

# Clay Francisco

## 1985-1993

**Q: Alright, will you please state and spell your full name?**

A: My full name is Clay C-L-A-Y Francisco F-R-A-N-C-I-S-C-O

**Q: And you...where do you currently live?**

A: I live in Enoch, Utah which is a subset area of Cedar City. And I've been here for thirty-seven years.

**Q: So the same place where you were enlisted?**

A: Yes.

**Q: You didn't get drafted you were enlisted.**

A: That's right.

**Q: Which branch did you serve in?**

A: The Utah Army National Guard

**Q: Were you full time or...?**

A: No...no...not full time.

**Q: Where were you stationed?**

A: Me initial training was in Fort Jackson, South Carolina where I went to... where I went and did basic training there. And then I went I did, completed my, it's called AIT or MOS certification on the same base and then after my training was complete there, I went to I came back to Cedar City where I spent the duration of my career in the Military.

**Q: So your job was to...**

A: My job was not a high technical job. I enlisted and trained as a light wheel vehicle mechanic. One thing that anyone needs to know and understand about the Military is your first and foremost training is infantry training and those are your skills that you learn in basic training. Not only just how to react to a combat situation but how to defend yourself and the others in your platoon or squad or company or whatever the case may be, whatever you are assigned to. And so your first and foremost training is in infantry and everything else comes behind it. The job code for my job was called 63 Bravo 10 and that was the school I went to. There were others schools that I had interest in but at the time that I entered training were not available until a later date and I elected not to do what's called split training. I wanted to complete training all in one block. So that is the way I did it.

**Q: So what years did you serve?**

A: Let's see, I enlisted in November of 1985 and I got out in November of 1993. So I was in for eight years total.

**Q: What was your highest rank?**

A: Sergeant E5.

**Q: So you were decorated for your service?**

A: Yeah...the best decoration that any soldier will ever get, it doesn't matter what branch he serves in rather it is Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy, Coast Guard, the best decoration you will ever receive is an honorable discharge. What that means is that the United States government recognizes your service to the country and because of your dedicated service; you are honorably discharged at the time of your enlistment period. To me that is the

biggest honor that you will ever get of being a soldier in the Military is being honorably discharged by your country.

**Q: Did you ever serve in any combat situations?**

A: No, I served in the Military while the United States was engaged in the Persian Gulf War with Iraq in 1991. Our unit was not activated or shipped to the combat zone, but was put on standby on high alert. And so we were starting to muster all of our equipment and we were getting ready to be deployed to that region of the world. And all we needed was the correct orders to come from above us which would have activated our unit and sent us.

**Q: When you reflect on your Military service, what is the memory that comes to your mind?**

A: Teamwork, learning to do things as a team, dedication is another thing that comes to my mind. Responsibility, honor in doing your job, making sure that when you receive an order, we called them orders but when you were requested to do a job that you did it to the best of your ability and the best you could. And those were probably the highlights.

**Q: Did you have any spiritual experiences on your...during your service?**

A: Yeah I did. Not so much after I got back home from my initial training. I had some really good spiritual experiences with other men who were in training with me that were not members of my religious affiliation. And so we had some discussions. There was questions about my religious affiliation being a member of the Latter Day Saints Church. And we talked about some major gospel principles and how they affect your life and how they affect the soldier in the combat field. So I had some good, I had some good experiences there. I ran into a missionary that was in my mission with me and he lived in Columbia, South Carolina. And when I used to attend church services I used to go off base to go attend LDS services and here sitting in front of me was another missionary that served in the same mission as me. He didn't recognize me until I tapped him on the soldier and turned him around and asked him what he was doing in the same building as me. I did have some good spiritual experiences there.

**Q: What was family life like while you were serving?**

A: While I was away it was ok. I wasn't married at the time. My parents were used to having me gone so to speak. I had just recently returned from a full time mission in August of 1985 and within ninety days I had gone through the process of being inducted in the Military. I knew when my training dates started. So, family life or my family while I was gone was pretty much normal. I'd been gone for a year and a half previous and it wasn't that hard on my parents to have me away again in a different place. But after I returned, it was still, you know, I had to get used to being home again. And I started dating a few girls and I ended up you know, dating my current wife and we got married. But while I was in the Military being married it was pretty normal because I was pretty much home all of the time.

**Q: Did you have any like great experiences of joy while in your service that you would like to share?**

A: Yeah there is several great experiences that I had while I was in there. Like I said earlier, some of the greater things you learn is doing things as a team. And one of the training exercises that we went through well it happened more than once; it was twice. I had trained with some other soldiers from a different type of unit that specialize in what's called special forces and these soldiers are trained to live off the land in any given

situation. And these guys what they do is they are flown on an airplane and then they parachute into an area and then they pretty much live off the resources that are available. And while I was teamed up with these guys I learned quite a few tricks about survival, about surviving in the elements. It was cold, it was almost wintertime. We had to pretty much live off the land so to speak. So we had to go hunt cotton tail rabbits. We ate those. They taught us how to survive off reptiles and insects, how to make field expedient shelters, how to start a fire with almost nothing. And so there were some really neat experiences that I had that I trained with other soldiers in the Military that I likewise probably wouldn't have had the opportunity to learn from.

