

# Brice P. Disque papers, 1906-1960

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Disque, Brice P., 1879-1960
<b>Title</b>	Brice P. Disque papers
<b>Dates</b>	1906-1960 (inclusive) 1906 1960
<b>Quantity</b>	1.89 cubic feet (6 boxes)
<b>Collection Number</b>	0316 (Accession No. 0316-001)
<b>Summary</b>	Papers of a public official and businessman who commanded the U.S. Army's Spruce Products Division during the First World War.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections</a> Special Collections University of Washington Libraries Box 352900 Seattle, WA 98195-2900 Telephone: 206-543-1929 Fax: 206-543-1931 <a href="mailto:speccoll@uw.edu">speccoll@uw.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	The papers are open to all users.
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Sponsor</b>	Funding for encoding this finding aid was partially provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## Biographical Note

Brice P. Disque commanded the U.S. Army's Spruce Production Division and founded the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen during the First World War. Born in Ohio in 1879, Disque entered the United States Army as a private at the start of the Spanish-American War. By that war's end, he was a lieutenant. After a series of various administrative assignments in the army and a brief stint as head warden of the Michigan State Prison, Disque volunteered for combat in France when the United States entered the First World War. His superiors instead sent him to the Pacific Northwest and charged him with accelerating the cutting of spruce and other trees which the Allies needed to build aircraft. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) had dramatically slowed logging throughout the region with a series of strikes and slowdowns primarily aimed at forcing employers to improve conditions in the logging camps and to institute an eight-hour day. After consulting with employers, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and members of the Washington Defense Council, Disque decided to use a mixture of force and concessions to fight the IWW. He dispatched a number of soldiers to work as loggers and to harass IWW organizers. He also convinced the War Department to add an eight-hour day requirement to all of its contracts with logging companies in the region.

Disque then founded the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen, an organization which was headed by army officers and which acted as part labor union and part patriotic society. Legion organizers enrolled all of the roughly 20,000 soldiers working as loggers and about 100,000 civilian loggers during the war. All enrollees had to sign a loyalty oath and agree not to strike. Enrollees could be members of

the IWW or AFL, but they had to promise not to organize workers into any union other than the legion. Disque's measures substantially increased spruce production in late 1917 and early 1918. After the war, timber executives assumed leadership of the legion and turned it into a conservative, industry-wide company union.

Immediately following the war, the United States Congress investigated charges that Disque and the legion had treated AFL members unfairly and spent too much money to accomplish limited results. Although the hearings tarnished Disque's reputation, Congress nevertheless approved his promotion to brigadier general. Disque drifted in and out of active duty in the 1920s and 1930s, alternating between performing training missions for the army and serving on the board of trustees of various private firms. Disque also served as president of the United States Spruce Production Corporation and as president of the Anthracite Institute, a large trade association, 1929-1933. He served in the Solid Fuels Administration for War during the Second World War. Disque died in 1960.

## Content Description

The largest part of the Bryce P. Disque papers is the United States War Department, Spruce Production Division series. The series includes the correspondence of Disque, his advisors, and other Spruce Division officials from 1917 to 1921. They primarily corresponded with one another and with logging companies, unions, and high-level federal officials. The letters are arranged chronologically, regardless of author and recipient. A partial list of major correspondents is included in the inventory. This series also contains over 200 telegrams between Disque and Major Leadbetter (Disque's liaison to the U.S. Army's top brass and to the Aircraft Production Board), dating from May 1918 to the end of 1920. A few Spruce Division reports and Disque's draft of a history of the division are also in this series.

A smaller series is devoted to materials relating to the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen. This includes correspondence between Disque and the legion's secretaries, minutes of the legion's 1918 and 1919 conventions, and copies of the legion's monthly bulletins from 1917 to 1919.

The collection also includes a small number of personal papers. The bulk of the correspondence in this series dates from 1919 to 1960 and relates to the post-war congressional investigation of the Spruce Division and to Disque's later business ventures. The series also contains drafts of Disque's writings and speeches delivered after 1920.

