# WW2 Diamond T Tank Transporter Tractor

Sandstone has just added a Diamond T T980 tank transporter tractor to the military collection. The unit was discovered in the Karoo and after negotiations with the owner it has been purchased by Sandstone for the Military Vehicle collection.
We are also fortunate due to the generosity of the Armour Museum in Bloemfontein that we have a WW2vRogers trailer which is in tip-top condition and will be matched to this particular ballast tractor so we can load our Sherman Tank and we will then have an absolutely perfect original World War Two configuration.
A very special feature of this truck is it is fitted with6LW Gardner engine which is superb for day-to-day purposes. Many of the original Diamond T's would have had very heavy consumption petrol engines although many were also fitted with diesel engines.

Designed as a heavy prime mover for tank transporting, the Diamond T 980 was the product of the Diamond T Company in Chicago. In 1940 the British Purchasing Commission, looking to equip the British Army with a vehicle capable of transporting larger and heavier tanks, approached a number of American truck manufacturers to assess their models. The Diamond T Company had a long history of building rugged, military vehicles for the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps and had recently produced a prototype heavy vehicle for the US Army which, with a few slight modifications met British requirements and an initial order for 200 was very quickly filled.
The result was the Diamond T 980, a 12-ton hard-cab 6x4 vehicle which proved to be one of the most successful and memorable in its class. Powered by an 895 cu in (14.7 l) Hercules DXFE OHV inline six diesel engine[2] developing 185 bhp (138 kW), or the 1,090 cu in (17.9 l) Hall-Scott 440 OHV inline-six gasoline engine (the largest gasoline engine in any WW2 military truck) of 240 bhp (180 kW), and geared very low, it could pull a trailer load of up to 120,000 lb (54,000 kg), and proved capable of the task of moving the heaviest tanks then in service.
With a single dry-plate clutch, it had a four-speed manual constant-mesh transmission plus a similar three-speed auxiliary gearbox, for a total of twelve forward and three reverse speeds, driving through Timken double-reduction differentials. Airbrakes were standard. The electrics were 24/12/6-volt. Top speed was 23 mph (37 km/h), and with a 568 litre fuel capacity, maximum range was 300 mi (480 km). Wheelbase was 179 in (4,500 mm), length 280 in (7,100 mm), track 74 in (1,900 mm), and height 100 in (2,500 mm). Steering was manual, with no power assist. The weight was 26,500 lb (12,000 kg), with GVW of 45,000 lb (20,000 kg).[2]
A winch of 40,000 lb (18,000 kg) capacity, chain driven off the auxiliary transmission and intended mainly for hauling damaged tanks aboard trailers, was mounted behind the cab.
Production began in 1941. The first batch of the vehicles was received in Britain in 1942 and very quickly demonstrated their rugged reliability in the British campaign in North Africa. Battle-damaged tanks needed to be quickly recovered, often under hostile fire, and returned to workshops for repair. The Diamond T, with its well-trained Royal Army Service Corps crew and powerful engine and winch, could accomplish this, even in the harshest desert conditions.
5,871 were eventually built by 1945 and were used by virtually every Allied army in every theatre of WW2. The British Army took delivery of around 1,000 during the war years and many continued in service afterwards, being replaced in the early 1950s with

the Thornycroft Antar ("Mighty Antar") although a few "T's" remained in tank transporter units up to 1971. Many of those sold off by the Army after the war were snapped up by heavy haulage and recovery specialists, notably Pickford's and Wynn's, in the UK. Today a number of the 70 year-old Diamond T's can still be found in private ownership in Britain and frequently appear at historic vehicle shows.

Sandstone now has a magnificent collection of Tank Transporters. We have an Oshkosh with an original trailer from post-World War Two, we have a World War Two Diamond T Ballast Tractor with the correct trailer, and we have also got the latest British and American Army issue HET. We have also got a smaller Diamond T horse with matching trailer so we now have four different configurations of Tank Transporters.

