

### Willi Kricks--“The Item” Druck (Printer)

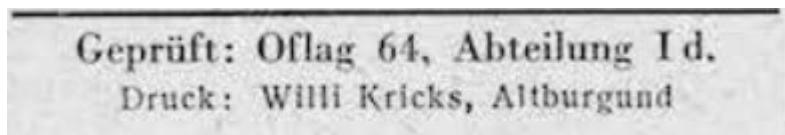
Willi Kricks was a German soldier who was a Szubin resident who operated a print shop in town. The Germans had removed its original Polish owner, Jozef Kapsa, in 1939 as part of taking total control of the town, its businesses and government. Ethnic Germans were put in charge. Kricks was also a guard at Oflag 64 and held the contract for all the printing needs of the German Army in Szubin which included Oflag 64. His wife, a devoted Nazi, managed the shop and its Polish workers for him.

At the beginning of each month Kriegy Frank Diggs, usually accompanied by Kriegy Seymour Bolten who was fluent in German, was escorted under armed guard to Willi’s print shop in town with the proposed “Item” draft. Diggs describes the experience in these words, ” There we would trim or expand the stories to fit each page since it was hard to judge their length without the use of a typewriter. Willi knew his business, however, the only real problem we encountered was how to deal with his wife, a hopeless Nazi who always greeted us with a ‘Heil Hitler’. We generally were able to ignore her.” Except for intermittent typographical errors, the printers did a good job and everyone looked forward to each edition of the “*The Item*”.

It is believed that Oflag 64 Commandant Oberst Schneider approved the entire newspaper effort because he felt if the POWs were busy with projects such as “*The Item*”, they would spend less time plotting escape plans. He was mistaken!

For more information regarding the printing shop, the original owners and pictures from the 1940’s, please visit the Oflag 64 Record Blog at <http://oflag64altburgund.blogspot.com/2016/05/about-kapsas-printing-house-where.html>

This was printed at the bottom of the last page of every issue of “The Item”.



Checked: Division I d.

Printer: Willi Kricks, Altburgund (German name for Szubin)