

# Frank Spiess, Jr. Collection

**Accession number:** 2015.029

**Collection:** Frank Spiess, Jr.

**Location:** Jackson Barracks Museum

**Description:** 2 document boxes, legal size; 2 large flat boxes, (29) objects

**Arranged and described by:** Matthew Leatherman, UNO intern (Photos/Archive)  
Beverly Boyko, Collections Manager (Objects)

**Access and Use:** The collection is available to all users who visit the Louisiana National Guard Museum.

**Acquisition Information:** Gifted by Frank Spiess Jr. to the LA National Guard Museum at Jackson Barracks, 2015.

**Access Restrictions:** The record group is open to research.

**Copyright:** Copyright remains with the Louisiana National Guard Archives.

**Cite as:** [item], collection, Louisiana National Guard Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana.

## Scope and Content

1930s-1980s (1941-1945)

c It contains items and documentation relevant to the study of the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion and World War II history; and limited information on COL Spiess's Post World War II career in the Louisiana National Guard, Civil Defense, National Guard Bureau and others. There is a large photo print and negative collection. The negatives were received badly damaged by heat and water. The solid blocks of negatives were soaked in distilled water so that individual images and image fragment could be scanned.

## Historical Background:

Frank Spiess Jr. enlisted in the Louisiana National Guard in November of 1954, and served with the 381<sup>st</sup> Ordnance Detachment and the 139<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion. He was honorably discharged as a Sergeant in July of 1964. His collection consists of photographs and documents relating to his father's service with the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion and the Louisiana National Guard before and after World War II. Following is a short biography of Frank Spiess, Sr.

Frank Spiess, Sr. enlisted in the Louisiana National Guard in the 1920s and was commissioned an officer in 1930. He served with distinction and rose through the ranks in the 156<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and the 141<sup>st</sup> Field

Artillery Regiment in New Orleans. As World War II approached and the military began to mechanize, a new anti-tank unit was formed from the 141<sup>st</sup>, commanded by Captain (later Lt. Col.) Frank Spiess. The unit first appeared as the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion (Provisional), and participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers in 1941. After this, the unit was re-designated as the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion, and began training at bases across the United States. The basic unit training was in California, with more training done in Indiana and Tennessee. After basic unit training and maneuvers in the United States, the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion shipped to England, and landed in Europe shortly after the D-Day landings in June, 1944. The 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion served in the European Theater of Operations, largely with the 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The unit gained a reputation for success as it moved from France to Germany and Czechoslovakia. Campaign Streamers awarded the unit include: Northern France, Ardenne-Alsace, Rhineland, and Central Europe. Further recognition was given for the unit's activities in the Argentan-Falaise pocket and at the Moselle and Sarre Rivers. As the Nazi regime collapsed and Allied troops pushed through Germany, "A" Company was tasked with guarding a salt mine that the enemy was using to store 400 billion dollars worth of currency, 100 tons of gold bullion, and valuable stolen art and cultural treasures. The battalion was with the first Allied force to enter Czechoslovakia just before the war ended.

Colonel Spiess returned to the Louisiana National Guard after the war ended, helping Major General Raymond Fleming re-organize it. He served as Assistant Adjutant General to Fleming and MG Raymond Hufft before serving with the National Guard Bureau in Washington D.C. After retirement, Colonel Spiess was very active in veterans associations connected to both federal and state service. Louisiana National Guard Documentation and pictures from the post-war period show the immense influence and presence Colonel Spiess had on the organization. Spiess is connected to the two most historic units of the LANG (The 141<sup>st</sup> FA BN and the 156<sup>th</sup> IN RGT) as well as being the first commander of one of its more significant wartime units (The 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN). A large percentage of official Guard documentation from the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s bears Spiess' signature block and it is clear that he was a vital member of the command staff under two of the LANG's most influential adjutant generals. Honored as one of the few inductees of the Louisiana National Guard Hall of Fame, Colonel Frank Spiess stands out as a major figure in state military history.

**Related Materials:** Colonel Frank Spiess Collection, LA National Guard Museum Jackson Barracks, New Orleans (2014.011).

**Removed Materials:** A small collection of photographs and negatives were removed and placed in the Jackson Barracks Image Collection (2015.002.027) (see list below).

**Reference Resources:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/773rd\\_Tank\\_Destroyer\\_Battalion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/773rd_Tank_Destroyer_Battalion)

<http://www.90thdivisionassoc.org/90thDivisionFolders/mervinbooks/773/773TD01/773TD012.htm>

**Contents List:** 2 letter sized Document Boxes; 1 large Flat Box (including 11 envelopes of negatives, awaiting conservation treatment).

