

COPY:

AMERICAN BANTAM CAR COMPANY

Butler, Pa.

September 25, 1939,

Lieut. Col. H. C. Lawes, Q.M.C.,
Holabird Quartermaster Depot,
Baltimore, Maryland.

Sir :

Some months ago this company made the error of selling three Bantam chasses to the Quartermaster Corps for trial, which was a serious mistake inasmuch as these cars in no way came up to the government requirements -- in fact they were the first series of cars manufactured by this company and had I been connected with the company at that time I would not have permitted the sale. Since then, however, our entire unit has been redesigned and our 1940 models, will, in my opinion, provide anything and everything demanded for army use up to their carrying capacity. The present car is equipped with a three-bearing engine with 25% more horsepower than those originally used. They were equipped with two-way springs and hydraulic shock absorbers. The frame has been strengthened and the radius rod assembly in the front end has been greatly strengthened. These cars will go over hills any place within a hundred-mile radius of Butler at speeds of 45 miles to 60 miles per hour, fully loaded. The speed on level ground is 70 miles per hour. It is possible to put them through the gears from a dead stop up to 30 miles an hour in 30 seconds. Our new self-equalizing brakes stop these cars in twice their own length from 30 miles an hour. They use no oil and the gallonage consumed in ordinary work is from 40 to 50 miles per gallon.

I am sure if you will look up the records of the old car, you will decide that there is nothing about these to which the old one could be compared and the thing we are after, Colonel, is an opportunity to demonstrate these cars to you again at our expense.

During the manuevers at Manassas, Majors Eggers and Leetch used one of these cars for reconnaissance purposes and found them far more satisfactory than a motorcycle and sidecar. They could go anywhere the foregoing vehicle could go and many places where they could not because of their power. The use of these cars is in no way confined to highways. They followed marching troops everywhere, over any trail which the troops chanced to follow. The cars were extremely well liked with the result that Major Eggers has given me your name, together with several others in the War Department, in the Quartermaster Corps, because he is of the opinion that there is a definite place for our equipment in the service.

Lt. Col. H. C. Lawes
9-25-39
Page two.

As an example, the Pickup Truck could be extremely useful to the Signal Corps; while the Roadster could be used by almost any division of the Service in place of motorcycle and sidecar equipment.

If it is possible to arrange a demonstration of the new 1940 car any place which you may see fit, we will gladly take the necessary equipment to whichever spot may be designated, together with any instruments which may be required to prove out compression, mileage, etc.

I realize that it is pretty difficult to get a second trial on any product but we feel our present cars will be extremely useful and would like very much to conduct a second test for you.

Thanking you for whatever consideration you may see fit to show us, I remain

Very truly yours,

s/ F. H. Fenn

Vice President &
General Manager.

Frank H. Fenn/cs