



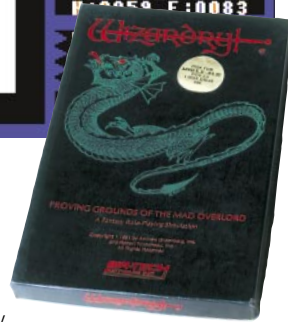
Ultima linked dungeons through an over-ground world, story and communication. Wizardry (see box right) reduced RPG life to survival in caverns – two leads for other fantasy games to follow.

Many game designers started their careers on the Apple II: Early Apple games were Dan Bunten's debut **Wheeler's Dealers** (1978) and **Dungeon Campaign**, an RPG by Robert Clardy. To market strategy and RPG games, Joel Billings founded Strategy Simulations Incorporated (SSI) in 1979. Doug Carlston gave up his job as a lawyer to start Brøderbund, quickly touching base with the Japanese software scene. With **Mystery House** in 1980, the married couple Roberta and Ken Williams created the graphic



adventure: She told the tale, he coded it. What started as a spare time venture quickly grew to one of the biggest publisher of computer games for many years to come, Sierra On-Line.

The impact of Apple RPGs in particular, was substantial: In 1979, Richard Garriott laid the foundation for the **Ultima** series with **Akalabeth**; over the years, **Ultima** transformed



The portable Apple IIc is one of the best designed and prettiest 8-Bit systems: The costly computer featured a floppy drive fitted to the right, and both...

...monitor and TV output. It was quickly set up and took up little space. The handle converts to a stand – a practical office and games machine.



In this promotional shot, Apple presented its hardware as all-round serious micros. To the right, the Apple III is shown, a short-lived, not 100% compatible successor.

from simple dungeon crawling to an adventure world in the vein of J.R.R. Tolkien. With plenty of imagination and technical talent, the son of a NASA astronaut populated his continent Britannia, installed towns that switched to a different scale upon entering, laid secret passages and commanded in peasants, wizards and hordes of monsters. In the centre of adventure, enthroned the creator himself, granting experience levels as Lord British.

Dungeoneers Robert Woodhead and Andrew Greenberg went straight in the other direction: In **Wizardry**, the overworld was reduced to inn, temple and weapon shop, the rest was hack'n slash, a rough rumble for survival in the dungeons. A six-strong party cast spells, fought and puzzled its way through the underworld while collecting experience points.

Even after the introduction of the audio-visually more powerful competitor Atari 800, Apple remained the leading computer format. According to the American trade magazine 'Computer Gaming World', half of all games before 1982 were either available for Apple or Apple-exclusives. It wasn't until 1984 that the popularity of the Apple II noticeably dropped in the face of competition from the C64 and Atari 800, soon also from IBM compatible PCs. Only a quarter of new games were now released for the Apple II. Despite manifold revisions, Apple itself abandoned its 8-Bit veteran to focus on the 16-Bit successor Macintosh.

Regardless of Apple's world wide excellent reputation, the platform remained an American phenomenon: In Japan, it had covered only a small niche and in Europe, the