

# The Ballad of Ira Hayes

## Johnny Cash

Ira Hayes,  
Ira Hayes  
CHORUS:  
Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war  
Gather round me people there's a story I would tell  
About a brave young Indian you should remember well  
From the land of the Pima Indian, a proud and noble band  
Who farmed the Phoenix valley in Arizona land  
Down the ditches for a thousand years  
The water grew Ira's peoples' crops  
'Till the white man stole the water rights  
And the sparklin' water stopped  
Now Ira's folks were hungry  
And their land grew crops of weeds  
When war came, Ira volunteered  
And forgot the white man's greed  
CHORUS:  
Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war  
There they battled up Iwo Jima's hill,  
Two hundred and fifty men  
But only twenty-seven lived  
to walk back down again  
And when the fight was over  
And when Old Glory raised  
Among the men who held it high  
Was the Indian, Ira Hayes  
CHORUS:  
Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war  
Ira returned a hero  
Celebrated through the land  
He was wined and speeched and honored  
Everybody shook his hand  
But he was just a Pima Indian  
No water, no crops, no chance  
At home nobody cared what Ira'd done  
And when did the Indians dance  
CHORUS:  
Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war  
Then Ira started drinkin' hard  
Jail was often his home

They'd let him raise the flag and lower it  
like you'd throw a dog a bone  
He died drunk one mornin'  
Alone in the land he fought to save  
Two inches of water in a lonely ditch  
Was a grave for Ira Hayes  
CHORUS:  
Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war  
Yeah, call him drunken Ira Hayes  
But his land is just as dry  
And his ghost is lyin' thirsty  
In the ditch where Ira died

Lyrics provided by <https://www.omusic.in/>