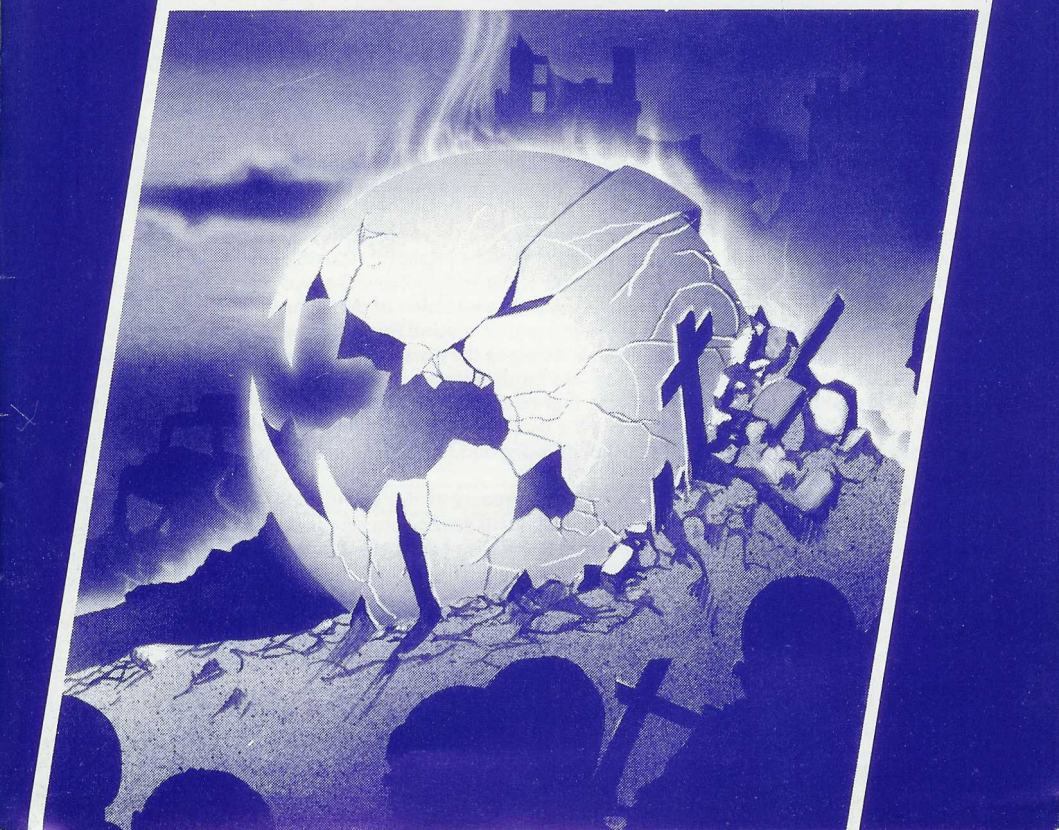
TIMETRAX



INTRODUCTION

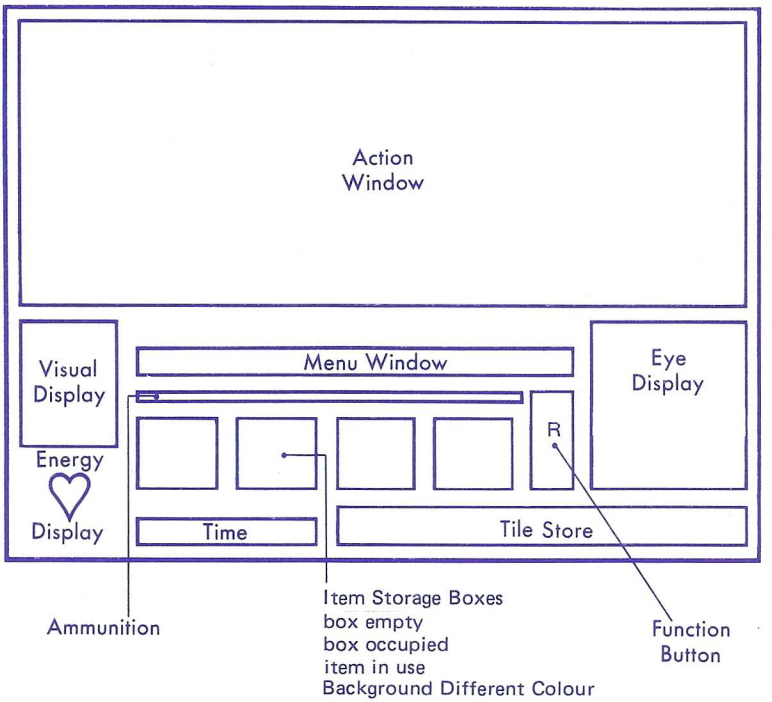
O.K. so the Holocaust wasn't so bad after all. You've got your own cellar, six candles, two tins of baked beans and running water. The beans are **not** your favourite brand it's true and the water **does** run from the ceiling but these days it's still **luxury**.
In fact the only thing ruining the decor is the tatty heap of torn cloth and bones, squatting in the corner. Half an hour ago that went by the name of Uriah Winterbottom M.Sc. physic researcher and aging loony. Now it's just cluttering up the only armchair left in Clapham, Uriah having departed these mortal coils. Presumably to higher things and if what's left of him gets any higher you're gonna have to go OUTSIDE to dispose of it...
Silly old fool was babbling on for days. Ever since Bomb Day in fact. Kept ranting on about how he only needed a few more hours and he could have stopped it. Put the mockers on the Dark One once and for all. Something about the Eight Minds and scattered Runes. Straight out of a Michael Moorcock.
Only thing was, the senile old nutter had proof, or what he called proof anyway. And looking at the Coordinate Table spread over the floor and the gold lettering in the Dark World books piled up around you it all seems a lot more likely now than it would have done before the Bomb...
The story went like this:–
Man has risen to the heights of civilisation several times throughout his history, only to blow it once apparently on the threshold of greater Things. (Note the capital!!) According to Uriah, this is not accidental. Several millenia ago, Good lost the battle with Evil and the bad guys have had it pretty much their own way ever since. The most treasured possession of the Eight Minds – the most powerful pysches in Creation – have been stolen and seeded through Time, in such a way that the Minds have to Probe around to find them. In doing so they are keeping open the Portals in Time, through which the Dark Ones are pouring into Earth History.
