

# JAMES HERBERT'S

# THE RATS

*It was only when the bones of the first devoured victims were discovered that the true nature and power of these swarming black creatures with their razor-sharp teeth and taste for human blood began to be realised by a panic-stricken city.*

*For millions of years man and rats had been natural enemies. But now the people of London found themselves locked in a deadly struggle with the rats, a struggle in which for the first time – suddenly, shockingly, horribly – the balance of power had shifted.*

## Your part in the struggle

You take on the roles of a number of characters who are locked in the struggle for supremacy between rats and man. You control the fate of the major characters: Harris, whose resourcefulness and courage make him a born survivor; Howard, the young scientist who is researching the rat menace; and Foskins the Under-Secretary of State entrusted with the heavy responsibility of saving London. You also control minor characters, ordinary people who suddenly find themselves involved in the struggle; people like Paula Blakely who tries to save her defenceless baby from the rats.

Sometimes you will have to confront the rats eye to eye in encounters where quick-thinking and fast reactions can make the difference between the life or death of the character you are playing.

At other times, you will have to take Foskins' place in General Headquarters, in control of London's Emergency Forces. As you observe the rats' movements you must try to work out a strategy for stopping their spread.

withstand the rats. Therefore the R and D Centre works on devising new weapons and better defences. Ultimately the R and D Centre will discover the secret source of the rats' superior strength and intelligence.

## The Emergency Forces



**Rat-Kill** Professional ratkillers, the people you call when there's something strange under the floorboards. Not so good at attacking the rats, but their knowledge of the rat species *Rattus-rattus* makes them valuable in defence.



**Police** Their knowledge of the city together with their experience at riot control make them good all-rounders.



**Firemen** Not really that useful against the rats, but you have to make do with what you are given.



**Army** The troops will only be called in as a last resort. If you can survive that long, their training and advanced weapon skills will give you a second wind.

## You win or lose the war

The rats breed quickly and, unchecked, will soon overrun London, and spread into the surrounding countryside where you will have no chance of preventing their spread across the whole nation.

To win the war you must therefore eradicate the rats. You lose the war if:

- Harris, Foskins or Howard is killed; or
- the rats break out of London; or
- all of the emergency forces are lost.

## Getting a good score

At the end of your game you will be given a score. To get a good score you need to:

- complete many encounters without getting your character killed;
- make sure that you do not lose too many forces.

## The Rats novel

You do not need to read the book in order to play and enjoy the software. However, many of the characters and situations in the software will mean more to you if you have read the book before you play the software.

## 1 HOW TO START

- 1 Set up your cassette recorder, computer and TV set as instructed in your manual.
- 2 **Spectrum only** Press J then hold down **SYMBOL** and press P twice. **LOAD ""** should now appear on the screen. Press **ENTER** and then **PLAY** on your cassette recorder to start loading.  
**Commodore only** Hold down **SHIFT** and press **RUN. PRESS PLAY ON TAPE** should now appear on the screen. Press **PLAY** on your cassette recorder to start loading.  
**Amstrad only** Hold down **CTRL** and press **ENTER** (bottom right-hand of the number key pad). Press **PLAY** on your recorder to start loading.
- 3 After several minutes, an animated title sequence will begin. (**Spectrum** Stop the cassette.) You can now either start a new game or select a demonstration.

## Their weapons

At the start you have:



**Protective suits** These give a measure of protection against the vermin's razor-sharp teeth and claws.



**Chemical gas** (Rat-Kill only) All-purpose anti-vermin gas. Not that effective against the stronger-than-normal rat species.



**Dogs** (Police only) The traditional method of killing rats. They fight savagely and bravely but suffer terrible losses.



**Riot shields** (Police only)

## Demonstration

Press D while the animation sequence is playing. The animation sequence will now be repeated continuously until you press **ENTER** or **RETURN** (as described below).

