



SEWERYNA DĄBEK

Volunteer Seweryna Dąbek, born in 1924, student.

I was deported for unconfined exile on 13 March 1940 from the town of Dereczyn, Słonim district, nowogródzkie voivodeship, to Severo-Kazakhstanskaya Oblast, Kirov region, Kirov *zernosovkhoz*.

We worked in the fields and with sheep (shift work). In the sovkhos I lived in a barrack, that is, a hut made of clay and mud. For half a year I lived under a wagon, which was taken into the steppe when the season came. The hygienic conditions were terrible: a small barrack had to house ninety people, the majority of whom were Polish and the rest Soviet.

The intellectual level was average, but mutual relations were good.

Our days were varied. Remuneration for meeting the work quota was very low. Food was awful. We didn't receive any clothes. Social life was good, but cultural life was poor.

The NKVD was very harsh.

We were often punished and interrogated. I was tried for *progul*, because I didn't go to work one day: my mother was sick in a hospital situated 50 kilometers away and they didn't let me visit her, so I went on my own, without permission.

Communist propaganda: meetings, lectures, and telling us that we would never go back to Poland. We didn't have any information about Poland except for what we could figure out ourselves. There wasn't any medical assistance, and the hospital was situated 50 kilometers away from the sovkhos.

Due to these harsh circumstances, my mama died in Russia on 13 August 1940. I was left alone, without brothers or sisters, among strangers.