Enough of them have arrived to make sure that no-one can collect the Runes and cast the spell that would close off the Portals, or even return the missing items to the Eight Minds in the first place; necessary if Time-Space is to be calmed once more and Mankinds next rise is to be unhindered by the bad guys...
From your luxury cellar beneath what was once London, all this sounds appealing really doesn't it? All you have to do is search Time and Space, using the Portals, kill off any baddies in the way, find and return the eight Items and as a finale line up the correct four Runes to stitch up the fabric of Space.

So here you go. Consult the table to find the next Portal around here, dig out your old gun and hop in. Simple! Trouble is the Portal Table doesn't make much sense about where you'll come out except that the appearances are to a fixed cycle and always go to the same place. So you'll have to map them out as you go. Assuming you get that far.
Just as you make your leap into Time you remember something else the old man was raving about, something that scared him so much he never had the guts to try this himself... an unstoppable, unkillable Guardian which protects the Runes and hunts down those who try to collect them...
Ah well, the beans were probably off anyway...

THE AIM OF THE GAME

Timetrax is the game of the Quest for peace in our Time. The aim is to shut off the invading Dark Ones and reset the fabric of the Universe. To do this you need to pacify the Eight Minds by returning their Character Items to them and then seal the Portals through Time by casting the correct spell. Like all good Quests this one is not easy. It is strongly recommended that you read right through the instructions before you get seriously involved. Don't make it any harder!