## Starting a new game

- 1 **Commodore and Amstrad versions** automatically load the game after the animation sequence. **Spectrum only:** When the title animation has finished, press **PLAY** on the cassette recorder to load the game. Note: if a tape loading error occurs (eg, the volume is set incorrectly) the screen border will flash black and white. Adjust the recorder, rewind the tape and press a key to try again.
- 2 If you wish to miss out the animation sequence, simply press **ENTER** or **RETURN** and then **PLAY** on your recorder. Note: you must always load the cassette from the beginning.
- 3 The game begins with Foskins' strategic battle against the rats.

## Continuing a game

The first screen to appear is the map of London, as described in section 3. You can continue a previously saved game whenever this screen is displayed (see section 7 **HOW TO SAVE YOUR GAME**).

- 1 **Commodore and Amstrad** Hold down **CRTL** and press L. **Spectrum** Hold down **SYMBOL SHIFT** and press L.
- 2 Replace the program cassette with the cassette that contains your game, rewind and then press **PLAY** on your cassette recorder.
- 3 After several minutes the program will start at the point which you saved the game.

## 2 RUNNING THE PROGRAM

You operate the program using only five keys; four keys move a cursor around the screen (to highlight options, deploy forces etc) and the fifth key confirms your choice. The keys are:



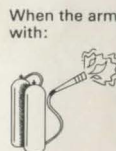
**Rifles** (Police and Army only)



**High-pressure water hoses** (Firemen only)



**Axes** (Firemen only)



**Flame-throwers**

When the army is sent in, the troops are also equipped with:



**Sonic locators**

There are four special weapons that the R and D Centre might develop for you:

	Spectrum	C64	Amstrad
Cursor UP	Q	Q	Q
Cursor DOWN	A	A	A
Cursor LEFT	O	O	O
Cursor RIGHT	P	P	P
CONFIRM	ENTER or SPACE	RETURN or SPACE	ENTER or SPACE

## 3 FOSKINS' STRATEGIC BATTLE AGAINST THE RATS

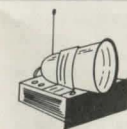
*Foskins sat in his offices at General Headquarters. He was frustrated and uneasy. No more resources, that's what the PM had told him. No more resources. They just didn't seem to realise the severity of the situation. The reports of giant rats attacking people made him shudder when he thought how quickly rats breed. How could he hope to stop them with only limited resources?*

Your job is to try to contain the rats. As the rat attacks increase, the media will place pressure on the Government to prevent further attacks, and you will receive further resources. Eventually the army will be sent in. Until then you will just have to do your best! Please note: At the start of the program will have barely enough time to explore your options, for you will soon be plunged into your first encounter with the rats (see section 4). This is signalled by an alarm bell. When the alarm has finished, you take on the role of the character, about to meet the rats eye to eye... After this encounter you will have much more time to watch the rats' movements and develop your strategy.

## Your resources

To defend London against the rats you have two resources:

Emergency Forces;  
a Research and Development Centre.  
The Emergency Forces can be used to attack the rats. Initially, however, their equipment is barely adequate to



**Sonic scramblers**



**Electric stun prods**



**Anti-Rattus gas**

However you'll have to find out for yourself how effective these weapons/defences are.

## The R and D Centre

The Centre can investigate four aspects of the rat menace:

**Origin** where the rats come from  
**Defence** how to protect humans against rats  
**Offence** new weapons to kill the rats  
**Nature** the biology of the rats

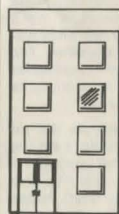
Note: investigations into the nature and origin of the rats may well have valuable spin-offs in the other aspects.



**What you do**  
The screen shows a map of London. On this map are marked:



GHQ



Harris' flat



R and D Centre

As the rats spread across London you will also see flashing white and red squares:

**White squares** Reports of possible sightings by civilians

**Red squares** Reports from the Emergency Forces in the field

Civilian reports can indicate where the rats are going to strike next; however not all the reported sightings by the panic-stricken people will be accurate. Reports from your Emergency Forces tell the results of their battles with the rats.

Monitor all reports carefully both to plan where to deploy your forces and to keep an eye on your progress in the war against the rats.

Note: eventually the Government will evacuate all civilians from London. After this point there will be no more civilian reports.