Major correspondents include J. Cheever Cowdin, Clarence F. Lea, Henry Martyn Leland, George Meany, Alton T. Roberts, the American Federation of Labor, American Lumberman, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Employers Association of the Inland Empire, the International Shingle Weavers Union of America, and the West Virginia Timber Company.

## Use of the Collection

### Alternative Forms Available

[View selections from this collection in digital format](#)

### Restrictions on Use

The creator's literary rights have not been transferred to the University of Washington Libraries.

## Preferred Citation

Brice P. Disque Papers. Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle, Washington.

## Administrative Information

### Arrangement

The papers are arranged into four series:

- Personal papers
- Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen
- United States War Department, Spruce Production Division
- Harold Hyman correspondence regarding *Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen*

### Custodial History

Most of the material in the collection was given to Dr. Harold Hyman by Disque's widow. Hyman assembled the material in the course of researching his book, *Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen* (Los Angeles: University of California, Institute of Industrial Relations), 1963.

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Dr. Harold Hyman of the University of California, Los Angeles, History Department, 1963.

### Related Materials

Disque's widow donated the majority of Disque's personal papers, along with most of his materials relating to the U.S. War Department Spruce Production Division, to the University of Oregon Libraries. For information about those papers, see Guide to the Brice P. Disque Papers, 1899-1957, Special Collections & University Archives, University of Oregon.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Personal papers

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1/1-12	Biographical 28 items	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	<b>General correspondence</b> Names of major correspondents, where applicable, appear in the folder titles.	
<b>Box/Folder</b>		
1/13	Michaels, Stern & Company; Michigan State Prison Industries 4 items	1906-1918
1/14	Cuthbert P. Stearns; J.H. Regal; Shaw (A. W.) Company 10 items	1919 January-June
1/15	1919 July-December 7 items	1919 July-December
1/16	Henry M. Leland 10 items	1920 January-March
1/17	Leonard Wood 5 items	1920 April-October
1/18	Clarence F. Lea 7 items	1921
1/19-20	1922-1923 11 items	1922-1923
1/21	Meier & Frank Company; MacDougal & Southwick Company 12 items	1924
1/22-24	1925-1927 26 items	1925-1927
1/25	1931-1935 11 items	1931-1935
1/26	Regarding Cutbert Stearns, Jr. 1 item	1922-1936
1/27	1936-1937 5 items	1936-1937
1/28	Cyrus S. Eaton 8 items	1941

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/29	1944 1 item	1944
1/30	George Meany; Martin F. Shea 7 items	1951-1952
1/31	1954-1955 8 items	1954-1955
1/32-34	1956-1958 26 items	1956-1958
1/35	1959-1969 3 items	1959-1969

Box/Folder

2/1-2	Miscellaneous 33 items	undated
2/3-9	Speeches and writings 19 items	<b>1919-1952</b>

## Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
3/1	Constitution and by-laws <a href="#">[view]</a> 1 item	<b>undated</b>
3/2-4	General correspondence <a href="#">[view]</a> 23 items	<b>undated</b>
<b>Speeches and writings</b>		
Box/Folder		
3/5	Notes 7 items	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3/6	<i>Business Chronicle</i> 1 item	1918 December 14

3/7	Address to the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen <a href="#">[view]</a> 1 item	1918 December
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### Reports

#### Box/Folder

3/8	Willard S. Hotchkiss, "Memo with Regard to Labor" 1 item	1917 December
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### Bulletins

#### Box/Folder

3/9	1917-1918 <a href="#">[view]</a> 3 items	1917-1918
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3/10	<i>Monthly Bulletin</i> 8 items	undated
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#### Box/Folder

3/11-12	Minutes of Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen conventions <a href="#">[view]</a> 12 items	<b>1918-1919</b>
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3/13	Resolutions- U. S. Aircraft Board 2 items	<b>1918 February</b>
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3/14-15	Ephemera 7 items Miscellaneous articles on the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen.	
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## United States War Department, Spruce Production Division

