

## Chapter 1

# The Chilkoot Pass and Fortymile River

In the spring of 1891, more than five years before the famed Klondike Gold Rush, Joe Quigley started off on the trip of a lifetime. He was 21 years old and had spent almost seven years on his own, growing from someone who “didn’t know whether to hire on as a man or a boy”<sup>1</sup> to a “six-foot and then some” man who was “all bone and muscle.”<sup>2</sup> He had, through his various jobs on the road, developed many of the skills he would need to succeed on the next leg of his journey. His intense awareness of the power of life within himself, tremendous determination, and sense of urgency to move forward spurred him on, and he was about to master one of the most rugged trails in the world.

Investing his hard-earned savings in a trip to Alaska was a huge gamble, but Joe had the confidence and optimism to imagine a bright future in the Far North. Venturing into the gamble of gold mining, Joe started off with the intention of going to Juneau where he’d heard there were gold mines. He was fortunate enough at the beginning of the trip to find potential mining partners who were going to the goldfields in the Yukon. As he later remembered it Joe said, “I went up on a steamer to Juneau, where I had heard there were mines, but I saw a party getting ready to go into the Interior of Alaska, I partnered up with him, and we went together. Billy Kaufman.” Joe and Kaufman joined up with Lew Pierce, Charley Framton and some others and “took a year’s outfit ... minimum necessities.”

Joe understood that he would need a partner. Being a prospector is a dangerous job, but there is safety in numbers. Having grown up in a large family and a tight-knit community, he knew how to weigh the value of himself as a work partner and how to find people to fill in the gaps. In the unknown territory he was entering, conditions were harsher than even a hard-working outdoorsman such as Joe was accustomed to. Sharing and cooperation were essential for survival.

Severe cold threatened Far North travelers in the winter, and mosquitos tortured them in the summer. Due to permafrost, water drainage is

prevented, and water stands on the ground. When spring thaw happens, overland travel becomes a nightmare of bogs, or muskegs, also called muskeg swamps. Muskegs are a mixture of acidic soil, water and partly dead vegetation, frequently covered by a layer of various types of moss. Rather than grassland or meadows, the Far North has tussocks, which are tall grasses that grow in clumps, and thickets, or dense groups of trees or tall shrubs. The large amounts of standing water breed more than 35 different species of especially large mosquitos.<sup>3</sup>

Juneau was a mining town that sprung up when hard rock gold was discovered there in 1880. Hard rock mining, or quartz mining, refers to mining techniques used to excavate hard minerals that contain precious metals, as opposed to placer mining which is the mining of stream beds for deposits of minerals. The most famous mining operation in Juneau was begun by John Treadwell 17 years before the big gold rush. The Treadwell Mining Complex was ultimately composed of four different mines, and in 1889 Treadwell sold his stake in the company for \$1.5 million and moved to California.<sup>4</sup>

All sorts of people with a “roving disposition” were attracted to Juneau, using it as a launch pad to Alaska and the Canadian Yukon. Most were there to try their luck with placer mining. Adventurers, fortune hunters, and frontiersmen came to Juneau in pairs and small groups. Some brought no more than a rucksack, a gold pan, a shovel and a vial of mercury.<sup>5</sup> Placer gold was known as “poor man’s gold” because the people who looked for it had no time or money to develop lode deposits.<sup>6</sup> As with all boom towns, whenever a prospector struck it rich, camp-followers were quick to come in to “mine the miners.” People providing the necessities and satisfying the desires and whims of the gold miners made up the citizenship of the towns. By 1890 Juneau had a population of just over 1200 and these people ranged from good people trying to make an honest living to the unscrupulous who took advantage of the miners’ weaknesses or naiveté.

Joe Quigley’s group, which included Billy Kaufman, Lew Pierce and Charley Framton, chartered a small fishing boat for the 115-mile trip from Juneau to Dyea. In the Far North, getting from one place to another was a constant problem to be solved. Locations with enough population to provide help, provisions, or companionship were far distant from each other. In the places where individuals of this group originated from, provisions and people could be right next door for a city dweller or just a few miles on foot or by horse for rural folks. In the northern latitudes where they were traveling, what would have been a simple errand back home would take days or weeks and an enormous amount of energy. Transportation methods in the Far North were seasonal. The vast area has a network of rivers and streams that are natural highways, and those waterways were often the fastest, and sometimes the only, way to go long distances. Travelers would follow the

waterways as far as possible in the desired direction, then leave to cross mountain ranges at the most favorable points, and return to the streams again as soon as the water became available. In the winter dog sleds were employed. In the summer the course was similar except that boats were used, and the shallowness of the water would limit the distance that boats could go. Once one was on the ground, hiking or riding a horse would have been the only choices available get to the desired destination. Joe and his companions relied on their own legs for any travel beyond the water.