SCREEN LAYOUT



SPECTRUM & MSX SCREEN LAYOUT

CONTROLS

1. Movement of Figure

Joystick Position	Action
Up	Jump Up or Climb Up
Down	Climb Down
Left	Walk Left
Right	Walk Right
Up + Left	Leap Left
Up + Right	Leap Right
Fire	Fire Weapon
Fire + Up	Move Into Screen (e.g. through door)
Fire + Down	Enter Options Mode

Climbing is restricted to areas containing stairs, steps, ladders, handholds, etc. Some features (e.g. Monoliths, Walls, Spear Traps) block left and right movement of the player but do not block missiles or movement of flying creatures. Other features (e.g. some small crates, boulders and giant mushrooms) may not be walked past, and must be jumped over. It is possible to land on one of these, and it is also possible, having jumped over one, to walk back in front of it.
Moving into a door or other opening will result in one of the following:–

You enter a new screen in the same Time Zone;
You MEET A CHARACTER (see appropriate section);
Nothing happens. Try LOOKing for hidden items.

Note that each LEAP reduces your energy – it is possible to die through leaping if you are very weak.

2. Options Mode

Use joystick left and right to **change** options, and "fire" to **select** an option. The following section describes each option and its uses.

FLIP Flips between option lists.

LOOK Looks for objects hidden in any location behind the player figure. No other action is possible until the search is completed.

TAKE Takes item currently in Visual Display.

HOLD Holds game

QUIT Quits game.

BACK Goes back to game from Hold.

DROP Lets you use joystick left/right to select a possession – "fire" drops it (see Item Replacement).

SWAP Similar to DROP, but selecting an item causes it to become "in use" (i.e. status light green).

TEST You must have 4 or more Rune Tiles for this to function. Use joystick left/right and "fire" to select a combination of 4 tiles (all different), which will appear in the Tile Test Area. When the fourth tile has been selected, the Eye Display will indicate how close the arrangement is to the Cosmic Pattern. Each of the four eyes correspond to one of the tiles (which are checked in a RANDOM order), as follows:–

1. Eye Closed – one tile not in Cosmic Pattern.
2. Eye Half-Open – one tile is in Cosmic Pattern, but in a different position.
3. Eye Fully Open – one tile in correct position in pattern.

Note that completing the correct pattern will end the game.

CAST You must have 2 or more Rune Tiles for this to function. Use joystick left/right and "fire" to select 2 different tiles, which will appear in the Tile Test Area. When the second tile has been selected, either nothing happens (the combination possesses no magical qualities), or a Spell will be named in the Menu Window. Select YES to cast it (you will lose the tiles concerned), or NO to return. A list of Spells is given later.

"R" BUTTON Whenever this is available for selection, it enables you to leave the Options mode and resume control of the figure.

ENERGY

Zero energy results in DEATH and the end of the game.

Energy is GAINED by: Using a Potion.
Casting a Restore Spell.

Engergy is LOST by: Leaping.
Touching a Flying Creature.
Touching Sharp Stalagmites or Swampy Ground.
Falling between floors (the further the fall, the greater the energy loss).

AMMUNITION and WEAPONS

Bullet: for Pistol.

Bolt: for Crossbow.

Gem: for Wand.

Certain Weapons only operate in certain Time Zones. The number of shots remaining in a weapon IN USE is shown as RED boxes on the Ammunition Display. A weapon must be IN USE to Fire or Load it. A weapon cannot be fired if the player figure is either in contact with a flying creature, or is facing ahead. Once a weapon is DROPped, even if when trading with a character, it will become unloaded.
To load a weapon (i.e. give it its full 10 shots), you must have the weapon IN USE while you TAKE the appropriate ammunition.
Once taken from a location, ammunition will not be available again from that location until you have visited another Time Zone.

SCROLLS and POTIONS

To use a scroll or potion, SWAP to it when it is already IN USE (i.e. its Status Light is GREEN).
Scroll: There are 10 Scrolls, all outwardly identical, each one holding the 2 Rune Tile combination of one of the 10 spells. The tiles will appear in the Visual Display. Note that the scrolls merely indicate which tiles are required for one UNIDENTIFIED spell – the player cannot cast this spell unless he owns the tiles involved.
Potion: Each Potion restores your Energy by up to half of its maximum value. Once used, a potion vanishes from play.