When the R and D Centre sends you a report, it appears at the top of the screen.

#### Your main options

At the bottom of the screen are listed three options: **Report**, **Forces**, **Research**. Initially **Report** is highlighted. To choose an option, highlight the option you want using the **LEFT** and **RIGHT** keys and then press **CONFIRM**.

#### Reading a report

- To read a report, choose the option **Report**. All the options are replaced with **Abort**, which is highlighted.
- Press **UP** and a cursor appears on the map. Use **UP**, **DOWN**, **LEFT** and **RIGHT** to manoeuvre the cursor over the report you wish to read, then press **CONFIRM**.
- The report is displayed. Press **CONFIRM** to proceed, after you have read the report. Note: you can only read a report once.
- The report is removed from the screen, and **Abort** is highlighted. You can now either select another report to read (as described in 2 above) or press **CONFIRM** to return to the main options.

9

10

#### Deploying forces

- To deploy forces, choose the option **Forces**. All the options are replaced by **Abort**, which is highlighted. Press **UP** and a cursor appears on the map. Move this cursor over the area of the map in which you wish to deploy forces, then press **CONFIRM**.
- The screen displays all forces (if any) and equipment in this area. You can now either deploy forces in this area or equip them.
- To deploy a force, choose the option **Deploy**. The screen lists all the forces available. To the right of each is displayed a number. This number is the number of units of this force available. You can deploy a maximum of three units of each force in an area.
  - Press **UP** to highlight each force.
  - Press **LEFT** or **RIGHT** to increase or decrease the number of forces.
  - When you have finished, press **DOWN** until **Go back** is highlighted and then **CONFIRM**.
- To equip a force, choose the option **Equip**. The screen lists all the weapons available to each type of force.
  - Highlight the weapon you want to deploy and press **CONFIRM**.
  - A box now appears around the weapon to show that this has been supplied to the force.
  - If you wish to take a weapon away from a force, highlight the weapon as above and press **CONFIRM** a second time.
  - When you have finished, press **DOWN** until **Go back** is highlighted and then press **CONFIRM**.
- Any forces you have deployed will appear as a yellow square on the map.

#### Deploying R and D resources

- To deploy R and D resources, choose the option **Research**. The screen lists the four areas of R and D research, and to the right of these a box showing the number of resources available. You have ten resources to deploy across all four areas of research.

11

- Press **UP** or **DOWN** to highlight each area of research. Then press **LEFT** or **RIGHT** to increase or decrease the resources assigned to the highlighted area.
- When you have finished deploying R and D resources, highlight the option **Abort** and press **CONFIRM** to return to the main options.

#### 4 YOUR FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE RATS

The screen describes the character you will be playing and the situation he or she is in.

#### What you do

You can give your character commands which range from the simple (eg, **TAKE TORCH**) to the detailed (eg, **TELL NEIGHBOUR TO GET HELP**). Your choice of commands depends upon the situation you are in.

- At the bottom of the screen are listed three options: **Command**, **Inventory** and **Redescribe**. Initially **Command** is highlighted. To choose an option, press the **LEFT** and **RIGHT** keys to highlight the option you want and then **CONFIRM**.
- To see where you are and who (or what) is present, choose the option **Redescribe**. Make sure you check these regularly.
- To see what you are carrying or wearing, choose the option **Inventory**.
- To issue a command, choose the option **Command**. A list of actions (eg, **GO**, **TAKE**) is now displayed. When you select one of these actions it appears at the bottom of the screen and a second list of words is displayed.

For example if you chose to **GO**, the screen displays the list of directions you can **GO** – eg, **DOWN**, **OUT**, **UP**. Or if you chose **TAKE** the screen displays what things you can **TAKE** – eg, torch, knife.

When you have selected the second part of your command this is added to the first part at the bottom of the screen (eg 'GO' becomes 'GO DOWN').

12

The screen may now display options for the third part, and so on. When the command is complete, your character will carry out the command.

Note: if you make a mistake, choose **Abort** to move back to the previous part of your command.

Note: the commands will always be changing. In many situations you must act quickly if you are to survive.