The chartered fishing boat they were in hit bad weather and had a two-week delay. In our time of instant gratification, it is hard to imagine what it must have been like for the group to have a two-week delay after coming so far on their journey, but they knew there was no choice and made the best of it. Joe recounted, “We struck head winds and bad weather en route to Dyea and pulled into Sunset Cove, the weather continued bad.... Couldn’t venture out again for fourteen days ... made camp on shore”<sup>7</sup> Camping for two weeks in bad weather while anticipating their long-awaited journey into unknown territory must have been frustrating, but they were aware that, as always, mother nature was the ultimate authority and that they would not be moving forward until the weather allowed the boat to continue.

It was March or April by this time and there is an old axiom that there are three seasons in Alaska: winter, the Fourth of July, and autumn. The temperature often goes below freezing at night on the water during early spring, and large, strong gales and storms are common. Fortunately, the coastline offers an unusual number of protected waterways for boats to take shelter. Sunset Cove was somewhere between Juneau and Dyea and was a local place name that fell out of use later.

After the weather delay, the party arrived in Dyea and saw a wood frame building that was a combination store, residence and barn, with a nearby garden, and was called the Healy and Wilson Trading Post. It was the only business there. In the mid-1880s, John J. Healy had been a hunter, trapper, soldier, prospector, whiskey trader, editor, guide, Indian scout, and sheriff, and he was living in Montana Territory when he heard about the early pre-Klondike Yukon gold strikes and headed north. Healy was known as an unsociable man of sour disposition. He did not offer credit at his trading post, but he did maintain lower prices than other suppliers who did.<sup>8</sup> Healy and his brother-in-law Edgar Wilson opened the trading post at the convergence of the Taiya River and Taiya Inlet on the south side of the Chilkoot Pass. The business became an important supply and information point for prospectors who were heading into the Yukon basin before the Klondike Gold Rush. It was located just downriver from a Tlingit village and was a place where Alaska Natives and First Nations peoples gathered to get work helping prospectors pack their outfits over the Chilkoot Pass.<sup>9</sup>

Historically, the Chilkoot Pass was a trade link between the coastal Tlingit and interior Athabascan Indians, and it was crucial to the trade network involved in the mid to late 19th-century Western fur industry. The Chilkoot Trail was one of only three year-round passages to the Canadian interior, which made it an important entryway for explorers, pioneers, and prospectors in the last quarter of the 19th century.<sup>10</sup> In 1873 George Holt was the first white man to cross the Chilkoot Pass, making the journey to the upper Yukon. In 1879 the Chilkats turned back three prospectors when they tried to go over the Chilkoot Pass, and a year later armed U.S. Navy personnel persuaded the Chilkats to open the trail to prospectors. Arthur Krause made a sketch map of the Chilkoot Pass when he crossed it in 1882, and a year later, in 1883, Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka of the U.S Army led a military reconnaissance across the Chilkoot Pass and descended the Yukon River to its mouth on a raft. In 1884, John J. Healy and Edgar Wilson established a trading post at the head of Taiya estuary, marking the beginning of Dyea.<sup>11</sup> The number of prospectors using the Chilkoot Trail gradually increased after prospectors discovered gold in the late 1880s on the Stewart and Fortymile rivers, upper tributaries of the Yukon River.

Joe Quigley and the rest of the party began relaying their supplies up the Dyea River towards the Chilkoot Pass. Dyea is very close to Skagway, and in modern times is within the limits of the Municipality of the Skagway Borough. The area has a unique climate, sandwiched between the wet, temperate rainforest and the dry Yukon exterior.<sup>12</sup> Drier than other towns in southeast Alaska, it has only 26.1 inches of precipitation annually, but it is known for its winds. The name Skagway derives from the Tlingit word which means “where the water bunches up,” referring to the white caps that are common in the Northern Lynn Canal. The weather experienced at different elevations varies dramatically.

