

In the summer of 1896, gold fever spread like wildfire across North America. According to rumors, someone had found gold near the Klondike River in Canada. Hopeful men and women were stricken with gold fever. People combed western Canada and Alaska in search of the precious metal. Nome, Alaska, was first settled as a mining camp. It became an important hub of the gold rush. Fortune seekers relied on the growing city for supplies.

Prospectors grumbled but were willing to face the hardships. They chose to endure the harsh, frigid weather for a chance to become wealthy. Lives were lost in the freezing, arctic climate. Gritty miners searched the land for hidden riches. Burros plodded beside their masters with huge boxes of mining supplies. They were also laden with food items such as flour, beef jerky, and beans. Fresh vegetables were scarce.

There were many other hazards. Danger lurked everywhere. A ghastly fate awaited anyone who stumbled upon a grizzly bear. Bandits often robbed miners of their gold.

Some lucky miners struck gold in the mother lode. They filled their coffers with treasure. Most, however, returned home empty handed.