

STORY OF PRINCESS REDFEATHER

(Tsianina (Cha-nee-nah) Redfeather Blackstone)

**This is the story of the Indian princess for whom
Red Feather Lakes is named.**



Cadman and Tsianina on the concert stage

Tsianina Redfeather was born December 13, 1882, in the Indian reservation territory of Oklahoma. Her Creek and Cherokee ancestors were uprooted from their southeastern United States homeland, then forced to march to the Oklahoma Territory between 1820 and 1842. So many died along the way that it was called the "Trail of Tears."

All her seven sisters and two brothers had musical talent, but Tsianina's was outstanding. She won scholarships to study music in Denver and New York. In Denver she met composer and pianist Charles

Wakefield Cadman. After that, she toured the world as a mezzo-soprano, often with Cadman. The opera "Shanewis" written by Cadman, was based on Tsianina's life story which she performed at the New York Metropolitan Opera in 1918.

Her theme song was Cadman's "Land of Sky Blue Water," but "Indian Love Call" was another of her famous songs. She also sang tribal songs in 7 or 8 different tribal tongues. She toured all over the world, even in Europe during World War I. While touring, she wore traditional clothing of soft leather; she braided her hair and wore headbands she beaded herself.

In 1922 she was touring the country when Dr. D.O. Norton heard her sing. He and several men who had invested in resort property northwest of Fort Collins decided to name the small mountain village in her honor, so they called it Red Feather Lakes. They also gave Indian names too many of the area's lakes: Hiawatha, Ramona, Apache and Shagwa.

She worked with various organizations to help her people. One group helped to get American Indians their US citizenship. She also founded the American Foundation for the Education of the American Indians and the First Daughters of America. She wrote a book titled "Where Trails Have Led Me."

Princess Tsianina is remembered as someone who charmed the world as a mezzo-soprano, pianist, writer, composer and a politician who did much for her people.

This remarkable woman truly deserved having the beautiful mountains of Red Feather Lakes, Colorado, named for her.

