish rocking chair)  
You rock gently back and forth in the chair.

examine the mailbox  
The pedestal style mailbox, cast from aluminum, stands about four feet high and has been painted white to match the trim of the house.

## Sample Transcript - continued

---

The mailbox itself is shaped like a house with an elaborately carved roof. The mail flap has the word "LETTERS" embossed on the front. The mailbox is locked.



While the ADRIFT RUNNER has a built in feature that displays a map, for this game the feature has been turned off. The author believes that part of the excitement of playing interactive fiction is the process of discovery and making your own map is part of this process. To make your own map, when you visit a new location make note of it on a blank piece of paper. Draw lines joining adjacent locations to indicate the direction of travel possible between the two. North is always at the top of the page just like most maps. Above is a sample from the game.

## APPENDIX C

## Technical Support

---

Back in the heyday of interactive fiction, when companies were actually making money by producing games, you could call in for help with getting the game to run, error messages, etc.

Today interactive fiction is largely a hobby for most writers, including this one. If you do experience problems it will more than likely be a problem with setting up the ADRIFT RUNNER. In this case you can look for help at <http://www.adrift.org.uk>.

That being said, if you are having difficulty with the game or find any bugs you can try emailing the author at [coreyarnett@hotmail.com](mailto:coreyarnett@hotmail.com). I have not included a hint system in the game because I think it takes away from the gamin experience and encourages cheating. If you are really stuck...AND I MEAN REALLY STUCK...you can try emailing me. Perhaps a better way to get help would be to discuss the game with others on the ADRIFT Forum first. There are many experienced ADRIFT users and players of interactive fiction there who would probably be only too happy to help.

A quick note about other platforms: other interpreters have been written to allow platforms other than Windows ® run ADRIFT games. Notably, SCARE and jAsea. I have done limited testing of this game on those systems and have found the result to be inadequate at best. The integrity of this game is not guaranteed on those systems. PROVENANCE was designed for Windows ® systems running the ADRIFT RUNNER. For more information on these other tools, please visit these websites:

[http://www.geocities.com/legion\\_if/scare.html](http://www.geocities.com/legion_if/scare.html)

<http://sourceforge.net/projects/jasea/>

## APPENDIX D

## **Author Biography**

---

I guess it would have been 1982 when I was first exposed to text adventures. I had broken my leg in a skiing accident so was forced to spend more time indoors, especially at school. It was lunch time and I just happened to hobble into the computer lab when a bunch of guys were playing Zork. It didn't take long to get hooked on that game. We literally spent days trying to solve some of those puzzles.

I got my first computer for Christmas that year, too. A TRS-80 Color Computer. It came with a subscription to The Rainbow magazine. It was packed full of all kinds of how-to articles and BASIC programs that you could type in and run. The January 1983 issue was called the Big Adventure Issue and it came with a game called Karak that you could type in and run. The whole point was to teach you how to write text adventures with If...Then statements. I wrote a couple silly little games, grew up and had a family, and forgot all about text adventures. Until I found the internet...

I came across ADRIFT purely by accident. I had been playing some old Infocom classics on line when the thought occurred to me that with the new computing power, the text adventure scene must surely be dead and gone. Was I ever glad to find out how wrong I was. I decided to see if I could write my own game and tried many of the other systems out there. When I first heard of ADRIFT I thought it was basically too simple and probably wouldn't work very well for what I had in mind. It was Version 3.8 at the time, and even then I could see the magic and wonderful ease of use this little gem possessed. I waited anxiously as versions were updated and as soon as Version 4 came out I registered. I have come to really respect the program and its author. I have learned a great from the ADRIFT community. What I have learned most of all is that, with ADRIFT, the hardest thing about writing a text adventure is writing the story.

## **APPENDIX E**

## **Copyright Information**

---

ADRIFT, The Adventure Development & Runner – Interactive Fiction Toolkit is copyrighted and all rights are reserved by Campbell Wild. The RUNNER itself is provided as freeware and is provided in this download so you can play the game for free. It can be used without charge but is NOT public domain software. It is provided with this package solely for the purpose of running games created with the ADRIFT GENERATOR. As no charge is being applied for the use of PROVENANCE, the license agreement is being honoured.

PROVENANCE is copyrighted © 2005 by Corey W Arnett and all rights are reserved. The work is original and has been released as freeware for the public to play and pass on to others. No part of this game may be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the expressed written consent of the author.

The manual and all other pieces of documentation contained herein are also copyrighted and may not, in whole or in part, be copied, photocopied, reproduced, translated, or reduced to any electronic medium or machine readable form without prior consent, in writing, from the author.

© Copyright 2005, MMV, Corey W Arnett. All Rights Reserved.

**APPENDIX F**

## PROVENANCE – Introduction

The dream, always the same, had invaded your sleep at irregular intervals throughout the years.

It is early winter and you are riding in your carriage down a long and winding country road. The narrow one lane road meanders through the hinterland carving out a thin divide in an otherwise sprawling deciduous forest. For the most part the trees are bare, with only the remnants of a few last straggler leaves that have yet to drop to the forest floor below. Along the twisting lane great expanses of yellow, green and red leaves carpet the ground in a dazzling mosaic of kaleidoscopic perpetuity. Winter takes a while to take hold here, but when it does it does so with a vengeance. The sun has breached the horizon and its fervent intensity warms the land, pulling the moisture from the ground in a sinuous miasma that rises up into the atmosphere like languid serpents. Only the sound of your horse's hooves breaks up the monotonous silence that permeates through the solitude. This monotonous scene plays itself out over and over again as if watching the same length of film being continuously replayed. The only discernable variation comes in the form of the sun making its way across the sky toward the west and slowly beginning to sink below the demarcation between earth and sky. The time of day is irrelevant though. It is the disturbing change in the dream that has occurred recently. Instead of the tranquil scenario you have been used to, a new twist has been added.

The trip is the same except a sense of dread permeates the atmosphere. A feeling that something bad will happen today and there is nothing you can do to stop it. You come



around a curve in the road and see a cobblestone bridge in the distance. The forest on your left gives way to a small clearing of tall grass and a quaint Victorian style house secreted off in the background. The sky has darkened considerably as the sun has nearly set giving the entire locale a chilling and somber aura. Adding to the mise en scene, church bells ring in the distance sounding four o'clock. Even your horse seems spooked.

You tie up your horse and scan the property for signs of life but find none. Opening the front gate you look down on the decorative brick walkway that meanders across the front yard and notice fresh drops of blood. It looks fresh and you bend down and dip your finger into it bringing it to your nose for confirmation. As you do the lonely howl of a wolf in the nearby forest momentarily distracts your attention. The stench of death hangs in the air and a general feeling of malaise permeates the moment.

Even though you know better, some unseen force draws you up the long path towards the house for a closer look. No good can come of this, you are certain, but the attraction is simply too strong. You must investigate. You are beginning to develop an uneasy sense that all is not right here, but that it is up to you to find out. Church bells in the distance sound out four o'clock in the afternoon. It will be dark soon. And with the night comes things that go bump.

## APPENDIX G