



JULIA - WADES - IN - THE - WATER — BLACKFEET INDIAN — GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MONTANA

# ROUTE OF THE **EMPIRE BUILDER**

BETWEEN CHICAGO AND THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST VIA GLACIER NATIONAL PARK



## DECEMBER 1945

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THE GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY EXTENDS CORDIAL  
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### JANUARY 1946

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# Julia Wades-in-the-Water

## (STA-TI-PI-TA-KI)

### Blackfeet Indian

Great Northern Railway presented in its 1945 Indian calendar the portrait of Wades-in-the-Water, one of the few remaining full-blood chieftains of the Blackfeet Indian nation in northwestern Montana.

Winold Reiss, the distinguished specialist in Indian portraiture, painted the patriarchal old chief in the summer of 1943. The final portrait of some 75 that year was Julia, wife of Wades.

The amazingly life-like pastel of Julia Wades-in-the-Water is presented by Great Northern as its 1946 Indian calendar, a continuation of a now-famous series of Blackfeet portraits by Mr. Reiss.

Ten times a great grandmother, Julia is an intensely interesting Indian woman. Of exceeding intellect, she possesses all—and more—of the personality so evident in the artist's conception of her.

Julia is Blackfeet aristocracy. Her father was Big Crow, ruling chief of the Fat Roasters band of the Piegan branch of the Blackfeet. Her mother was Horse Catch Woman of the same band.

The lodges of the Fat Roasters were clustered on the grassy banks of the tumbling Marias River in the Spring of 1872, when Julia was born in the buffalo skin tepee of Big Crow. She was named Sta-ti-pi-ta-ki, or Under Owl Woman.

Big Crow's daughter was four years old when General George A. Custer and 276 soldiers of the Seventh Cavalry

were massacred by Sitting Bull's war-painted Sioux at Little Big Horn. Julia has a very vivid memory of that year, for in 1876 she saw buffalo for the first time. A great herd of bison—staple of the Blackfeet diet—was discovered grazing the rolling hills near the Fat Roasters' camp. The whole band went to the slaughter.

"There seemed to be thousands of buffalo," she recalled, "and many, many were killed. There was a great feast that night. I was raised on buffalo meat. We could eat all we wanted without tearing off ration points."

Big Crow died when his daughter was seven, and an aunt, who had married a white trader, took the young Blackfeet girl into her home. Under Owl Woman became Julia, and she was taught the white man's way of living and his language. At 16, Julia married Charles Thomas, a white clerk at the Indian agency, and they lived on a large ranch near Browning, Montana, where two children were born.

After Thomas died Julia returned to the Indian way of life. She became expert in Blackfeet artcraft—the making of tepees, parfleche bags (for food storage), ceremonial robes of deerskin, and decoration with beads, porcupine quills and paints of berry juices and colored earth. She was active, too, in the affairs of the Blackfeet, particularly in the political life of the tribe—an interest she still maintains. Too, she is education-minded, and can boast today that two children, ten grandchildren and ten great grandchildren all attended, or are students in various government Indian schools.

Thirty years ago Julia married Wades-in-the-Water, then an Indian police officer. When he became chief of the Blackfeet police, Julia became a policewoman—the first in Montana.

After retirement on pension several years ago, Wades and Julia joined the small, representative colony of Blackfeet who live during the summer vacation season in Glacier National Park, which adjoins the Indian reservation. Hundreds of peacetime vacationers in Glacier's magnificent mountain wonderland remember Julia Wades-in-the-Water. She posed with them in pictures; she danced with them in ceremonials; she invited visitors to her spic-and-span tepee, and told them memorable stories of Blackfeet customs and tribal legends. With still-expert fingers she fashioned miniature moccasins of skin and beads and gave them to visitors as souvenirs of a memorable adventure in Glacier National Park.

Whether the big, modern hotels and rustic, restful chalets in Glacier National Park will be open to guests in 1946 is dependent on many factors, principally developments of the war. But, you can plan now for your post-war vacation in the park, which is on the main line of the Great Northern Railway.

Your inquiry about vacation adventure in Glacier National Park in Montana should be addressed to A. J. Dickinson, Passenger Traffic Manager, Great Northern Railway, St. Paul 1, Minn.