



THE

BULGE

Battle for Antwerp



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TOP SECRET



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COMPUTER WAR GAMES

A wargame is history brought alive. It places you in command of forces at a moment when different decisions could radically change the path of history. It allows you to try out the different options available to the commanders of the time, and find out how history could have been altered. A wargame is not a simple game. In order to accurately show the choices of the commanders it must copy as much of the real situation as it can. The balance between simulating history and stimulating the players has always been the most difficult part of the wargame.

On a computer, much of this conflict disappears. The computer can handle the complex mathematics and the record-keeping needed in a wargame. It leaves the players free to make decisions on the strategies and tactics needed to win. It also gives a greater feel for the problems facing the commanders historically. A traditional wargame sometimes puts you in the position of a god rather than a Field Marshall: you can see all the forces in the battle, know exactly their strengths and weaknesses; and you can take as long as you want to decide what to do. The computer brings back the 'fog of war': it can present you with incomplete or even wrong information; and it can force you to make your decisions fast!

Finally, a computer can give you the one thing that a wargame cannot: someone to play the game against you. Computers can now be taught how to play each side in a wargame so well that you won't be able to tell the difference from a real opponent—except, of course, that the computer will make fewer mistakes!

We hope that you will enjoy this computer wargame, and that it will bring alive the history of the period for you. War is Man's most violent way of reacting to his neighbours, but sometimes the people involved see no alternative. Perhaps with this game you will see why.



THE BULGE

At the start of 1944 most of Europe between the Pyrenees and the Carpathians was controlled by a single power: Nazi Germany. But Soviet Russia was thrusting forward on a wide front in Eastern Europe; an Allied army was pushing slowly Northward in Italy; and the greatest seaborne invasion ever to be attempted was being prepared in Britain.

On 6th June 1944 the Allied armies struck Southward across the Channel and gained a foothold in Normandy. The Germans hesitated: Hitler was convinced that the main attack would come at Calais, and he held back forces from Normandy. The Allies poured troops into the beachhead, then broke out of Normandy into Brittany, and South into Central France. On 15th August the Allies made the second invasion that Hitler had feared. But they did not land in Calais, they came ashore in the South of France.

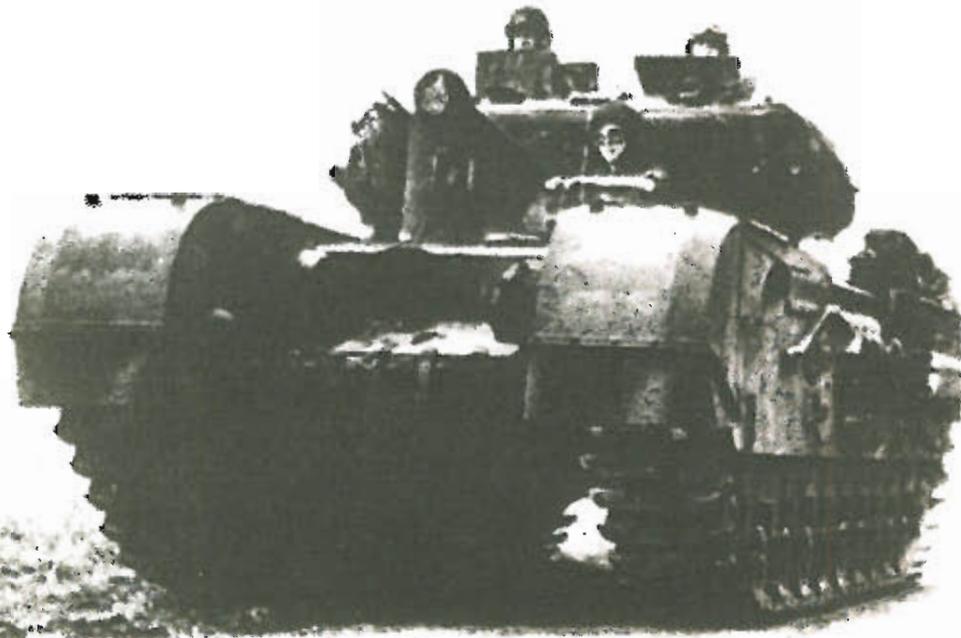
Through August and September the Allies pushed forward against the retreating Germans. Paris was retaken without struggle, and a new French army took its place in the front line against Germany. The Allied forces in Southern France were held up more by fuel problems than by serious defence. On 21st September the two Allied invasion forces met in Lorraine, and sealed the Germans back into Germany.

