

# Colonel Frank G. Spiess Collection

**Accession number:** 2014.011

**Location:** Jackson Barracks Museum

**Description:** 3 document boxes, legal size; 1 tall; 12 publications; 73 objects

**Arranged and described by:** Rhett Breerwood, LANG Command Historian (Archive)  
Beverly Boyko, Collections Manager (Objects)

## Scope and Content

1930s-1980s (1942-1945)

The collection contains documents, photos, internal periodicals, correspondence, publications and other miscellaneous items, featuring activity of the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion from the 1930s-40s, post-war Battalion Reunions, and post-war service of Frank Speiss. It contains items and documentation relevant to the study of the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion and World War II history; and COL Spiess' Post World War II career in the Louisiana National Guard, Civil Defense, National Guard Bureau and others.

## Historical Background:

Frank Spiess enlisted in the Louisiana National Guard in the 1920s and was commissioned an officer in 1930. He served with distinction and raised 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 Colonel Frank Spiess. 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.

**Box 1 – 2014.011.070**

10 folders – COL Spiess' Post World War II career – includes Louisiana National Guard, Civil Defense, National Guard Bureau, among others.

1. Pictures-Louisiana National Guard Post War Reorganization
2. Louisiana National Guard and Civil Defense documents
3. Louisiana National Guard and Civil Defense photographs
4. Correspondence 1950s-1980s
5. 773<sup>rd</sup> Heavy Tank Battalion 1951 Yearbook
6. National Guard Bureau documents (1957-1960)
7. 1953 Louisiana Sesquicentennial
8. Jackson Barracks Museum-requests for Tank Destroyer display
9. Documents on history book re:773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN
10. Pendennis Club photos (1982)
11. Bound 773<sup>rd</sup> Unit History, orders, actions (WWII)
12. Bound 773<sup>rd</sup> Pictures, newsletters, history (WWII)
13. 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division After Action Report 1945 (inc 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN)

**Box 2 – 2014.011.071**

8 folders – Unit reunion material, mostly relating to the 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN

1. 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN Reunion correspondence/copy of Civil War letter
- 2-5. 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN Reunion documents
6. 90<sup>th</sup> Division Reunion documents
7. Reunion photos
8. COL and Mrs Spiess in Europe

**Box 3 – 2014.011.072**

16 folders, 3 reports – Focuses on Spiess’ early military career through his World War II service. Includes documents, photos, internal periodicals, correspondence, and other miscellaneous items, featuring activity of the 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion.

1. Personnel documents and biographical material
2. Personal and family photos
3. Military documents 1930s-1940s (pre-war)
- 4a. Military photos 1930s-1940s (pre-war)
- 4b. 1939 141<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery Officer’s Club publication
5. World War II- 773<sup>rd</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion (773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN) activity
6. 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN history
7. 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN maps
8. Correspondence (war related) [family letters copied and originals retained by donor]
9. World War II paraphernalia (propaganda leaflets, foreign pamphlet, occupation pass, etc)
10. Unit newsletters (773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN, 90<sup>th</sup> Division, 357<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment)
11. Newspapers and clippings (Frank Spiess and 773<sup>rd</sup> TD BN)
12. Redeployment documentation (returning home from Europe)
13. Spiess Awards and decorations
14. Magazines (early 1940s)
15. Pictures (World War II)
16. Oversized items from collection – Signed Raymond Fleming photograph and National Guard Bureau Appreciation certificate

**Publications** (object # 2014.011.074)

1. The 90<sup>th</sup> Division (1946) “History of the 90<sup>th</sup> Division in World War II, 6 June 1944 to 9 May 1945” (2 copies) D769.3 90th.A5 1946
2. Hill, Jim Dan (1964) “A History of the National Guard,”
3. The National Guard Annual (State of Louisiana) March 1, 1938, UA220.A5 1938
4. Artillery Firing Manual (#990) March 1918 UF160 .A775 1918
5. Drill Regulations (75 French Gun Model #1897) Vol. 111 September 1918, UF160.A775 1918v.3
6. Target Range Pocket Book (U. S. Magazine Rifle 1903 Model, Cal. .30) April 28, 1908, UD333.A2 1917
7. Army Field Range M-1937 (Jeffersonville Quartermaster Depot) 1943 U408.3.A131943

