

For Release
July 14, 1938

By Major A. H. Thiessen
Science Service Meteorologist

Electric current in a lightning flash! If it takes about one-half of an ampere of electricity to light an ordinary reading lamp, how many amperes in a lightning flash? To measure the current in an artificial lightning bolt is much more simple than to measure it under natural conditions. Physicists of the General Electric Company have ingeniously measured the current in a number of ways and found that for a very severe stroke of rare occurrence about 200,000 amperes passes, but generally the value is around 25,000 amperes. One method used was to measure the amount of magnetization of basalt found near points that had been struck by lightning. -----