

# The Ballad Of Ira Hayes

Johnny Cash

Ira Hayes, Ira Hayes

R: Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
he won't answer anymore  
not the whiskey drinkin` Indian  
nor the Marine that went to war

1. 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

2. 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

R: Call him drunken Ira Hayes...

3. 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

R: Call him drunken Ira Hayes...

4. 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

R: Call him drunken Ira Hayes...

5. 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

R: Call him drunken Ira Hayes...

6. 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