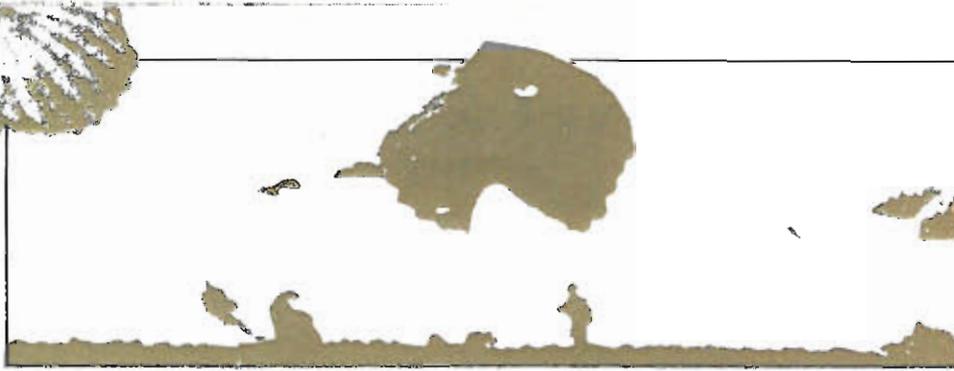
The Allied commanders were sure that the Germans were defeated. On 17th September Field Marshall Montgomery launched an ambitious invasion of German-occupied Netherlands. The task was to seize all the bridges between the British frontline and the Rhine—cross the Rhine and Germany is open. The tanks rolled, the paratroops landed. But the bridge at Arnhem proved to be “a bridge too far”, and the British were held at the Rhine. But other battles went well for the Allies: Antwerp fell on 9th November, although the defence was fierce; and the American 3rd Army continued to press Eastwards in Lorraine and Alsace. It appeared that Germany was defeated, and the Allies could take time choosing where to attack next.

Far left:
A Churchill Tank advances into Europe shortly after the Normandy landing.

“Prepare to take the offensive in November . . . some 25 divisions must be moved to the Western Front in the next one to two months.”

Hitler
August 19, 1944





Hitler had other ideas. On 16th December he launched the offensive that he called *Wacht Am Rhein*, but which history knows as the Battle of the Bulge. His objective was well-chosen: attack between the British and American armies and divide them; then strike North-West to capture Antwerp. Antwerp was the main Allied supply port, and without it all supplies would have to come through Cherbourg, a hundred miles to the West. The site of the break-out was well-chosen: the attack was to be made through the Ardennes against a light US screening force. In 1940 the French had said that tanks could not pass through the Ardennes and they had done so. In 1944 the Allied commanders made the same error.

By the end of the first day the US forces facing the attack had been brushed aside. The Germans had pushed through the rough country immediately in front of them into a more open terrain; and they had crossed the first major river barrier, the Ourthe. The Allies did not react until nightfall. By then it was obvious that this was a major offensive, and large forces would be needed to oppose it. Nonetheless only one division was detached from the North to help, and one division from the South (despite General Patton's loud protestations).