In your first encounter you will not lose the game if your character gets killed. When the encounter has finished, you continue with Foskin's strategic battle against the rats. If you have completed the encounter without getting killed (or without taking the opportunity to run away!), important information about the rats may be passed on to the R and D Centre.

#### 5 FURTHER ENCOUNTERS WITH THE RATS

As the game proceeds, you will see the nature of the conflict between man and rats intensify. You will have to take on the roles of characters in more and more desperate encounters with the rats. (Remember: if Harris, Foskins or Howard gets killed in an encounter, you lose the game).

London's Emergency Forces will find it increasingly difficult to survive and all will depend upon whether or not R and D are able to develop new superweapons to counter the rat menace...

Please note: Because of the large number of encounters and the complexity of the strategy, the program is actually stored in several parts. If you survive long enough, then you will be asked to load more parts of the program before continuing.

- Make sure that side B of the cassette is facing upwards.
- If this is the first time you have had to load another part, rewind the cassette. Otherwise DO NOT REWIND: this should save you time.
- Press **PLAY** on the cassette recorder.
- When the next part has loaded, you can continue. (Spectrum only Stop the tape).

13

#### SUMMARY OF KEYPRESSES

	JOYSTICK	AMSTRAD	C64	SPEC
Cursor UP	Up	Q	Q	Q
Cursor DOWN	Down	A	A	A
Cursor LEFT	Left	O	O	O
Cursor RIGHT	Right	P	P	P
CONFIRM	Fire	ENTER or SPACE	RETURN or SPACE	ENTER or SPACE

Note: Amstrad only The cursor keys on the keypad may also be used.

#### 6 HINTS AND TIPS

- The rats will act intelligently, sometimes using secret ways to make rapid moves from one area of the city to another. Prepare for this by keeping a careful watch on civilian reports, especially those in areas where up till that point there has been no rat activity.
- You won't play exactly the same set of encounters in every game. But don't worry; all that you need to defeat the rats will be available every time you play.
- If your character survives an encounter with the rats, you may hand on to the R and D Centre valuable first-hand information about the rats, and this will speed up their research and may well provide London's Emergency Forces with the new weapons or defences that will ultimately help you defeat the rats. Therefore, even though you do not lose the game if any of the minor characters gets killed, it is in your interests to keep them alive.
- The only way to destroy the rats is for the R and D Centre to discover exactly where they are coming from. Harris will then have to encounter their source. If the rats have not been cleared from the area when this attempt is made, then Harris will have little chance of success.

#### 7 HOW TO SAVE YOUR GAME

- The game continues until the war with the rats is either won or lost. At any time when the main strategy screen, offering a choice of **REPORTS**, **FORCES** and **RESEARCH**, is displayed, you can stop playing the game and continue later.
- Replace the program cassette with a blank cassette and rewind to the start of the header.  
Spectrum only Make sure the ear lead is disconnected.
- Commodore and Amstrad Hold down **CTRL** and press **S**.  
Spectrum Hold down **SYMBOL SHIFT** and press **S**.
- Press **RECORD** on your cassette player.

15

- After several minutes your game will be saved on the cassette. You will need this cassette when you want to continue a game from this point.
- After your game has been saved, you may continue

#### 8 HOW TO FINISH

**Spectrum version** Simply disconnect your computer from the mains supply.  
**Commodore and Amstrad versions** Simply switch off your computer.

#### 9 USING A JOYSTICK

A joystick will be used instead of, or in addition to, the **UP**, **DOWN**, **LEFT**, **RIGHT** and **CONFIRM** keys.

Note: Spectrum only Remember to plug your joystick into the Spectrum before you load the program.

Program created by GXT  
from the novel *The Rats* by James Herbert  
Copyright © James Herbert 1974

Program copyright © Hodder and Stoughton 1985

All rights reserved. The contents of this package are copyright and may not be duplicated in any form by mechanical, lithographic, photographic, electronic or other means.



**HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
SOFTWARE**

Mill Road, Dunton Green,  
Sevenoaks, Kent

14