

# The Ballad of Ira Hayes

Pete Seeger

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]  
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]  
Ira returned a hero  
Celebrated through the land  
He was winned 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]  
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]

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