



**SUPPLY
LINE**

Camera

Many Canadians used small, affordable and portable cameras such as this to record their wartime experiences. They took photographs of family and friends, or of significant events or places. Unlike today's digital cameras, wartime cameras used film that had to be developed in labs and printed before the pictures could be seen.

Original



Camera © Canadian War Museum

Photography During the Second World War

Amateur photography was widespread and popular during the Second World War. People took photographs of family and friends, or of significant events and locations.

Pictures were a way for those separated by war to share images of one another, and what they were experiencing.

Wartime Cameras and Film

Simple cameras like the original examples in the Discovery Box were affordable to most Canadians. They were made of materials such as plastic, metal, glass and leather. Some cameras were even designed to fold up and fit into a pocket, making them easier to carry.

Second World War amateur photography was very different from today. Unlike digital cameras, wartime cameras needed film. In cameras such as the one in the Discovery Box, the film came on rolls of **celluloid**.

Users could not see their pictures right away. After all the space on the roll of film was used up, the film had to be removed from the camera and developed. The cameras in the Discovery Box have been sealed shut.

Once the film was developed, it could be used to make prints on special paper. Most amateur photographs were taken in black-and-white.

Photographs, Security, and Censorship

Photographs could be a security risk. They might show details of buildings, equipment and uniforms. The government regulated which photographs could be published in the media. In some cases, parts of a photograph would be changed to hide sensitive details. This was part of a broader program of wartime **censorship**.

In 1942, as part of the uprooting and forced relocation of Japanese Canadians, the federal government confiscated their cameras. This was a result of inaccurate fears that the cameras might be used for spying. Japanese Canadians could only use cameras by special permission, or in secret.

Vocabulary

Celluloid:

An early form of plastic, widely used for photographic film. It was very flammable, and was replaced by “safety” film.

Censorship:

The control and regulation of information by the government. In Second World War Canada, this included the media as well as things such as letters written by military personnel.