CHESTS and KEYS

There are 4 chests, each with its own key. Each key is a different colour. Unless you have the appropriate key IN USE, you cannot LOOK, TAKE or DROP items from or into the chest.

RUNE TILES

There are 15 Rune Tiles, each with a different Rune on it, of which you may carry no more than 10 at a time.

CHARACTER ITEMS

There are 8 Character Items, each one belonging to one of the 8 Minds. The items are:

DAGGER	HELMET	SKULL	EMERALD SCARAB
BOOK	CLAY DOLL	MAP	BATTLE AXE

SPELLS

WARP AHEAD Travel one Time Zone into the FUTURE.

WARP BACK Travel one Time Zone into the PAST.

TIMESTOP Temporarily stops time for all but the player figure.

REVEAL If player figure is in front of a Chest, its contents are shown in the Visual Display.
If you are in a Meeting with a Character, their possessions are shown in the Visual Display.
If neither of the above, no effect.
Note that you CANNOT TAKE any revealed items.

RESTORE Same effect as a Potion.

OPEN If player figure is in front of a Chest, he may Look, Take and Drop into/from it until he leaves Option Mode.

CHARM If player is in a Meeting, he may charm the character into trading any of his possessions for anything that the player offers. The spell is broken when the player goes AWAY.

BANISH Banishes all creatures for approx. 30 secs.

CHARGE Fully reloads any weapon IN USE.

ORACLE Shows one of the 4 Cosmic Pattern Rune Tiles in the Visual Display (N.B. it cannot be Taken).

MEETING MINDS

Upon meeting one of the Eight Minds, the appropriate face will appear in the Visual Display, and the player figure will be removed. You are always in Option Mode in a meeting, and are restricted to the following special options:–

AWAY Leave meeting, return control to player figure.

CAST See "Options Mode."

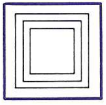
SWAP See "Options Mode."

KEEP Do not exchange items with character.

DEAL Exchange items with character (N.B. make sure you have space to store any items!)

DROP When in a meeting, Drop causes the selected item to be offered to the character – it is displayed in the Eye Display. If the character doesn't want the item, it will be returned immediately, otherwise the character will offer one of his two possessions in exchange. If you then choose to KEEP your own item, the character may offer you his other item. Items offered by the character are displayed in the Visual Display. Note that, if you offer the character his own Character Item, even if you refuse to trade for either of his possessions, he will use Cosmic Manipulation to force an exchange! All of the characters are consistent in their evaluation of offered items – they will only offer an item in exchange for a more valued one, unless they have been CHARMed.

TIME PORTALS



Each Portal lasts for approx. 7 seconds, and connects one Time Zone to another. A Portal appears SOMEWHERE in time and space every 10 seconds. You can only see Portals which open onto your current screen. To use a Portal, you must move to touch it, whilst keeping ON THE FLOOR – you will then be transported. You MAY NOT re-enter a Portal you have just come through. The Portals follow a fixed schedule which repeats every 10 minutes.

The proper use of Portals is essential to achieving your aims, and as it is very unlikely that you could stumble into a Portal by chance, let alone one which goes to the right time and place, you should always consult the TABLE. Whenever you use a new Portal, or see one on your screen, you should note its position so that, if you should wish to enter it again, you will know exactly where to wait for it! Unlike BR the Portals are always on time and never get diverted.

TIME ZONES

Time Zone	Year	Minds Present
Wilderness	2100 AD	Lazer Sky the Sand Rat
Holocaust	2000 AD	None
Gothic	1900 AD	Professor Wells Blackflay the Ghoul
Dark Ages	1000 AD	Bella the Witch Drew the Hermit
Golden Age	5000 BC	Ra Sheeba the High Priestess
Ice Age	10000 BC	Stone Eye the Necromancer
Dawn of Man	50000 BC	Grunt the Barbarian

PERFORMANCE RATINGS

At the end of the game, you will be rated on a scale of nine grades. Your rating will be based on your success in each of the four following categories:–

i. The proportion of the Cosmic Pattern decoded.
ii. The number of Character Items returned to their owners.
iii. The number of Spells cast.
iv. The number of Flying Creatures destroyed (NOT Banished).

