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, horrified—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 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.

How 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;
- the rats break out of London;
- 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 "7 should now appear on the screen. Press ENTER and then PLAY on your cassette recorder to start loading.
3. 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.
4. Amstrad only: Hold down CTRL and press ENTER (bottom right-hand of the number key pad). Press PLAY on your recorder to start loading.
5. 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.

2 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
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.

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).

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 to move a cursor around the screen (to highlight options) and the fifth key confirms your choice. The keys are:

- Up
- Down
- Left
- Right
- Return

3 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)

4 Rifles (Police and Army only)
High-pressure water hoses (Firemen only)
Aaxes (Firemen only)

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

- Flame-throwers
- Sonic locators
- Sonic scramblers
- Electric stun prods
- Anti-Rattus gas

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

The R and D Centre
The Centre can investigate four aspects of the rat menace:

- Origins: where the rats come from
- 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.

7 The Emergency Forces
Their knowledge of the city together with their experience at riot control make them good all-rounders.

- 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.

8 The Rand D Centre
The Rand D Centre can investigate four aspects of the rat menace:

- Origins: 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

As the rats spread across London you will also see
flashing white and red squares:
White squares Reports of possible sightings by civili-
lians
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
battlers.
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
1 To read a report, choose the option Report. All the
options are replaced with Abort, which is highlighted.
2 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.
3 The report is displayed. Press CONFIRM to proceed,
after you have read the report. Note: you can only
read a report once.
4 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.

Deploying forces
1 To deploy forces, choose the option Forces. All the
options are replaced with CONFIRM which is highlighted.
2 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.
3 The screen displays all forces (if any) and equip-
ment in this area. You can now either deploy forces
in this area or equip them.
4 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 de-
ploy a maximum of three units of each force in an
area.
   a) Press UP to highlight each force.
   b) Press LEFT or RIGHT to increase or decrease
the number of forces.
5 When you have finished, press DOWN until Go
back is highlighted and then press CONFIRM.
To equip a force, choose the option Equip. The
screen lists all the weapons available to each type of
force.
   a) Highlight the weapon you want to deploy and
press CONFIRM.
   b) A box now appears around the weapon to show
that it has been supplied to the force.
   c) If you wish to take a weapon away from a force,
highlight the weapon as above and press CONFIRM
a second time.
   d) When you have finished, press DOWN until Go
back is highlighted and then press CONFIRM.
Any forces you have deployed will appear as a yel-
low square on the map.

Deploying R and D resources
1 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 re-
sources to deploy across all four areas of research:

HINTS AND TIPS
1 The rats will act intelligently, sometimes using sec-
et 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 activ-
ity.
2 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.
3 If your character survives an encounter with the
rats, you may hand on to the R and D Centre valu-
able 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.
4 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, then this attempt is made, then Harris will
have little chance of success.

HOW TO SAVE YOUR GAME
1 The game continues until the war with the rats is
either won or lost. At any time when the main
screen shows the choice of REPORTS, FORCES and RESEARCH, is displayed, you can stop
playing the game and continue later.
2 Replace the program cassette with a blank cassette
and rewind to the start of the header.
3 When you have replaced the program cassette with
a blank cassette and rewound to the start of the
header,
   a) Press RECORD on your cassette player.
   b) Press UP or DOWN to highlight each area of re-
search. Then press LEFT or RIGHT to increase or
decrease the resources assigned to the highlighted
area.
3 When you have finished deploying R and D re-
sources, highlight the option Abort and press CONFIRM
to return to the main options.

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 can 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 com-
dands depends upon the situation you are in.

1 At the bottom of the screen are listed three options:
Comman, Inventory and Redescribe. Initially Com-
mand is highlighted. To choose an option, press the
LEFT and RIGHT keys to highlight the option you want
and then press CONFIRM.
2 To see where you are and who (or what) is present,
choose the option Redescribe. Make sure you check
these regularly.
3 To see what you are carrying or wearing, choose the
option Inventory. You can now either select another
option or press CONFIRM to return to the main options.
4 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 dis-
plays 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.
5 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').

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

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