The Chilkoot Pass is a small gap in a massive mountain range that divides the Yukon Valley from the north Pacific Ocean. To say that this route is difficult and dangerous is an understatement. The pass itself can only be reached after a 1000-foot climb up a 35-degree slope that is completely encased in ice for most of the year, with avalanches being a threat in the spring.<sup>13</sup> The 26-mile trail is very steep and shoots up about 1000 feet in the last half mile. Joe’s party brought tools, equipment, and supplies, including snowshoes and a sled. A typical “year’s outfit” weighing nearly a ton had to be carried in heavy 100-pound packs, requiring repeated trips up to the top of the pass. There were no regulations yet about what to take, but in 1887, because they feared mass starvation the Canadian government required miners to take a year’s worth of minimum necessities. That load became known as “a ton of goods” because food for a year weighed more than 1000 pounds, and when clothes and equipment were added, the weight was easily doubled.

Although the rivers had melted enough to be flowing, the temperature of the April air was still hovering near freezing. Each person in the party trudged through the hard currents, crossing and re-crossing the river, carrying heavy loads of gear and supplies, struggling to keep their footing while wading through waist-deep frigid water and fighting against the ice floating around their bodies. In Joe's words, there were "still chunks of ice in water in April 1891 ... water to waists, and sometimes above, hard to hold footings. If it had not been for the packs on your back you wouldn't have held footing." The journey required an intense physical connection with nature and there was no respite for the weary or the weak-willed. Many people who made the attempt would hire "packers," usually Alaska Natives, to carry the massive burden that even minimal preparation required. The packs for Joe Quigley's group averaged 80 to 100 pounds each,<sup>15</sup> and the men carried their own packs, discovering that the weight of their load was helping to keep them from being swept away by the rushing ice water. Losing one's footing and falling in the water could be deadly, and hypothermia was a serious risk.

Hypothermia occurs when the body temperature drops to dangerous levels. The symptoms can include hallucinations that cause the victims to do things like abandon a sled with survival gear to go off toward an imaginary warm cabin. People with hypothermia have been known to take off their clothes because of a symptom called "paradoxical undressing," and their bodies are found partly or completely unclothed with abrasions and bruises on the knees, elbows, feet and hands.<sup>16</sup> Hudson Stuck, who traveled extensively in the Far North, wrote that "the strong cold brings fear with it. All devices to exclude it, to conserve the vital heat, seem feeble and futile.... Yet the very power of it, and the dread that accompanies it, give a certain fearful and romantic joy to the conquest of it."<sup>17</sup> Joe Quigley was young and physically fit, and he had an iron will and a decent share of good luck to get him through. He also had the forethought to take precautions against frost and other dangers to ensure his survival.

Much of a Yukon prospector's life was centered on rivers and streams, and extreme weather was a given. The challenge of carrying their belongings across the freezing stream over and over during the beginning of the trip was more than most of the would-be gold miners could take. They began to understand that the arduous journey to the goldfields was only the start and that they would not be able to survive the first winter in the arctic wilderness. They could sense the threat of death and permanent bodily damage looming. It was spring, and they feared the possibility of avalanches, knowing that when a massive slab of snow comes roaring down the mountain at 80 miles an hour, escape is unlikely. Frostbite was a constant threat as well. Freezing tissues could cause a person to lose their fingers, toes, nose, or ears. Each torturous slog through the frigid water and climb up the perilously steep trail

made the climbers wonder if it was worth it. Joe said in an interview that by the second day all but four of the men began to turn back, and “we bought what we could of their outfits, though we didn’t have much money with us.” Years later during the big gold rush, many people on the trail had to turn back and lost all of their belongings.

Many of the people who chose to enter the Klondike through the Chilkoot Pass had sunk all of their hopes and all of their money into the effort. Some had given up their homes and had nowhere to return to, or they had borrowed money to make the trip, having no way to pay the debt if they didn’t find gold. For many, finding gold in the Klondike held the promise of an instant change in social status during a time of economic depression and their hopes hung on a successful search for the sought-after treasure. Those whose spirits or bodies could not take the strain would hope to salvage something from the things they’d brought with them and would try to sell their outfits to the people who could continue.