8. German Military Symbols January 1943 (Military Intelligence Service Wash. D. C.) U26.U5 1944
9. Notes on British Forces (G-3 Operations ETOUSA) August 1943, UA647.8 .U5 1943
10. 39th Infantry Division 1950 Publication Camp Polk Summer Training, UA27.5 39th.A51950
11. The Officers' Guide ( 6th edition) Military Service Publishing 1941, U133.O44 1941
12. The Cross of Lorraine (79th Infantry Division) June 1942 to December 1945 D769.3 79th.C6 1945

### Objects

OBJECTID	OBJNAME	DESCRIP	MATERIAL	OTHERNAME
2014.011.001	Drawing	Pencil Sketch, framed Notation on back reads "LT. Col. Frank G. Spiess (New Orleans, La) Southwest of Paris, France August 1944 World War II 773rd Tank Destroyer Bn. (Third U.S. Army) Commanding Officer Sketch made during combat by"	Paper/Wood/Glass	Pencil Sketch
2014.011.002	Boots	Officer's Russett Brown Tanker's Boots worn by COL Frank Spiess, 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion	Leather	Tanker's Boots, brown
2014.011.003	Belt	Sam Brown Belt worn by LTC Frank G. Spiess 773rd Tank Destroyer Bn. World War II	Metal	Sam Brown Belt
2014.011.004	Boots	Officer's Tall Russett Brown Boots worn by COL Frank Spiess, 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion	Leather	tall brown riding boots
2014.011.005	Boot Hook	Boot Hooks used by LTC Frank G. Spiess 773rd Tank Destroyer Bn. World War II	Metal	Boot Hooks
2014.011.006	Belt	Khaki Belt worn by LTC Frank G. Spiess 773rd Tank Destroyer Bn. World War II "U.S. J.Q.M.D. 1944 40"	Metal	Khaki Belt
2014.011.007	Binoculars	Binoculars in black leather case used by LTC Frank Spiess "F.G. Spiess 0266094"	Vinyl	Binoculars
2014.011.008	Chain, Scabbard	Silver Chain for attaching Scabbard to Belt on a dress uniform "Gensco France"	Metal	
2014.011.009	Mitten	Right-hand Mitten Leather wih palm opening for fingers. "Frank G. Spiess 6-266094"	Fabric/Leather	Mitten
2014.011.010	Hat	Winter Hat "Frank G. Spiess N0-266094"	Fabric/Wool	Winter Hat
2014.011.011	Hat	Winter Hat "Frank G. Spiess NOMA HAT CO., Inc. Cont. W-669-qm-16416 Dated Mar. 4, 1942 Stock No. 73-H-64410 Q.M.C. Tent Spec. P.Q.D. No. 25 Dated 2/10/41 Phila. Q. M. Depot W.C. Bell"	Fabric	Winter Hat

