217	2 Doz	Pen-holders		24
244	~~Flags~~	4 Flags	2·10 × 5	1
245	"	6 "	4·2 × 8	1
246	"	3 "	6·4 × 12	1
247	"	1 "	8·6 × 16	1
250	"	4 Gross	Pens assorted.	4 Gros
Blank forms 100	10	Requisition for stationary supplies		17 Requisition
114	20	Form of draft		20 100 Forms Bond, Invoices
166	100	Voucher for clerk hire		100
		Schedule of Stationary		3

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, April 30, 1901.

Thomas W. Cridler Esquire
Ass't. Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

Sir

I have the honor to request that the articles of Stationary named below be furnished for use at this office.

I have the honor to be Sir,
Your obedient Servant
(Signed) Selah Merrill

No. 140/136 - 150 Consular Certificate and Declaration of Purchaser &c. to Invoices "Purchased by Importer"

No. 38

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, May 28, 1901.

Hon Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

Sir

I hereby ask for leave of absence from my post for sixty days during the coming summer at such time as I may find it convenient. Twice during my Consular career I have asked for leaves of Absence, - the first was not used, - and the second was in 1900, - and the Department knows too

well the malicious intrigues and combinations which frustrated my plans. I have no definite plans for the coming summer, but I ask for the permission all the same.

Respectfully your obedient Servant
(Signed) Selah Merrill
U. S. Consul

Carriage Road Between Jerusalem And Nablus

One of the greatest thoroughfares in Palestine is that between Jerusalem and Nablous, the ancient Shechem. For centuries it has remained only a camel path, for the most part very rough and stony. In the course of a single year a vast amount of traffic and travel passes over this route, but until the year 1900 no effort was made to connect the two points by a carriage road. Early in 1900 the route was surveyed and specifications sent to Constantinople whence the order for its construction must proceed. After the contract was signed work was begun in the autumn of that year and at the very end of March 1901 the first carriage past over the completed road.

The extreme width of the roadbed is 19 feet 6 inches. After the grading a bed of stones 8 inches thick was made over which earth was rolled and firmly packed. The grade is good, there being very little of the distance where a horse cannot trot. I am speaking now only of the completed section between Jerusalem and Birch. The culverts and small bridges on this section number 20 with three additional bridges of fair size, the largest having two arches of 10 feet each with 15 feet of solid masonry between them. There is no water on this section of the road, but these are necessary to accomodate the small torrents created by the winter rains, which often do great damage.

From Jerusalem to Sinjil, the point where the Jerusalem district ends, the distance is a little over 19 miles, divided as follows:- the completed portion Jerusalem to Birch, about 9 miles and from Birch to Sinjil about 10 miles. The entire distance from Jerusalem to Nablous said commonly to be 40 miles, is actually as surveyed 38 miles and a half. Hundreds of American travellers will remember Sinjil as their camping place the first night out of Jerusalem going north towards Damascus. It is about half way to Nablous the camping place for the second night.

It is a curious fact that the present name Sijil is an Arabic adaptation of the Crusading name St Giles; and Birch is the Biblical Beeroth mentioned in Joshua 9, 17. It has a good living spring and there has been talk of bringing water thence to Jerusalem. Beeroth is not quite 100 feet higher than Jerusalem but it might be found that the supply of water was not greater than its own village people require.

The contract price for building this section of the road was about $23000, the difference between the estimated cost and the contract price being about $600. The bidders for the completed section were two only both Christians (Armenians); Mohammedans and Jews do not engage in such work.

The distance between Birch and Sijil is only one mile greater than that between Jerusalem and Birch, but the country is more rugged, there are many more natural obstacles to be encountered, and the estimated cost of that section is $40,000 to $44,000.

Specifications for this section have already been sent to Constantinople. "It is hoped" that this portion will be built next year, but as is well known no "hopes" of that sort can here be counted upon with any certainty. The order to build the road must come from Constantinople, but the money must be raised in the Jerusalem district by a tax upon the peasantry. — I have said that the Jerusalem district ends at Sijil; what is north of that point comes under the jurisdiction of Nablous.

This route is connected with famous historical events for Assyrian, Jewish, Maccabean, and Roman armies have passed about it; our Lord passed over it, and Paul ~~p~~ went this way on his memorable visit to Damascus, and again when he made his final departure for Cesarea escorted by four hundred and seventy Roman soldiers. The country too, is full of historical sites, such as Nob, Gofna, Beeroth, Bethel, where Jacob was Ramah the home of Samuel, and Shiloh where the ark rested.

The wagon roads already existing in Palestine are; — Jerusalem to Jaffa 40 miles. It was begun in 1868 but a number of years elapsed before wagons could pass over it which they always did with difficulty, ten to twelve hours being necessary to go to Jaffa and 14 to 16 hours to climb back again up the mountains. Thousands of Tourists will remember the great discomforts of this the only road to Jerusalem, the stones and broken places, the springless ambulance-like vehicles, and the pitiable condition of the underfed, overworked, tired out horses. It was only in 1892 when the railroad between these two points became a certainty that the Jerusalem and Jaffa road was made fairly comfortable for carriages.

2, Jerusalem to Hebron, completed in 1890, 23 miles.

3, Jerusalem to Jericho about 22 miles. This was completed in 1898 just before the German Emperor arrived which was in October of that year. The work dragged so that ten years were spent in building it

4, Jerusalem to the top of the Mount of Olives, about 4 miles, perhaps a little more. This was made in 1898 "for the German Emperor", and it is still called "The German Emperor's road". If his coming would insure good roads thousands of tourists as well as the people of the country wish he would come every year.

5, Jerusalem to Birch just completed, 9 miles.

It is true that carriages go from Jericho to the Dead Sea, the River Jordan and back to Jericho, but there is no made road, carriages going almost where they please accross the plain. Likewise wagons go along the roadless seacoast from Jaffa to Haifa at the foot of Mt. Carmel, for the road that was made for the German Emperor in 1898 is now with most of its bridges entirely in ruins. Wagons also go from Jaffa to Gaza, but no road was ever made here, and the drivers pick their way accross the plain and sands.

Jerusalem, June 1901.

(Signed) Selah Merrill
U. S. Consul

No. 0

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria July 1st 1901

Hon. Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

Sir,

I have the honour to inclose herewith the accounts and returns of this office with the necessary vouchers for the quarter ending June 30th, 1901 and advise my drafts Nos. 40/41 for $275,00 and $112,72 respectively in favour of Messrs. Thomas Cook & Son.

Respectfully Your Obedient Servant
Signed Selah Merrill
U. S. Consul

Inclosures