By the time all of the gear and supplies were at the top of the Chilkoot Pass, Joe Quigley, Billy Kaufman, Lew Pierce and Charley Framton were alone. “We couldn’t use our sleds or snow shoes, so they were only a liability until we got over the pass, and we had to pack them up the steep trail along with everything else.”<sup>18</sup> By Joe’s recollection, they had cut some 700 steps into the ice to reach the summit. Several years later, in 1897 during the peak of the big gold rush, the stairs cut into the ice would be called “the Golden Staircase.” That sobriquet was memorably illustrated by Eric E. Hegg’s iconic 1898 photograph depicting a string of prospectors, tied together by rope, bent over with huge packs on their backs, struggling to reach the top. This image had such impact on the mind of the brilliant comic, actor and filmmaker Charlie Chaplin, that when he made the film *The Gold Rush* nearly 30 years later in 1925, he recreated the scene perfectly. In 1891 when Quigley, Kaufman, Pierce and Frampton were making their climb, the small party was alone, and there were no journalists watching and waiting with cameras.

On May 9, 1891, on his 22nd birthday, Joe Quigley was on the border between the Alaska Territory and Canada, standing at the top of the Chilkoot Pass, looking toward Summit Lake below him, knowing that the frontier was not by any means closed. “We landed on top of Chilkoot Pass May 8, 1891 and found the snow on the sunny side of the hill too soft for travel so we walked back and forth on top of the divide until the night got cool enough to harden up the trail. On my twenty-second birthday, May 9, we started relaying our outfits on the sleds down to Summit Lake that day.”<sup>19</sup> He dove into the biggest adventure of his life by sliding all of his worldly belongings down a 3000-foot mountain into a place he’d dreamed of with a spirit of expectation and optimism that would keep him going through years of working in conditions that would test even the hardest bodies and souls.

The men had carried tools and nails with them, and now they had to build a boat that could carry them with their equipment and supplies down the river for the next leg of the trip, which involved travel by water. “The next day we went down to the head of Lake Linderman. There we built camp and saw pit, and cut logs, and built 21 feet on bottom, double ender boat, floored so it would carry quite a load. I had had experience with building boats, so we got along fine.”<sup>20</sup> Having grown up next to a river, Joe had experience with small boats and that proved to be helpful for the travelers.

They had to cut enough logs to build a boat, then use the whipsaw to cut the logs into planks. A whipsaw had a blade up to 14 feet long and was made to be used by a two-person team. The procedure for whipsawing started with either digging a pit deep enough for one person to be under the log or building a trestle frame tall enough for one of the team to stand under. The second person stood on top of the logs to be cut. The saw blade teeth were angled and sharpened so as to only cut on the downward stroke. On the return stroke the burden of lifting the weight of the saw was shared equally by the two-person team. Joe had some boat building experience, but none of them knew how to whipsaw. This is not a thing that can be easily learned unless the two people on the team have a natural rhythm together, and the group had difficulty with it. They had all been told that two men could saw 250 board measure a day in good timber, but they felt that it was impossible for them. They also didn’t know how to file their saw correctly, even though they had files with them.

Through persistence, the four men managed to build a 21-foot-long double-ender, floored boat. A “double-ender” boat has an outboard rudder, as opposed to a “canoe stern” boat that has an inboard rudder. Their shiplap boat was built with overlapping timbers. Grooves were cut into the top and bottom of the boards to fit the panels tightly together to keep out the water. Years later, when the stampede came through, Joe and his friends would be considered “old-timers” or “Sourdoughs”<sup>21</sup> and hordes of new “Cheechakos”<sup>22</sup> would emulate them. In the early years, when Joe’s party was building their boat on the shores of Lake Linderman, there were plenty of natural resources. It was a time of learning and paving their own way. These prospectors in 1891 had no idea that less than six years later the surrounding forest would be stripped of timber from the thousands of stampedeers on their way to the goldfields.

Quigley, Kaufman, Pierce and Frampton launched their newly-built boat loaded with their supplies and gear and “ran down the Linderman River.”<sup>23</sup> They were lucky to miss the rocks and go on to Lake Bennett without incident. The next leg of the journey from Lake Bennett to Miles Canyon was quite a distance, about 100 miles, but it went smoothly. The party tied up above Miles Canyon and climbed up on the bluff to inspect the canyon and White Horse Rapids, mapping a course they hoped to follow. Joe saw that there was a place

in the White Horse Rapids that seemed smoother, and they all agreed to steer for that. The currents were very fast and they stayed right on the crest for miles, then shot through Whitehorse Rapids quickly, then on through the somewhat slower Squaw Rapids. The party made it through Five Finger Rapids and also had what Joe described as “a smooth and pleasant trip” from Squaw Rapids to Fortymile, where they camped on shore along the way.<sup>24</sup>