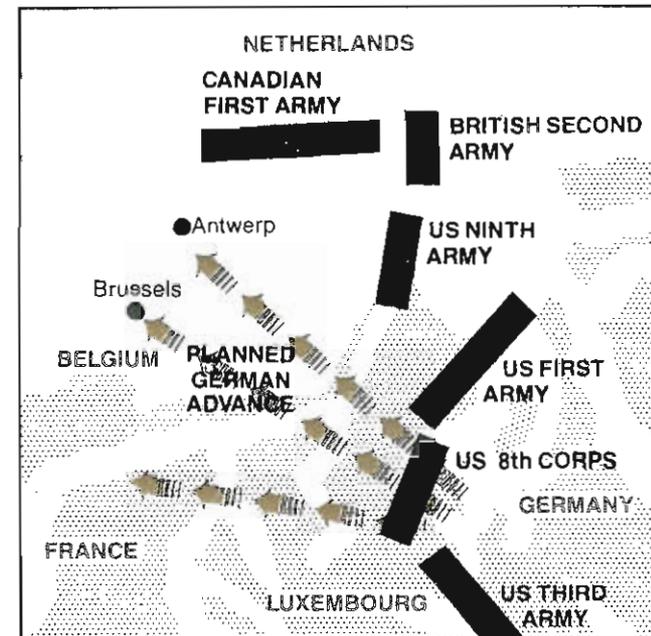
The extra divisions could only slow the Germans. They pushed forward throughout the 17th and 18th, although the offensive in the North began to meet organised and effective defence, and began to slow down. Allied Headquarters ordered Patton's Third Army to prepare to move Northwards against the now-forming Bulge, while the only Allied reserves (the 82nd and the 101st Airborne) were put in to blunt the tip of the thrust. The British were ordered to stand by on the Meuse in case the Germans got that far.

At St Vith the Americans began a spirited defence against heavy odds, while part of the 101st Airborne moved into Bastogne to hold up the German advance against that town. The Germans surrounded Bastogne but could not take it, and they were forced to divert their troops around the town to continue the advance. When the German commander called on the Americans in Bastogne to surrender, Brigadier General MacAuliffe responded with the famous message "Nuts!". On the 22nd the Germans took St Vith and pressed on towards Liege and Namur. But the schedule was slipping, and ammunition and fuel were in short supply.

On 25th December the spearhead of the German attack reached Rochefort. Here they were held by the 2nd Armoured division and defeated. In the South, Patton was ready to launch his Third Army against the flank of The Bulge. The German offensive in The Bulge was over, and from that time it was the Allies who advanced. On 3rd January Bastogne was relieved, and by 28th January the Germans had been driven back to their start line. The Allied offensive was delayed by about six weeks. There were some 60,000 Allied and 120,000 German casualties.

Could the Germans have won? The plan was sound although ambitious, but the will and fighting power of the Americans was greater than the Germans had believed. And the weather, while it had kept the Allied air forces grounded, was not conducive to a fast advance. Finally, the terrain must not be forgotten: the plan was to break out of the rough country of the Ardennes as soon as possible. As the schedule of the advance slipped so defensive advantages of trees and hills began to count against the Germans. Perhaps the last word should be given to General Sepp Dietrich, leader of the German advance:

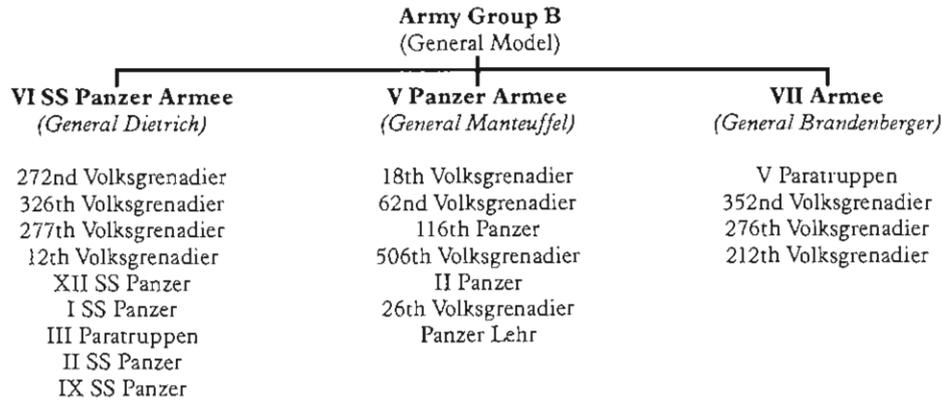
“All I had to do was cross a river, capture Brussels, and then go on to take the port of Antwerp. The snow was waist deep and there wasn't room to deploy four tanks abreast, let alone six armoured divisions. It didn't get light until eight and was dark again at four; and all this at Christmas time.”



