

# Book tells of Polish suffering



TRANSLATION: Bronia Kacperek of Fulwood

## Translation helps to heal the wound

A PRESTON woman is hoping an English version of a harrowing book will help people understand how a band of Polish settlers came to live in Lancashire.

Bronia Kacperek, of Fulwood, spent two-and-a-half years translating an 800-page volume on the horrors refugees faced in fleeing eastern Europe.

Stalin's Ethnic Cleansing in Eastern Poland, *Tales of the Deported*, is filled with the tales of 135 people who suffered under deportations ordered by Russian dictator Stalin.

Bronia hopes it can explain why they now live across the county and also help relatives and friends understand how they shared camps with bugs, rats and mosquitoes.

Bronia, who became the chairman of the Committee of the Association of Families of the Borderland Settlers in 1994, and her mother Anne, who

### By Alan Burrows

died two days before the millennium, submitted their own stories.

The 73-year-old said: "After the war we came to England and wanted to see our friends so a group of the children of the original settlers got together and we decided to write our memoirs.

"The books were split into how we lived before the war and what happened after the war and when we came to England.

### Overwhelmed

"But people and some of our own relatives would say they wanted to read it but it was in Polish.

"I just had a telephone call from George Grenfell-Baines, the architect, and he said he was overwhelmed and said he had no idea what happened.

"He said it was unbelievable that people went through this."

The book, which took two-and-a-half years to translate, includes a remarkable tale of how Bronia's Russian friends

even sent food parcels to England.

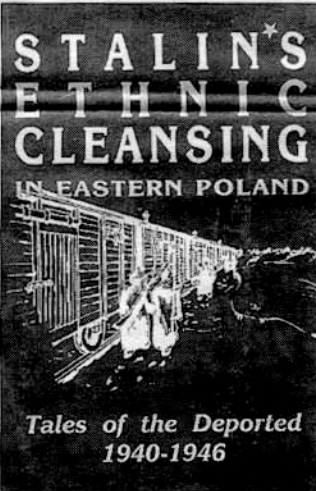
She said they had only read about England through Dickens' books, which gave accounts of "dreadful social conditions."

The book catalogues two of the most harrowing events in Bronia's life, her arrest and meeting her father for the first time in a year on the streets of southern Russia.

However, Bronia said she nearly mistook him for a German spy! She said he was wearing a strange uniform and she quickened her steps to catch a glimpse of the "real enemy" before recognising him and throwing her arms around his neck.

Many people were too disturbed to tell their tales, and Bronia also hopes their relatives will understand the traumas their parents went through.

The book is available from Caldra House by ringing 01273 772234 or by ringing Bronia on 01772 774898.



DEPORTATIONS: Josef Stalin