**Q: How did you feel that you think the support from home was like your country supporting you?**

A: It was great. Being that the United States had not been in a major conflict when I mean major you know declaration of war. The United States had been involved in several other small instances. One of them for example was when I was in basic training it was when the United States took a bombing strike on Libia and while we were there the training instructor said you know see we told you we are getting ready, getting you guys ready to go somewhere. And it was kind of frightening to a degree but when I was in the Military I felt like my country, my state, my family, and my friends were all in support of what I was doing. I felt no lack of support from anyone that I was associated with to any degree.

**Q: Do you have any regrets about your service?**

A: No, I don't because there were a lot of bible lessons that were learned from it. I know there are other veterans who may have some regrets about their service and it depends on the situation that the man was in. But in my situation in the time that I served in the Military I have no regrets whatsoever. It was worthwhile. I enlisted for a reason is because I believed in this country and I believed in the constitution and it was one way that I could give my country back something that it had given me. And I recommend any young man who turns eighteen nineteen years old, the Military is an experience that every young man in this country should serve. They should have that backing behind them because there are valuable lessons taught that you can't gain anywhere else.

**Q: So along those lines...how has your service colored your current political, social, or religious views?**

A: I don't know that my Military service really colored my views. I had these views even before I served and I come from a family history of Military service from the time you know my grandfathers, my uncles, my own father, you know we all pretty much served in the Military in one branch or another at sometime from World War I to the present. My father was a veteran of the Korean War. I had several uncles who were veterans of World War II and my great-grandfather was a veteran of World War I. So I come from a history of Military service and my service in the Military didn't change the way I felt about this country. It didn't change my political stature or my political affiliation and it hasn't changed how I feel about service in the Military. My United States needs to defend the cause of freedom. I support it whole heartedly.

**Q: So if you could give advice to the men and women of the service today, what would it be?**

A: Give everything you can. Be the best you can be because what you are doing is... fulfilling and uplifting to the people of this country.

**Q: How do you feel about the current conflict in Iraq?**

A: It's unfortunate, its not an easy thing for anyone to serve in a combat situation. Sometimes it is psychologically detrimental to them. Sometimes its emotionally detrimental physically the soldiers are physically fit and trained to serve in that type of situation, but more mentally and psychologically it's tougher on them than anything there is. And I believe that the United States is engaged in this activity for a just reason and a just cause. My...the way I feel about this country is anybody that threatens this country needs to be dealt with on a one-on-one basis. And it is better to deal with them off American soil. It is better to deal with someone on their own land than it is on ours. And as unfortunate as the attack was on the World Trade Center, it should be an eye opener to every American in this country irregardless of their political affiliation that this problem needs to be dealt with. And the American Military needs to be allowed to do their job and let them do it and let them finish it.

**Q: Is there anything else you would like to say before we close?**

A: No just glad to say that I was able to serve in the Military. My current employment I've been at for the last twenty years kind of prevented me with my continuation of the Military and if I had not have been working shift work I would have stayed active with my unit. I eventually would have been deployed to Iraq. And I enjoyed my service well enough in this National Guard unit in Cedar City enough that if my work employment schedule had not have had a conflict with my training then I would have stayed with it and I would have had better than twenty years in right now.

**Q: Wow, well I am glad to hear that and I would like to thank you for your time.**

**DISK STOPPED**

**RESTARTED SHOWING HIS UNIFORM AND TALKING ABOUT IT**

A: This is the common dress uniform that an American Soldier wears in the United States Army. And it's kind of like a...it's a suit jacket but what it depicts is, it depicts the training that the soldiers had, it depicts the branch of the Military that he's in. And I'll start with the right sleeve showing the rank of the soldier. This is a typical of what is called a noncommissioned officer's uniform. If you look at an officer's uniform it will have a black stripe across the...the lower part of the arm on both sleeves of the jacket. And the officer's rank will be displayed on the top epaulets up here so that will either be a lieutenant, a captain, a major, a lieutenant colonel, a colonel, general. Ok an officer's rank is all displayed up here instead of out here on the sleeves. But this is the rank of what they call an E5, a three stripe sergeant and there are other noncommissioned officer ranks that go up above that and you'll see one rent rocker here, you'll see double rockers or you'll see three or you'll see an eagle in here, you'll see stars in here and it's all depiction of rank in the non commissioned officer's category. Name tag obviously is here. Now this blue bar right here [above name tag] is a citation that is awarded by typically the President of the United States and that is awarded to a unit for service of valor. This one was awarded to my unit for their service in the Korean War. They endured many, many days I can't remember how many days it was on record. It seems like it's like twenty some-odd days without support and they defended themselves against the Koreans by utilizing everything that they had in their area like glass bottles, knives and forks, spoons, rocks and they loaded glass and utensils in the gun barrels of howitzers