Position of American forces and the planned German advance.

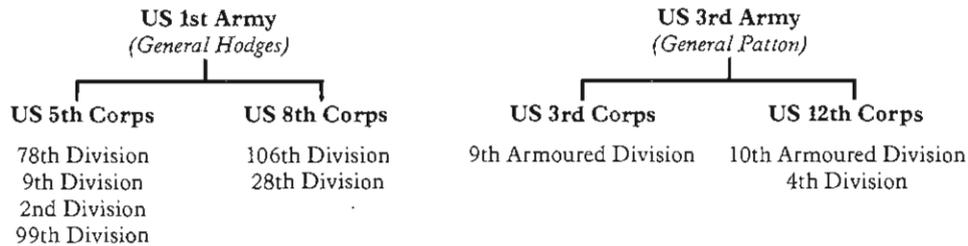
THE GERMAN ARMIES

Ardennes December 1944



THE ALLIES

American troops facing the German assault, 16th December 1944



Later reinforcements

US 1st Army:

1st Division, 30th Division, 3rd Armoured Division, 7th Armoured Division, 84th Division, 2nd Armoured Division.

US 3rd Army:

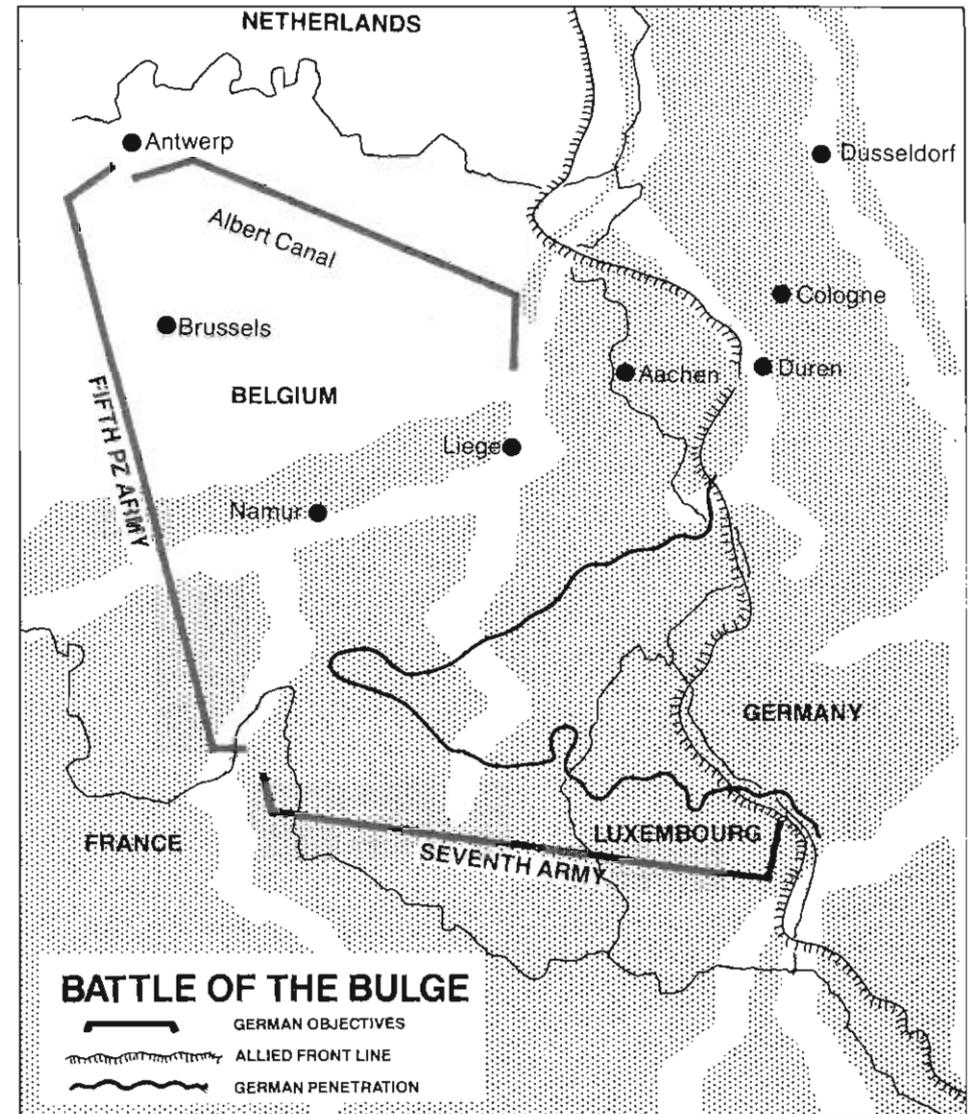
4th Armoured Division, 28th Division, 9th Armoured Division.

