AWESOME stories

0. PHILIP JOHNSTON and the CODE TALKERS - Story Preface

- 1. NAVAJOS and THE LONG WALK
- 2. NAVAJO and the ANCESTRAL LANDS
- 3. NAVAJO FAMILY LIFE
- 4. LIFE on the NAVAJO RESERVATION
- 5. THE NAVAJO NATION
- 6. PHILIP JOHNSTON and the CODE TALKERS
- 7. MEET the NAVAJO CODE TALKERS
- 8. WEST LOCH DISASTER
- 9. AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT on SAIPAN
- 10. CODE TALKERS and the BATTLE of SAIPAN
- 11. BANZAI CHARGE at SAIPAN
- 12. HARI-KARI on SAIPAN
- 13. CASUALTIES AT SAIPAN
- 14. BATTLE of PELELIU LANDINGS
- 15. CASUALTIES at PELELIU
- 16. SECRETS of the CODE TALKERS
- 17. BELATED HONORS

This image, from a slide-share power point about the Navajo Code Talkers by Alissa Hartenbaum, depicts Philip Johnston who conceived the idea of a Navajo-language code system to be developed and used during WWII.

Using Native Americans to transmit military messages to each other had been successfully tried near the end of World War I when 19 <u>Chocktaws</u> helped the U.S. win the Great War. The concept was also used in World War II, most notably for the D-Day invasion on the beaches of Normandy.

Philip Johnston, however, <u>proposed</u> a *different* idea. He <u>believed</u> Navajo speakers could develop <u>a code</u> they could teach to other "Code Talkers" who would then be sent wherever they were needed. If Philip Johnston's idea could be implemented quickly, a code could be in place before the end of 1942.

Because Navajo is an unwritten <u>language</u> (follow the link to hear it spoken), sending messages would be simple once everything was in place. <u>Code Talkers</u> would have to memorize the code and use IT when communicating with each other.

They would have neither cumbersome encryption machines nor logs which could be stolen by the enemy. They would only have <u>themselves</u>, as a "walking code," and their radio or telephone equipment.

The concept was ingenious but difficult to initially implement. Each code talker would have to commit the entire code to memory (once it was created) and would have to know it as well as he knew his own name. Only such a thorough understanding of the code would allow a Navajo to instantly translate military communications in difficult combat conditions.

Living in San Diego at the time, Johnston proposed his idea to Lt. Colonel James E. Jones who was stationed seven miles north at Camp Elliott. Their conversation is recorded in *The Navajo Code Talkers*, originally published in 1973 by Doris A. Paul.

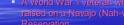
Colonel, what would you think of a device that would assure you of complete secrecy when you send or receive messages on the battlefied?

Incredulous, Jones responded:

In all the history of warfare, that has never been done. No code, no cipher is completely secure from enemy interception. We change our codes frequently for this reason. (Code Talkers, page 8.)

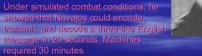


PHILIP JOHNSTON and the CODE TALKERS



 He knew that Choctaw (another Native American language) had been used in

l



Persuaded to at least consider a demonstration, Jones and other officers were amazed two weeks later when

Navajo civilians instantly translated six commonly used military messages.

By April of 1942, at the time 600 Americans and thousands of Filipinos died during the infamous <u>Batan Death</u> <u>March</u>, Marine recruiters were <u>authorized</u> to <u>visit</u> the Navajo reservation. Instead of the 200 men that had been proposed, however, the commanders in Washington authorized 30. One of the recruits dropped out.

The remaining twenty-nine Navajo recruits (including <u>Carl Gorman</u> who later became a famous artist) developed <u>the code</u> which helped America win the war in the Pacific. They were <u>sworn in</u> at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, near the stunning <u>scenery</u> of Navajo Church.

Later recruits also learned the code, and what it meant to be a Marine, first at <u>Camp Elliot</u> and then at Camp Pendleton.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PHILIP-JOHNSTON-and-the-CODE-TALKERS-Wind-Talke rs-Navajo-Code-Talkers-in-WWII

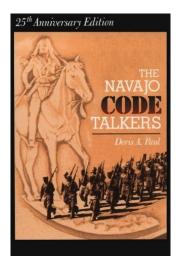
See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/PHILIP-JOHNSTON-and-the-CODE-TALKERS-Wind-Talker s-Navajo-Code-Talkers-in-WWII

Media Stream



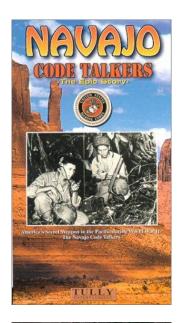




Philip Johnston and His Ideas about a Navajo-Language Code Alissa Hartenbaum via Slide-Share Net. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Philip-Johnston-and-His-Ideas-about-a-Navajo-Language-Code

<u>Chocktaws - Soldiers of WW-I</u> Image online, courtesy Choctaw Code Talkers Association. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Chocktaws-Soldiers-of-WW-I</u>

<u>Navajo Code Talkers - by Doris A. Paul</u> Book-cover image online, courtesy Dorrance Publishing and Google Books. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Navajo-Code-Talkers-by-Doris-A.-Paul</u>



Navajo Code Talkers: The Epic Story - Video Cover Video-cover image online, courtesy Amazon. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Navajo-Code-Talkers-The-Epic-Story-Video-Cover



<u>Carl Gorman - Navajo Code Talker</u> Image of Carl Gorman online, courtesy Arizona State University. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Carl-Gorman-Navajo-Code-Talker</u>



Camp Elliot - Code Talkers

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Camp-Elliot-Code-Talkers</u>