and that's how they defended themselves against the North Koreans. So this went on for quite sometime but this is a citation given by the President of the United States to the unit. This small medallion right here [pin above blue bar] is a depiction of the... it's like a branch of the Military, it's called the ordinance core. If you look at this close, what you will see is two cross canyons, a canyon ball, and a flaming pot at the top and it says ordinance core, United States Army. And there are a lot of units that are assigned to the Ordinance Corp and again you will also see the Ordinance Corp emblem right here in this gold or brass medallion on the collar. This one [on other side of collar] shows United States of course. These on the shoulders right here are a designation that you belong to a National Guard unit in the state of Utah. This is called the minuteman emblem and the man in the middle of the emblem which is in front of a bee hive shows the early Mormon settlers of Utah and the Mormon Battalion was activated by the United States government and sent to fight in the Spanish War. And this unit that I belong to here in Utah the Second Battalion 222<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery is one of the last remaining units who still have ties to the original Mormon battalion. Ok? This, what looks like a medal here [on left pocket] is a certification for weapons training. And this is a depiction of the training or the level of my abilities to perform with a specified weapon. This is what's called the expert medal. You can't get any higher than this on a rifle. This is as high as you can go in the Military for your qualification with a weapon. This one is a qualification medal [on left pocket next to previous pin] for the deployment of hand grenades. You have to be able to demonstrate that you can deploy a hand grenade over specified ranges when you throw it. Ok well you know when you look at the Military uniforms there's always different color ribbons on here. Ok and what these are is this tells a little story about the soldier and what he has gone through in his career. Some uniforms you look at, these ribbon stacks can be this high. There can be another great big badge up on top of them. They can have what looks like a helicopter with wings or you'll see what's called the jump wings or I mean there's a lot of different things that go on a uniform right here, but this isn't a very big pile of ribbons. This is pretty typical of a guy that has been in six to eight years. The... this green and yellow ribbon right here... and the way you stack these on here is the school or the award you are given of least importance goes on the bottom right. Ok, so this one is on the bottom right, this is an award given by the state of Utah to me for successfully completing basic training. This next one is a ribbon awarded to me for successfully completing my AIT or MOS training. This ribbon right here is another state ribbon it's state Utah National Guard achievement ribbon. This is a federal ribbon, ok, the Federal government awarded me with this one for successful completion of basic training. This next one which is green and yellow and blue barred in the middle is a federal ribbon which is, was awarded to me for successful completion of Noncommissioned Officers Academy otherwise I could not have obtained a noncommissioned officer's rank. I have to successfully pass this school right here which is a two week school before I can be given E5 stripes. And this is a federal ribbon which what awarded to me for achievement above and beyond the call of duty. It's called the Army Achievement Medal. And that's what those are. So if you see what's called a Class A uniform like this and you see these colored ribbons on here, that's all they are is a depiction of awards that are given to a soldier.

**Q: What does the circle mean?**

A: This is the unit designation patch. This tells what type of unit a soldier is assigned to. This particular patch right here is called a I Corp. I Corp is the department of the Military or the Army who basically has control of all the field artillery deployment in the world. When field artillery units are activated and sent to a combat zone, I Corp typically controls the movement of the unit and so there are other unit patches. For example, if you were assigned to an infantry unit, you would have an infantry patch and you would also have, also have a blue disk underneath these two on the lapels which are designations of infantry. Sometimes you'll see soldiers that'll have a rope that comes up here, a braided rope that goes underneath the arm and comes underneath here and back down. They'll be different colors, but the most common is blue braided rope which is a designation of an infantry combat man. But that's what that is. There's a... those are all division patches. Infantry, artillery, communications, there's a lot of different types of divisions within the Military and so whatever the division is a soldier belongs to is he is what this designation right here is. This slash right here is an indication of years of service. My unit is not or this uniform is not current or up to date of my service in the Military. There should be one more here which these bars are representative of each three years. So sometimes you'll see these old, noncommissioned officers in the Military and they'll have a whole stack of these coming up their arm right here. Each one of those is three years in the Military. Then, over here, because I never saw over seas duty or service across you know United States borders there are small vertical bars that come up this one and these are six month bars that come up the right sleeve. But since I never served you know anytime off the American soil you know I wouldn't be awarded that so.

**Q: That's very interesting.**

A: That's what the uniform's all about.