Reserves:

101st Airborne Division, 82nd Airborne Division.

British Forces allocated:

29th Armoured Brigade, 6th Airborne Division.



The planned German breakout.



PLAYING THE GAME



The aim of the game is to gain control of the road to Antwerp. Explore the scrolling screen, you'll find it in the top left—you are now about 60 kilometres from Antwerp. The game is real-time when played against the computer (and all movements are real-time in the two player game). Use the 'pause' button to work out your moves if necessary—it gives you time to think. You have a global map to see the overall state of affairs and a detailed battle map. You can move your units around the battlefield using the joystick and/or keyboard.

Note the state of the weather, the terrain, the ammunition and fuel levels, morale and the weapons involved—all influence the value of any one move.

Movement

The following factors influence the speed of movement:

- Armour moves faster than infantry.
- Allied armour moves faster than German armour.
- Mechanised infantry (German) moves as armour but fights as infantry.
- Artillery moves as infantry (to simulate limbering/unlimbering etc.)

- Speed of movement of armour is greatly reduced when moving through forests, hills and crossing rivers.
- Allied aircraft disrupt supply lines and reduce German movement allowance.
- If the fuel depot at Spar is not captured by December 22 all German units move and fight at half strength until it is captured. (If destroyed by the Allies, Germans will continue at half strength.)

Remember all the units keep moving as you give your orders—it's real-time. Keep your eyes on the intelligence reports, they might be vital.

Engaging Enemy Units

All movement commands to your forces are either given by joystick or keyboard (redefinable). Remember, units cannot be directly accessed in the global map and movement orders can be given to units which will take most of the game to execute if left unaltered.

Move your cursor sight over a selected unit or town. When it is correctly positioned the sight will change colour.

- Green to black if over an Allied unit.
- Green to yellow if over a German unit.
- Green to red if over a town.

