

"If you turn us loose now it's a hundred-to-one shot we'll never get to the Canadian line. Give us a chance; won't you?"

"What do you say, Wah-na-gi?" said Hal, calling to the girl.

She came down to the table.

"I think perhaps John McCloud would give them another chance."

"All right, you get it," said Hal. "On your way. You can take it as a Christmas present from John McCloud."

"I hope you won't regret it," said Ladd. "And here's a telegram I got for you at Fort Serene. That'll help some," and he handed Hal a telegram which had been opened. Hal took it and put it in his pocket.

The two prisoners had their own provisions! They were given their mule and told to "beat it." They were never seen again or heard of. Perhaps they reached the Canadian line and disappeared in the northern wilds; perhaps they were the men whose bones were found the following spring at the foot of one of the ravines of Dead Man's Canyon.

When they were gone, Hal turned to the others and said: "Boys, you take your Christmas dinner here with us to-morrow." He looked at his watch. "Gee, it's *to-day*! It's midnight! Merry Christmas, Wah-na-gi! Merry Christmas, boys! Merry Christmas to all at Red Butte Ranch," and all gathered round and shook him and each other by the hand, and if the angels didn't sing on high they did in the glad hearts of these homely folk.