Document Box 1 of 2 Folder List: Photographs – 2015.029.034

1. M-10 and M-36 Tank Destroyers, transport vehicles, aircraft, c. 1944-1945
2. Captured Volkswagen scout car, possible German railway guns, c. 1944-1945
3. 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion, crossing the English Channel, August 1944
4. "In the states," 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN training, taken by 164th Signal Photo CO, Tennessee, July-August 1943
5. "In the states," wives and home, c. 1941-1943
6. "In the states," misc. training photos, c. 1942
7. Official Military photos, Frank G. Spiess, 1942-1952
8. Frank G. Spiess, H.S. graduation (1924), 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN reunion, 1984
9. Camp Beauregard, Summer Camp 1928, arrow indicates Frank G. Spiess
10. Various locations in Europe, c. 1944-1945 [photos donated wrapped in paper with place names, numbered on back of photos to retain original order]
11. 1952 Korean War ROK Army, Captain Franklin, 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank BN, [most captioned on back]
12. Captured Volkswagen scout car, MG Van Fleet awarding Silver Star to LTC Spiess, c. 1944-1945
13. "Dillingen, Saar River, (et al illegible, see original copy), c. 1944-1945 [photos donated in paper with place names, numbered on back of photos to retain original order]
14. "Czecho-Slovakia, etc.," city, unidentified Lieutenant, c. 1945
15. "Czecho-Slovakia, etc.," civilians and possible police officers, c. 1945
16. "England," transport ships and unit flag, c. 1944
17. "England," camp life and recreation, c. 1944
18. "England," country side and buildings, c. 1944
19. "England," personnel photos, c. 1944
20. "773<sup>rd</sup> TD Battalion Ready to Cross the English Channel," 1944
21. "Pictures of Korea," military photos, c. 1950-1953 [most captioned on back]
22. "Pictures of Korea," damage in Seoul, c. 1950-1953 [most captioned on back]
23. Personnel, camp life and recreation, c. 1944-1945
24. Various cities and landscapes, most likely Europe, c. 1944-1945
25. Military personnel, c. 1944-1945
26. Russian Troupe Performing and Possible German POWs
27. Folder, photographic slides, 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary D-Day
28. Negatives
  - a. Folder, "Jackson Barracks and New Orleans," Personal and family photos.
  - b. 2 folders, "Indiana," 1 folder personal and family photos, 1 folder military.
  - c. 2 folders, "California," 1 folder personal and family photos, 1 folder military.
  - d. Folder, "Germany Occupation," 1 heavily damaged negative.
  - e. Folder, "Germany Combat," military photos.
  - f. Folder, negatives c. 1945-1946, Awards ceremony
29. Folder, Misc. items - 4 copies, 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN pamphlet, Pocket Constitution of the United States of America, Artists proofs from 773 TD BN Unit Flag print, 17 copies Jackson Barracks pamphlet, copy of certificate signed by Spiess as Captain, Co. commander, 156<sup>th</sup> Infantry.









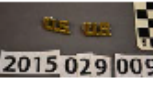
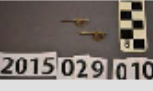

Document box 2 of 2 Folder List: Artwork and records, most post World War II – 2015.029.035

1. Artwork and letter from LT Richard “Dick” Hagan to Frank Spiess. Artwork is unit crest and patch, both water damaged.
2. Artwork, unit crest signed by Blomquist (?) to Frank Spiess
3. Photostat, Discharge from Active Service, 20 Dec. 1945, Camp Shelby, MS
4. Discharge Papers, LANG, Frank Spiess, 156 Infantry, 1927
5. Newspaper clipping, New Orleans Times-Picayune, 773 TD BN Reunion, September 24, 1951
6. Documents, maps, and travel orders, Col. Frank Spiess, 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary D-Day celebration
7. Records, post WWII LANG service, c. 1946-1955
8. 773 TD BN, awards and casualty list, “The Jerk” (BN Paper), c. 1945
9. Documents, all written post WWII, c. 1950s-2007
10. Documents 1920s-1980s, found in Jackson Barracks Library vertical biography files “Spiess”


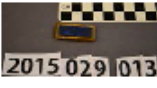








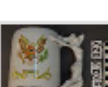

Large flat box 1: Oversize Documents and Materials – 2015.029.036

1. Newspapers, French, 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary D-Day editions
  - a. “Le Figaro,” 6-7 June 1964
  - b. “Le Figaro,” 8 June 1964
  - c. “Ouest,” 6-7 June 1964
  - d. “L’Aurore,” 6-7 June 1964
  - e. “Paris – Normandie,” 6-7 June 1964
  - f. “Le Parisien,” 6-7 June 1964
2. “Paris Match,” 13 June 1964, Numero Historique: Juin 1944, La Bataille De Normandie
3. Magazine, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Twentieth Anniversary D-Day, 2 copies
4. Panoramic photos, 156<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Camp Beauregard, LA 1930, 2 copies
5. Certificate of Merit, LANG, presented to Col. Frank G. Spiess 1 May 1967
6. Plastic bag containing 11 envelopes of damaged negatives awaiting conservation.
7. Photo album, “Photographs” printed on black cover. Contains images of Frank Spiess’ career in the LANG from 1937-1945, including training and wartime activities of the 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion. Digital copy available on the Jackson Barracks Museum Flickr page.