The nine grades are listed in descending order below, along with the minimum requirements in each category. Note that, if the game ends through Death, your rating will be lowered one grade, and that, if you have completed the Cosmic Pattern, you will be guaranteed at least HERO status.

Grade	Rating	Pattern Decoded	Items Returned	Spells Cast	Flyers Destroyed
1.	DEMIGOD	8	8	10	96
2.	SUPERHERO	6	6	7	64
3.	HERO	4	5	4	48
4.	WARRIOR	3	4	2	32
5.	ADVENTURER	2	3	1	16
6.	TRAVELLER	1	2	0	8
7.	EARTHLING	0	1	0	6
8.	JESTER	0	0	0	4
9.	PUDDING	0	0	0	0

The number in the Pattern Decoded category is your closest attempt (not necessarily your last one), scored as:–

2 points for each tile correctly placed.
1 point for each tile which belongs to the Pattern, but is not correctly placed.

Once you have received your rating, press FIRE to BEGIN NEW GAME.

HINTS

Always turn to face AHEAD before entering Options Mode, to avoid accidental firing of a weapon.
The Guardian of the Portals is indestructible.
The PISTOL is always on your start screen.
AMMUNITION will always be found in the same places.
(Examples of where to look... Furniture, Doors, Alcoves, Containers, Bushes, Nests, Holes. There are others.
CHARACTER ITEMS never start in the same Time Zone as their owner.
At the START of the game, every screen contains at least ONE item, in addition to those in chests, held by characters, or ammunition. (Each screen has fewer than 10 possible item locations.)
ITEM REPLACEMENT Rune Tiles lost through spell casting are redistributed in time and space, as will be any item that you DROP, unless you are in a Meeting.

COSMIC COORDINATES TABLE

The following table gives the Time and the 2 screens that each Portal connects, for each Portal in the 10 minute cycle. To read the table for any time on the game clock, just look up the last 3 digits (i.e. Minutes/units; Seconds/tens; Seconds/units). e.g. if the game clock reads 01:27:36, look up 7:36 on the table – 7:42 is the next Portal. There are 21 screens (3 per Time Zone). The clue to the identification of each screen is given in this Table.

Time	Screen		Screen	
0:02	18	THREE HUTS IN THE DAWN	0	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
0:12	14	YELLOW IDOL IN THE AGE OF GOLD	10	DEAD TREE IN THE DARK
0:22	8	GOTHIC HEADSTONE	3	HOME IN THE HOLOCAUST
0:32	15	ICE AGE	10	DEAD TREE IN THE DARK
0:42	10	DEAD TREE IN THE DARK	5	YELLOW GREEN HOLOCAUST
0:52	8	GOTHIC HEADSTONE	0	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
1:02	15	ICE AGE	12	GOLDEN AGE ALTAR
1:12	16	ICE AGE GROTTO	7	FIVE GOTHIC DOORS
1:22	20	TWO RED FERNS IN THE DAWN	4	HOLOCAUST BINS
1:32	4	HOLOCAUST BINS	1	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
1:42	16	ICE AGE GROTTO	3	HOME IN THE HOLOCAUST
1:52	14	YELLOW IDOL IN THE AGE OF GOLD	2	DEAD TREE IN THE WILDERNESS
2:02	18	THREE HUTS IN THE DAWN	17	ICE AGE SHACK
2:12	13	GOLDEN AGE SYMMETRY	7	FIVE GOTHIC DOORS
2:22	17	ICE AGE SHACK	0	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
2:32	9	DARK AGE ALTAR	6	GOTHIC LABORATORY
2:42	19	DAWN OF THE TOTEM POLE	9	DARK AGE ALTAR
2:52	9	DARK AGE ALTAR	2	DEAD TREE IN THE WILDERNESS
3:02	14	YELLOW IDOL IN THE AGE OF GOLD	5	YELLOW GREEN HOLOCAUST