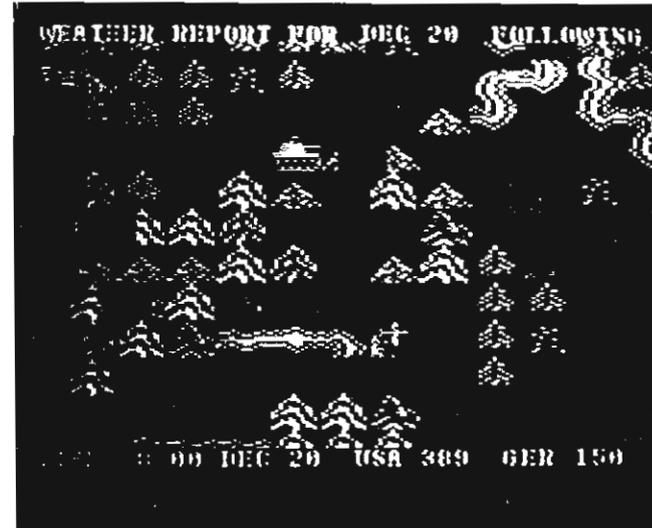
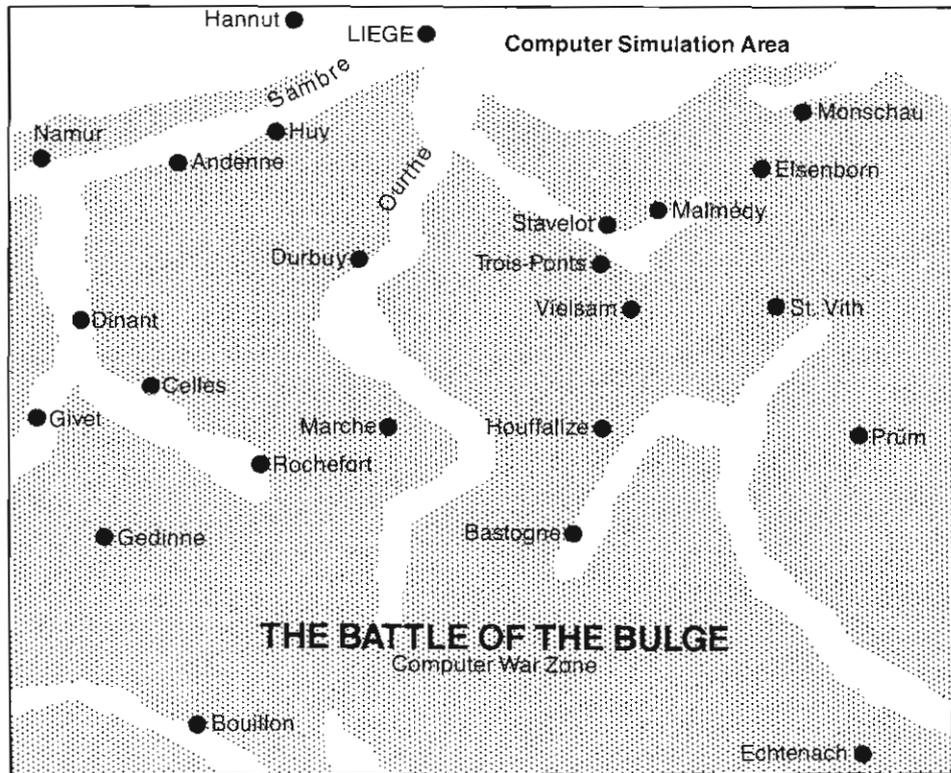
Then press Fire Button (or Space Bar)

- If you are over an enemy unit it will print the name and strength of the unit.
- If over a town it will state the name of the town and by whom it is controlled and its points value.
- If over your own unit it will state its name and strength and current status (stationary, advancing, engaged etc.).

If your unit is advancing a white flashing cursor sight will show the direction of advance as far as the edge of the screen, this white sight will NOT scroll the map. To leave the Orders unchanged simply press the Fire Button or Space a second time and the legend will disappear allowing normal movement of the cursor sight.

To change orders or give initial orders do NOT press Fire Button/Space Bar a second time. Instead move the sight by the keys or joystick in the direction you wish to move, a short beep indicates everything is in order and the sight changes to green. You may now move the sight and the unit as far as you wish (the map will scroll if necessary). Press the Fire Button (or Space Bar) and a lower tone beep

Computer War Zone.



Allied Infantry supported by tanks move forward cautiously near Celles.

will be given. (Note the cursor **will not** release a unit until this lower tone beep has been registered.) The legend is now removed from the foot of the screen and you can access another unit.