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2014.011.012	Frog	Reichs Labor Service RAD Hanger Frog German Labor Service Dagger Hanger	Fabric/Metal/Leather	German Labor Service Dagger Hanger
2014.011.013	Slide Rule	Atlas or Midget Slide Rule used by "Captain F.G. Spiess BOC 7. F.A.S." Eugene Dietzgen Co. (c) 1935 \$6.00 Fabrikoid Case \$.80 extra 4.25 inch diameter	Vinyl/Plastic/Paper	Slide Ruler
2014.011.014	Sewing Kit	Personal Sewing Kit with scissors, razor blade, needles, pins thread, thimble and buttons "Frank G. Spiess 6-266094"	Fabric/Metal/Plastic	Personal Sewing Kit
2014.011.015	Portfolio	File Portfolio Pouch "Frank G. Spiess 523-6577 Divirion Histories SS"	Vinyl	
2014.011.016	Portfolio	File Portfolio Pouch "Colonel Frank G. Spiess 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion"	Vinyl	
2014.011.017	Cap, Garrison	Three (3) Garrison Caps Hungarian Artillery never issued	Fabric/Metal/Plastic	Hungarian Garison Cap, Artillery
2014.011.018	Side-Arm Knot	Four (4) Side-Arm or Sword Knots/Tassels Hungarian Army	Fabric	Knot, Sword or Side-Arm
2014.011.019	Epaulettes	Pair of Shoulder Straps Hungarian Army Light Gray Cord on Gold Felt	Fabric	Shoulder Knot, Hungarian, WWII
2014.011.020	Side-Arm Knot	Two (2) Side-Arm or Sword Knots Hungarian Army	Fabric	Knot, Sword or Side-Arm
2014.011.021	Thread	Black Spool of Thread. used by LTC Frank Spiess, 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion US Army World War II	Fabric	
2014.011.022	Razor Blades	Pack of "Gem" Single Razor Blades used by LTC Frank Spiess, 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion World War II	Fabric	
2014.011.023	Hearing Aid	Hearing Aid worn by LTC Frank Spiess	Plastic	
2014.011.024	Patch, Shoulder Sleeve Insignia	Shoulder Sleeve Insignia 773rd Tank Destroyer Battalion	Fabric	773 Tank Destroyer
2014.011.025	Nametag	Leather Nametag "Spiess Asst. Adj. Gen. LA"	Leather/Plastic/Paper	Spiess, Assistant AG
2014.011.026	Knife	German Paratrooper "Gravity Knife"	Metal/Leather	German Paratrooper "Gravity Knife"
2014.011.027	Dagger	1st Model Luftwaffe Dagger and Sheath German Air Force early period	Metal/Leather	Luftwaffe 1st Model
2014.011.028	Dagger	Reichs Labor Service RAD Hower and Sheath German Labor Service Dagger	Fabric/Metal/Plastic	German Labor Service Hower
2014.011.029	Sword	Luftwaffe Sword, Scabbard and Hanger "Solingen" German Air Force	Metal/Leather	Luftwaffe
2014.011.030	Saber	M1902 Officer's Saber used by LTC Frank Spiess "M.C. Lilley & Co. Columbus, Ohio" bakelite handle	Vinyl	M1902 Officer's Saber
2014.011.031	Hat Cord	German Officer's Hat Cord World War II	Metal	German Labor Front
2014.011.032	Side-Arm Knot	German Air Force Officer's Side-Arm Knot World War II	Metal/Fabric	German, Troddel

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2014.011.033	Round	Three Small Arms Rounds 17, 43, 50 cal Inert, Emptied or Drilled collected by LTC Frank Spiess, 773 Tank Destroyer Battalion	Metal	Small Arms, 17, 43, 50 cal
2014.011.034	Cap Device	German Officer's Cap Device Oak Leaf Wreath World War II	Metal	German Oak Leaf WWII
2014.011.035	Cap Device	US Officer's Cap Device World War II	Metal	US Officer WWII "Spiess"
2014.011.036	Epaulettes	Pair of Shoulder Straps German Air Force Officer Candidate? Brown with Silver Trim	Fabric	Shoulder Straps, German, WWII
2014.011.037	Collar Tabs	Four German Paramilitary Collar Tabs Rottenführer (English: Section Leader) Yellow (signal corps?) Piping and Silver Braid World War II	Metal	German, Paramilitary WWII
2014.011.038	Collar Tabs	German Paramilitary Collar Tabs German Schutzstaffel (SS) "Gr.11" Yellow (signal corps?) Piping and Silver Braid World War II	Metal	German, Paramilitary WWII
2014.011.039	Collar Tabs	German Paramilitary Collar Tab Untersturmführer [2nd LT] German Schutzstaffel (SS) Three Pips with Yellow (signal corps?) Piping and Silver Braid World War II	Metal	German, Paramilitary WWII
2014.011.040	Cap Device	German Labor Front Cap Device Deutsche Arbeitsfront, DAF	Metal	German Labor Front
2014.011.041	Patch	Luftwaffe Glider Pilot German, World War II	Metal	Glider Pilot
2014.011.042	Patch	Parteiadler or Emblem of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP; known in English as the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or simply the Nazi Party) (wikipedia). German, World War II worn on shirt	Fabric	German, Nazi Party Emblem
2014.011.043	Patch	Unidentified German Patch Probably a German Labor Service Organization World War II	Fabric	German, Labor Service
2014.011.044	Patch	Luftwaffe Glider Pilot "C" level proficiency German, World War II	Fabric	Glider
2014.011.045	Pin	Unidentified pin/ribbon "L. Schmitt-Rauch" et al on reverse German, World War II	Fabric/Metal	German, Memento? WWII
2014.011.046	Ribbon	Three Unidentified Medal ribbons green/white/red with safety pins Hungary 1923. 'Distinction for Long Service, 2nd Class German, World War II	Fabric/Metal	Hungarian,
2014.011.047	Medal	War Merit Cross Without swords for meritorious service behind the lines for soldiers or civilians (wikipedia) German, World War II	Fabric/Metal	