Associated object from this collection: See Museum's PastPerfect database for details

Louisiana National Guard Museums Accession# Contains exact match "2015.029"				
12/04/2015 Matches 29				
Catalog / Objectid / Objname	Description	Location		
O 2015.029.001 Cap, Service	 Officer Dress Blue Cap Bancroft Military Caps cap device, gold hat band, orange Signal Corp band Worn by Frank G. Spiess, Jr.	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.002 Helmet Liner	 4th Army Colonel's Helmet Liner with badly damaged head band dated 1958 cap device, gold hat band, orange Signal Corp band Worn by COL Frank Spiess Sr. 4th Army	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.003 Belt	 Field Artillery Officer's Dress Belt Worn by COL Frank Spiess Sr. marked "The Gemcraft Belt/Registered/Top Grain Cowhide"	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.004 Cap, Service	 Portions of an Officer's Dress Service Cap Worn by COL Frank Spiess Sr. Bill, branch color band (artillery) and gold hat band.	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.005 Epaulettes	 pair shoulder straps worn by LT Frank G, Spiess, Jr. 139th Signal Corps 1964-	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.006 Epaulettes	 pair shoulder straps worn by COL Frank G, Spiess, Sr. Assistant Adjutant General 1948-	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.007 Cap Device	 Officer's Cap Device worn by COL Frank G, Spiess, Sr. c. 1930s-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.008 Collar Brass	 Pair Antiaircraft Artillery Collar Insignia worn by COL Frank G, Spiess, Sr. c. 1946-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.009 Collar Brass	 Pair U.S. Collar Insignia worn by COL Frank G, Spiess, Sr. c. 1940s-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.010 Cufflinks	 Pair Cufflinks worn by COL Frank G, Spiess, Sr. c. 1930s-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:
O 2015.029.011 Cufflinks	 Pair Cufflinks worn by COL Frank G, Spiess, Sr. c. 1930s-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections	Temp. Location:

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O 2015.029.012 Ribbon		Silver Star Ribbon worn by COL Frank G. Spiess, Sr. c. 1946-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.013 Ribbon		Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon worn by COL Frank G. Spiess, Sr. c. 1946-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.014 Buttons		Officer's Buttons Army Green Service Coat? worn by COL Frank G. Spiess, Sr. (or Jr?) c. 1946-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.015 Wallet		Identification Wallet marked Frank G. Spiess c. 1942-70s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.016 Grenade, Training		Pineapple Hand Grenade Trainer re-painted in 2015 c. 1942-46	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.017 Bookend		76mm Anti-Tank Artillery Round Bookends shot from M10 Anti-Tank Destroyer Property of Frank Spiess, Sr. c. post 1946	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.018 Cushion		773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Cushion hooked fabric design Property of Frank Spiess, Sr. c. post 1946	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.019 Dish		Five (5) 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Small Dishes spoon rests? Distinguished Unit Insignia Property of Frank Spiess, Sr.	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.020 Dish		Five (4) 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion Small Dishes spoon rests? Property of Frank Spiess, Sr. c. post 1946	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.021 Mug		LA Guard memento mug Property of Frank Spiess, Jr. or Sr. "USA" on bottom c. 1970s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.022 Mug		"773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion memento mug "Frank G. Spiess" "Northern France/Ardennes/Rhineland/Central-Europe "Scotland/England/Wales/France/Luxembourg/Belgu	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
O 2015.029.023 Mug		"773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion memento mug "Lt. Col. Frank G. Spiess" "New Orleans, Louisiana c. 1950s	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections

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O 2015.029.024 Mug		Two 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion memento mugs "17th Reunion" "1982) etc.	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
		Temp. Location:		
O 2015.029.025 Mug		773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion memento mug "21st Reunion" "1990) etc.	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
		Temp. Location:		
O 2015.029.026 Cartridge Box		44 Caliber Cartridge Box Sharps Rifle 1873-1881 empty	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
		Temp. Location:		
O 2015.029.027 Map		Framed Silk Map "Zones of France" Mar 1944 Possibly one used by Frank Spiess Sr commanding the 773rd Tank Destroyer Bn.	Jackson Barracks Museum	Collections
		Temp. Location:		
P 2015.029.028 Photograph		Large Oval Photo Print unidentified man related to Frank Spiess, Sr. c.1890-1920	Jackson Barracks Museum	Archive 2-Lake
		Temp. Location:		
P 2015.029.029 Photograph		Large Oval Photo Print unidentified soldier related to Frank Spiess, Sr. c.1890-1920	Jackson Barracks Museum	Archive 2-Lake
		Temp. Location:		

**Total Items: 29**