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courteous reply assuring me that foreigners would not be molested in any way. In the absence of the consular staff, Thompson volunteered to act as messenger and deliver my message to the German commander. While on his way to the Hotel de Ville, which was being used as staff headquarters, a German infantry regiment passed him in a narrow street. Because he failed to remove his hat to the colours a German officer struck him twice with the flat of his sword, only desisting when Thompson pulled a silk American flag from his pocket. Upon learning of this occurrence I vigorously protested to the military authorities, who offered profuse apologies for the incident and assured me that the officer would be punished if Thompson could identify him. Consul-General Diederich returned to Antwerp on Monday and I left the same day for the nearest telegraph station in Holland.

The whole proceeding was irregular and unauthorized, of course, but for that matter so was the German invasion of Belgium. In any event, it seemed the thing to do and I did it, and, under the same circumstances I should do precisely the same thing over again.