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2014.011.048	Medal	War Merit Cross With swords for soldiers for exceptional service in battle above and beyond the call of duty (wikipedia) German, World War II	Fabric/Metal	
2014.011.049	Medal	Badge of Honor for Caring for the German Volk (German: Ehrenzeichen für deutsche Volkspflege) was an order-like award created by Adolf Hitler on 1 May 1939 for services in the social sector. (wikipedia) German, World War II	Fabric/Metal	German, Care for German Volk
2014.011.050	Game Piece	Dice-Like Game Piece World War II	Bakelite	Dice
2014.011.051	Badge	Hilter Youth Proficiency sn: 68419	Metal	German, Hilter Youth Proficiency
2014.011.052	Badge	German Hilter Youth Proficiency	Metal	German, Hilter Youth Proficiency
2014.011.053	Cap Device	Cockade Cap Device German	Metal/Plastic/Fabric	German, Cockade
2014.011.054	Cap Device	Cockade Cap Device German, World War II Swastika National Socialist German Workers' Party	Metal	German WWII Cockade
2014.011.055	Cap Device	Cap Device National Emblem Eagle World War II German	Metal	German Nazi Emblem WWII
2014.011.056	Cap Device	Cap Device Reichsadler or Emblem of the Deutsches Reich (German Reich, 1933-1945), World War II German	Metal	German Nazi Emblem WWII
2014.011.057	Pin	Nazi Party Pin 1942	Metal	German, Nazi Party
2014.011.058	Cap Device	Cap Device Senior Railwayman World War II German	Metal	German Railway WWII
2014.011.059	Pin	Hirschberg Coat of Arms Pin Hirschberg is a town in the Saale-Orla-Kreis district, in Thuringia, Germany. German, World War II	Metal	Hirschberg Coat of Arms Pin
2014.011.060	Pin	"Arbeits Dank" pin German Labor Front RAD - Reich Labor Service	Metal	Reich Labor Service
2014.011.061	Badge	Aufklärungsabteilung (lit. reconnaissance detachment) was an Abteilung sized reconnaissance unit attached to a German division during the Second World War. (wikipedia) German, World War II	Plastic	German, Recon Detach
2014.011.062	Button	Nazi Party Emblem Button German, World War II	Metal	German, Nazi Eagle Emblem
2014.011.063	Leather	Leather Lace fragment used by LTC Frank Spiess, 773 Tank Destroyer Battalion for equipment repair work World War II	Leather	Lacing for Repairs, WWII
2014.011.064	Handkerchief	Women's Handkerchief "Thelma" or maybe "Helena" probably gifted to LTC Frank Spiess, 773 Tank Destroyer Battalion during movement through Europe, 1944-45. World War II	Fabric	Women's Handkerchief

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2014.011.065	Brassard	German Reich Brassard The Reichsadler or Emblem of the Deutsches Reich (German Reich, 1933–1945) World War II	Fabric	German Reich Brassard
2014.011.066	Flag	German Flag or Pennant with Streamers "AT ZIJI NASI OSVOBODITELE" possibly translates as "At a Nazi Cleanse" World War II	Fabric	German
2014.011.067	Streamer	US Campaign Streamer "Argentan-Falaise Gap, Chambois, France" World War II	Fabric	Argentan-Falaise Gap, Chambois, France
2014.011.068	Flag	Nazi Germany Flag Vehicle Banner Collected by LTC Frank Spiess, 773 Tank Destroyer Battalion as they crossed the Siegfried Line north of Luxemburg on January 30th, 1945 (F. Spiess. Jr. pers.comm. 3/11/14). World War II	Fabric	Nazi Germany Vehicle Banner
2014.011.069	Suitcase	Large Black Suitcase "LT. COL. FRANK G. SPIESS 0-266094" 773 Tank Destroyer Battalion World War II	Wood/Metal/Cardboard	Spiess Suitcase
2014.011.073	Decal	Washington Artillery Distinguishing Unit Insignia reverse decal for display on windows	Paper	Decal, WA