

16 August 1943

TO WHO IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I first met Mr. Charles H. Payne through Brigadier General H.R. Kutz during the summer of 1940. My files on this subject are not available to me at the present time and consequently I cannot give dates with accuracy.

At this time I was on duty as Chief of the Planning and Equipment Branch of the Supply Division of the General Staff. This branch had cognizance of all development work being undertaken for the U.S. Army.

Prior to this time, the Office of the Chief of Infantry had been interested in the development of a light machine gun carrier of low silhouette which would be self-propelled. This development had fallen between the Ordnance Department and the Quartermaster Corps and was relatively inactive about the summer of 1940.

Apparently Mr. Payne knew of this development and proposed the utilization of the Bantam automobile, or a modification of it, as a suitable vehicle in this field. So far as I know, for many months he was the only person outside of the Army who was interested in this development. He called on me frequently and insistently. It was not until after a pilot model of the present "jeep" was shown at Fort Myer that other outside organizations became interested in its manufacture.

Just how much of the development was done by other personnel in the Bantam Company I do not know, as Mr. Payne was the sole person with whom I dealt. Whether the original idea was his or not, it is quite certain that without his persistence this development would not have been so promptly consummated.

I believe that the Office of the Chief of Infantry and the Chief of Cavalry at that time should have the necessary records to determine whether or not Mr. Charles H. Payne should be given the award of the Medal for Merit in its development. So far as my memory serves me, he is the only outside civilian who contacted the War Department General Staff on this matter until after the pilot model was built.

H.S. AURAND,
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

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