The Yukon is a massive 2000-mile-long river and the party had successfully traveled close to 600 miles to Fortymile in the boat they constructed on the shores of Lake Bennett. Their planning and attention to detail paid off in a smooth shot through the rapids, but this was not something to be taken for granted. A few years later during the big stampede, there were so many accidents that the North-West Mounted Police began to assign each boat a number and record the names of the passengers to notify the next of kin and identify bodies if the boats capsized. In the first days of the rush down the Yukon River more than 100 boats were torn to pieces in the White Horse Rapids, killing at least ten people. Those who survived the disasters lost most of their supplies and were trapped between the Coast Mountain passes and the unknown territory of the goldfields.<sup>25</sup>

Joe and his companions poled their boat up the Fortymile River to Nugget Gulch on Bonanza Bar. It was often necessary to pull the loaded boat upriver with ropes as they waded. The rivers in the Far North are like highways and the seasons determine the method of travel. After spring breakup, boats were the best method of travel, but once the water was frozen, dog sleds were the preferred method of transportation. The water systems in the area tend to be wide and shallow, and when the water became too shallow to paddle or sail, they would pole the boats. Poling is back-breaking work that requires the person to stand and propel the boat by using a long pole, touching the end of the pole to the river bottom and pushing against the current. It is a different skill than paddling or rowing and requires good balance, but it can extend the range of the boat, reducing the amount of hiking and backpacking necessary.

They knew that there were two basic types of gold deposits: lode deposits and placer deposits. They understood that gold-bearing quartz veins ran through the ground and that erosion loosened gold particles and washed them into the rivers and streams. They were there to do placer mining, to separate the heavy gold particles from the lighter sand and gravel. Lode, or hard rock, mining took more work and capital than any of them had at this time. The simplest way to approach placer mining was to pan for gold. The men would first dip the pan into the stream and bring up a combination of water, sand and gravel, swirl the pan around, letting the water slosh out along with the lighter sand. As the lighter materials leave the pan, the motion causes the heavier minerals, such as gold, to sink to the bottom, ideally leaving gold nuggets at the bottom of the pan.



A more effective method of placer mining was to use sluice boxes. Since the miners were working on the shores and gravel bars of the creeks and rivers, the power of water could be harnessed to help them separate the gold they found from the dirt and gravel. They would build wooden troughs, called sluice boxes. After they shoveled some sand, gravel and water into the box, a series of riffles in the bottom of the box would agitate the slurry of water and gravel, allowing small particles of the heavier gold to fall out of the solution. This was an efficient way to collect the gold while allowing the waste material to fall out of the end of the box. An alternative to building the long sluice boxes on site was to use a portable unit called a rocker that the miners would carry with them. The rockers were compact, boxy sluices operated by rocking the unit from side to side. This process of rocking the portable sluices, while working on the gravel bars of the creeks, was called “rocking on the bars.” Unless they could rock out an ounce a day, they put their rocker in the boat and moved on to the next new bar.

Landing in a place with a name like Nugget Gulch, finally getting to do some prospecting, and finding a little gold must have given them a feeling that they had truly arrived. Nugget Gulch didn’t quite live up to its name, but they were still excited to find some gold. Joe reminisced, “Right about then, we found some coarse gold in Nugget Gulch, and then began prospecting the Gulches that ran into the 40-Mile, and all were pretty good. Franklin Gulch, further up was pretty good too. We were on pretty poor ground on Nugget Gulch, and there weren’t many nuggets in that spot.”<sup>26</sup> Every time they would dip their pans in the water, they hoped to find large quantities of the precious metal that would change their lives. Each time they would bring up just enough to keep their hopes up, and each time they would brush themselves off and start over, hunting for the next big thing. When prospectors came to the Yukon to seek gold, they didn’t know how long it would take to strike it rich, or if they ever would. Some inner voice drove them on and gave them the resilience to bounce back from each disappointment.

A practical man who was accustomed to things manifesting in their own time, Joe soon realized that he needed to make a living by more than just prospecting for his own gold. He met some old-timers who had been in the area for a while and he worked for them while learning more about prospecting and mining. He made enough money to buy minimal provisions and supplemented his diet by hunting. In the short time he had been there, he’d learned about which game was the best to hunt. Recounting the experience, he said, “I had enough to go down 40-Mile and buy bacon and beans and tea and rice, and a little ammunition for my .30–40 Winchester ... fine moose meat, plenty of caribou, and if you go back in the mountains plenty of bighorn sheep. Sheep is the best of all, finest kind of meat and no gamey or mutton flavor. Bear is excellent in the right season and away from fish as

food. Meat taken up until September 20th is excellent.” Game meat was a major part of everyone’s diet in the Far North, and to be a knowledgeable hunter could mean the difference between life and starvation. Some sections of the wilderness had very little game, making survival without provisions questionable.