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		

Container(s)	Description	Dates																								
3/16-4/12	<p><b>General correspondence</b><a href="#">[view]</a>            320 items            The following list provides the names of major correspondents and the corresponding box and folder numbers:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>American Federation of Labor</td> <td>3/20, 3/24</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>American Lumberman</i></td> <td>3/71, 4/10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blodgett Company, Ltd</td> <td>3/30, 3/33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>J. Cheever Cowdin</td> <td>4/7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employers Association of the Inland Empire</td> <td>3/27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Everett, Clarke &amp; Benedict</td> <td>4/1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>International Shingle Weavers Union of America</td> <td>3/17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clarence F. Lea</td> <td>4/1-3, 4/6-7, 4/10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alton T. Roberts</td> <td>4/10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Smith Powers Logging Company</td> <td>3/46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>United States Department of Labor</td> <td>3/21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>West Virginia Timber Company</td> <td>4/5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><a href="#">^ Return to Top</a></p>	American Federation of Labor	3/20, 3/24	<i>American Lumberman</i>	3/71, 4/10	Blodgett Company, Ltd	3/30, 3/33	J. Cheever Cowdin	4/7	Employers Association of the Inland Empire	3/27	Everett, Clarke & Benedict	4/1	International Shingle Weavers Union of America	3/17	Clarence F. Lea	4/1-3, 4/6-7, 4/10	Alton T. Roberts	4/10	Smith Powers Logging Company	3/46	United States Department of Labor	3/21	West Virginia Timber Company	4/5	1917-1921
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Box/Folder	Description	Dates
4/13-26	<p>Telegrams between Disque and Major Leadbetter            226 items</p>	1918-1919
4/27	<p>Histories concerning Spruce Production Division logging railroads</p>	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	4 items	
4/28	Writings 1 item A history of the Spruce Production Division by Disque.	
4/29	Minutes and articles of incorporation 1 item	
4/30-31	Reports 13 items	
5/1-6	Congressional hearings on aircraft expenditures 7 items	
6/1	Audits 6 items	
6/2	Publications 2 items	
6/3	Ephemera 3 items Articles on the Spruce Development Company in periodicals.	
6/4	Photographs 6 items	

## Harold Hyman correspondence regarding *Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen*

Box-folder6/5

6 items

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Armies--United States--Officers--Archives  
 Collective labor agreements--Lumber trade--Northwest, Pacific  
 Governmental investigations--United States  
 Labor disputes--Northwest, Pacific  
 Loggers--Labor unions--Northwest, Pacific  
 Loggers--Northwest, Pacific  
 Lumber trade--Northwest, Pacific



Raw materials--United States  
Timber--Northwest, Pacific  
World War, 1914-1918--Economic aspects

**Personal Names :**

Cowdin, J. Cheever  
Disque, Brice P., 1879-1960--Archives  
Lea, Clarence Frederick, 1874-

**Corporate Names :**

American Federation of Labor  
American Lumberman (Firm)  
Employers' Association of the Inland Empire  
International Shingle Weavers' Union of America  
Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen  
United States Spruce Production Corporation  
United States. Army--Officers--Archives  
United States. Dept. of Labor  
United States. War Dept. Spruce Production Division  
West Virginia Timber Company

**Geographical Names :**

Northwest, Pacific--Politics and government

**Form or Genre Terms :**

articles  
correspondence  
ephemera  
minutes  
Newsletters  
reports  
telegrams  
writings

**Other Creators :**

**Personal Names :**

Leland, Henry Martyn, 1843-1932  
(creator)  
Meany, George, 1894-1980  
(creator)  
Roberts, Alton T  
(creator)

## Names and Subjects

**Subject Terms :**

Personal Papers/Corporate Records (University of Washington)

2006 (Last modified: 1/10/2017)



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<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/cc-zero.shtml>