

FREAKISH CURRENTS SLOW WIRE SERVICE

Shifting Electric Impulses, Felt
Here and in Canada, Laid
to Aurora Borealis.

EFFECT NOTICED ALL DAY

Telegraph Officials Report Many
Miles of Lines Working
Irregularly.

Thousands of miles of telegraph wires in the northern part of the United States and Canada were crippled at intervals yesterday by electrical disturbances attributed in some quarters to the Northern Lights or Aurora Borealis. Although there was no major interference with business because it was a holiday and the worst disturbance came in the early morning, the work of the telegraph companies was slowed.

The trouble began at 5:30 o'clock in the morning and continued to be noticed until after 8 o'clock. After that it recurred intermittently during the day. At the offices of the Western Union it was said that previous experiences with the phenomenon indicated that it might last from half an hour to three days. Excess electricity was picked up by the grounded wires, it was said, and charges as high as 100 volts were added in such a shifting fashion that their effect could not be neutralized and the changing current threatened to mutilate messages.

Telegraph officials said that "non-technical" men explained the disturbance by a shifting of the normal electrical flow in the earth. Earth currents, it was said, were associated with Aurora Borealis and generally the disturbance came with a display of the Northern Lights. The association of sun spots with electrical disturbances has also been suggested, according to officials. Study of the subject is in progress.

The Associated Press reported that its leased wire system was affected in the morning from New York to Kansas City and that other private lines were hit.

At the offices of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company it was said that there had been no interference with telephone wires and that it would require an unusual disturbance to affect them.