Even though Joe was an experienced hunter, he found that hunting in the Far North was different than in other places he’d lived, and he learned an important lesson early on. Shortly after he came to Fortymile country he’d hunted for several days before he saw a caribou. There was snow on the ground and the temperature was well below zero. It was late in the afternoon and he was a long way from his cabin, so after he killed and dressed the caribou, he rolled it over on its stomach and packed snow around it so the birds couldn’t pick at it. Joe left the carcass to come back and get it the next day. When he returned and rolled it over the stench was overwhelming. He realized that he hadn’t let the body cool off and having it almost airtight with snow had insulated it, keeping it warm and spoiling the meat. Joe chalked it up as a lesson: “That was another thing I learned not to do!”<sup>27</sup> A survivor, Joe learned not to repeat his mistakes, and he earned a reputation as a superb hunter.

Years later Grant Pearson said of Joe Quigley, “He was one of the best hunters and rifle-shots in the country, and he had a lot of patience. If Joe couldn’t get close enough to the game, neither could anyone else. He first spotted his game through his field glasses and would take special notice to determine whether it was in good condition. Then, after watching to find out which way it was headed, he would get the wind direction and plan his approach. When you heard his rifle speak you could bet your money it was a hit and one that wouldn’t spoil too much meat.” Pearson went on to describe a specific hunting trip when he and Joe spotted a bull caribou. After watching the caribou for some time Joe remarked, “We won’t get any closer. I’ll take him from here.” The caribou was 400 yards away. Joe took a rest across an outcropping of boulders, where he could see only the top of the animal’s back. “When that fellow moves it’ll be downhill, and we’ll lose him,” Joe said. “I’ll break his back, that won’t spoil much meat.” Joe shot and the caribou disappeared. Pearson reminisced, “We went over and sure enough his back was broke. Joe surely called his shot!”<sup>28</sup>

Joe continued doing labor for other miners and persisted in searching for his own big payoff. He talked about meeting miners in the area and the work he did: “I rocked on the bars awhile. They were pretty well rocked out, so I found Old Man Adam Malden, on Nugget Gulch and he needed help on handling his boxes so he took me in as partner.” This is where he first met Skiff Mitchell who came down to see Old Adam. “Skiff was a big, Skookum fellow then ... black mustache and black hair.”<sup>29</sup> Skookum is a Chinook word

that people in the Far North and the Pacific Northwest often used to describe someone strong, powerful, significant, and impressive. Skiff Mitchell was a California lumberman who had come to the Klondike in 1886. Ten years later, Mitchell bought Discovery Claim #1 on Eldorado Creek from prospector Jay Whipple for a very low price. Mitchell made a fortune from the claim and lived on the proceeds for the next 50 years.<sup>30</sup> Skiff Mitchell was one of the rare lucky ones.

Living and working alone in the snow-covered wilderness presented a multitude of challenges. There were no nearby stores, and even with careful planning and impressive resourcefulness, a trip to get supplies was inevitable. Joe told of a trip trudging through the snow for more than 200 miles to obtain the necessities of life. “After the freeze-up in Fall 1891 I freighted provisions on sled, up the 40-Mile, about forty miles, and then over the divide seventy—eighty miles, then to the headwaters of the 60-Mile River. I traveled alone with a sleigh, necking it. I didn’t even have a little dog.”<sup>31</sup> Dragging a sled full of goods over rough territory with no roads required strength, stamina and specialized knowledge. Keeping the load balanced so that the sled didn’t nose into the snow or become uncontrollable on the downhill slopes was a concern that had to be addressed while fighting the cold, working with as little as four hours of sunlight, and finding the way without the help of modern equipment. Joe’s exceptional ability to walk quickly and tirelessly for long distances was remarked upon by many throughout his life. Covering long distances on foot became essential for the life he had chosen and his hiking skills would serve him well in the future. He was not a complainer and had a tendency to understate things, but Joe must have been wishing for a dog team to help with the work of pulling the heavy sleigh during the long trek. Everything Joe had accomplished and endured up until this point had prepared him for the life of extremes he had taken on, and by the end of his first year in the Far North, he realized that he had what it took to continue on his chosen path. He had already, at age 22, achieved things that very few could, and Joe Quigley was in it for the long haul.