Units next to each other on the map automatically engage. Casualties are calculated by the respective strength of individual units, their preset fighting values, and allowance for other units engaged in the combat. Casualties are continually updated on the strength display, and combat will continue until one unit is wiped out or its morale threshold forces it to retreat. You can always give orders to move away from the combat if the line is clear, but remember:

- The fighting values of armoured units are greatly enhanced if they engage infantry on open ground.
- Infantry units enhance their fighting values and reduce their casualties when fighting in a town (i.e. positioned on a "town square").
- Armoured units reduce their fighting values when fighting in towns.
- German artillery will give its support to a nearby unit by moving the movement cursor sight until it is positioned over the German unit it wishes to support, and then pressing the button. The greater the distance to the unit to be supported, the lower is the value of this support. If an artillery unit is directly engaged by an Allied unit it will fight at one-eighth its nominal strength (Note—there are no separate artillery units for the Allies, these have been absorbed in the strengths and calculations of the existing units).
- The fighting efficiency of German SS Panzer units is greater than other Panzer units of similar strength to reflect the inclusion of some Tiger II tanks among these units.



Additional instructions for two player game Version

1. The game is not played in real-time. Both parties have an unlimited time to input their orders (Germans first, then Allies).
2. When both sets of orders have been given, real-time begins for all unit movements. These can be followed on either the battle map or the global map.
3. In order to simulate surprise attack, the Allies do not have the chance to input initial orders.
4. We suggest that an agreed time period is used for the order phase for each player. Mind you, planning the campaign probably took the Germans some time.
5. The pause command does not work during the order phase.

SYMBOLS

German Panzer Units



German Infantry



German Motorised Infantry



German Artillery (Moving)



German Artillery (Fighting/Stationary)



Allied Armoured Units



Allied Infantry



Small Towns



Large Towns

Keys and Commands

COMMAND	CBM64	SPECTRUM
Switch to global map	f1	G
Switch back to battle map	f7	B
Switch to option menu for Save/Quit etc.	Restore	CAPSHIFT/SPACE
Pause	Horizontal	
Restart	Cursor	CAPSHIFT
	Vertical	
Up	Cursor	SYMBOLSHIFT
Down	Q	Q
Left	A	A
Right	O	O
Give orders	P	P
End order phase (2 player version)	SPACEBAR	SPACE
Joystick Controls	f3+f5 together	E+M together
	Port 2	Kempston/Cursor type
	(fire button to give orders and move units)	

VICTORY HINTS

The key to survival and victory is information. Without the correct interpretation of the incoming data you'll not get anywhere. So use the pause button to halt all the movement to allow you to look around the maps. That will give you time to make your decisions.

Watch and examine all the maps. The global one is especially useful in the two player version. Remember your cursor sight will reappear on the scrolling battle map in the same area as on the exit point from the global map. Pay attention to the messages scrolled across the top of the screen and keep a brief checklist of every unit as it is destroyed.

Try to give all the units long term movement objectives rather than attempting to constantly update short term orders—strategy is the key; of course short term tactics are important but keep to the objectives you set yourself.

When starting the game, select the colours most suitable for your TV—you can change the background and both armies' colours. Then use the demonstration mode to get a feel for the game. Study the maps and the terrain. Get to know the values of the towns. Some of them, particularly in the North-West, are worth many more points. Now examine your stationary units—you'll see the ones without current orders will "flash" on the global map. Put the cursor sight on the unit and go back to the battle map, direct to that unit. Weigh up the pros and cons of different moves carefully. For instance, armour moves slowly through forests and towns, but there are generally more bridges in a town if you need to cross a river.

The program has the facility to set your own criteria. Points are awarded for each town held.

Keep cool and keep your wits about you. Read up on the way history turned out. Then try changing it!

Acknowledgements

Battle and combat design:
 Programming and screen design:
 Game development masterminded by:
 Marketing:

Ken Baker
 David Bolton and Colin Gordon
 Lothlorien
 Argus Press Software Group