

Chapter 8

The Second World War

1939-1945

By 1939 Nfld. was emerging from a decade of great economic depression and when the war broke out Nfld.'s strategic importance generated considerable military activity. The construction of military bases, increased demand for Nfld. resources like fish, timber and iron ore as well as the location of great air and sea routes created many jobs and prosperity in Nfld.

War overseas: WWII grew out of the depression where many countries turned away from democratic governments to extremist leaders. Countries like Germany, Italy and Japan were taken over by extremist leaders who saw war as a solution to their problems. German dictator Adolf Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 and in response Britain and France declared war on Germany. By 1941 Italy and Japan joined Germany, while The United States and the Soviet Union joined Britain and France. This war was fought on a global scale on land, on water and in the air.

Enlistments: at the outbreak of war the commissioned government decided to recruit men for the British Army rather than incurring the expense of their own Nfld. Regiment. Although Nfld. did not have their own regiments, some of their units were designated as Nfld. Units due to the number of Nflders that registered. They used the NFLD abbreviation to mean "Not Found Lying Down." The Canadian Armed forces had three women's branches which many Nfld. women joined.