3:12	18	THREE HUTS IN THE DAWN	14	YELLOW IDOL IN THE AGE OF GOLD
3:22	19	DAWN OF THE TOTEM POLE	6	GOTHIC LABORATORY
3:32	12	GOLDEN AGE ALTAR	1	NO SAND IN THE WILDERNESS
3:42	11	DARK AGES	8	GOTHIC HEADSTONE
3:52	9	DARK AGE ALTAR	4	HOLOCAUST BINS
4:02	13	GOLDEN AGE SYMMETRY	4	HOLOCAUST BINS
4:12	17	ICE AGE SHACK	9	DARK AGE ALTAR
4:22	12	GOLDEN AGE ALTAR	6	GOTHIC LABORATORY
4:32	19	DAWN OF THE TOTEM POLE	5	YELLOW GREEN HOLOCAUST
4:42	10	DEAD TREE IN THE DARK	0	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
4:52	6	GOTHIC LABORATORY	4	HOLOCAUST BINS
5:02	20	TWO RED FERNS IN THE DAWN	1	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
5:12	6	GOTHIC LABORATORY	1	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
5:22	10	DEAD TREE IN THE DARK	7	FIVE GOTHIC DOORS
5:32	16	ICE AGE GROTTO	13	GOLDEN AGE SYMMETRY
5:42	20	TWO RED FERNS IN THE DAWN	13	GOLDEN AGE SYMMETRY
5:52	16	ICE AGE GROTTO	2	DEAD TREE IN THE WILDERNESS
6:02	5	YELLOW GREEN HOLOCAUST	0	DOOR RIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS
6:12	18	THREE HUTS IN THE DAWN	7	FIVE GOTHIC DOORS
6:22	17	ICE AGE SHACK	4	HOLOCAUST BINS
6:32	12	GOLDEN AGE ALTAR	11	DARK AGE
6:42	20	TWO RED FERNS IN THE DAWN	10	DEAD TREE IN THE DARK
6:52	15	ICE AGE	6	GOTHIC LABORATORY
7:02	19	DAWN OF THE TOTEM POLE	16	ICE AGE GROTTO
7:12	12	GOLDEN AGE ALTAR	3	HOME IN THE HOLOCAUST
7:22	17	ICE AGE SHACK	14	YELLOW IDOL IN THE AGE OF GOLD
7:32	15	ICE AGE	1	NO SAND IN THE WILDERNESS
7:42	18	THREE HUTS IN THE DAWN	11	DARK AGE
7:52	14	YELLOW IDOL IN THE AGE OF GOLD	8	GOTHIC HEADSTONE
8:02	3	HOME IN THE HOLOCAUST	2	DEAD TREE IN THE WILDERNESS
8:12	19	DAWN OF THE TOTEM POLE	2	DEAD TREE IN THE WILDERNESS
8:22	13	GOLDEN AGE SYMMETRY	9	DARK AGE ALTAR
8:32	18	THREE HUTS IN THE DAWN	3	HOME IN THE HOLOCAUST
8:42	11	DARK AGE	3	HOME IN THE HOLOCAUST
8:52	7	FIVE GOTHIC DOORS	5	YELLOW GREEN HOLOCAUST
9:02	20	TWO RED FERNS IN THE DAWN	8	GOTHIC HEADSTONE
9:12	7	FIVE GOTHIC DOORS	2	DEAD TREE IN THE WILDERNESS
9:22	19	DAWN OF THE TOTEM POLE	12	GOLDEN AGE ALTAR
9:32	17	ICE AGE SHACK	8	GOTHIC HEADSTONE
9:42	11	DARK AGE	1	NO SAND IN THE WILDERNESS
9:52	16	ICE AGE GROTTO	11	DARK AGE

MIND GAMES

Argus Press Software Group

The Argus Press Software Group,
Liberty House, 222 Regent Street,
London, W1R 7DB.
Telephone: (01) 439 0666.