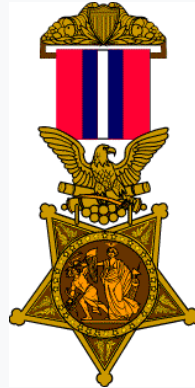


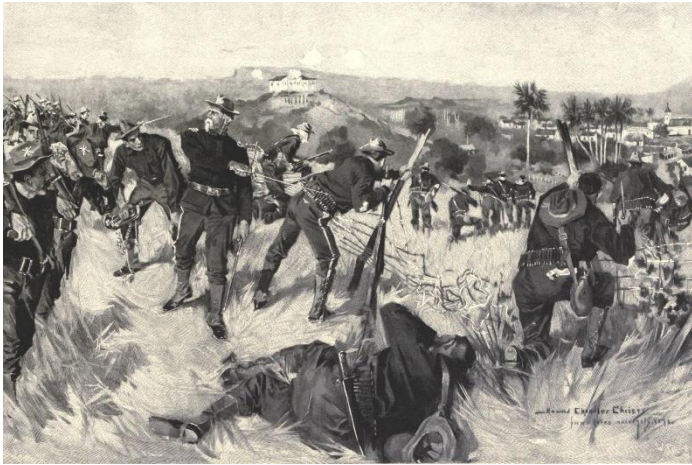
Oscar Brookins



Born	July 19, 1869 Byron, Wisconsin
Died	August 18, 1938 (aged 69) Ohio
Allegiance	United States of America
Service/branch	United States Army
Rank	Private
Unit	17th Infantry Regiment
Battles/wars	Spanish–American War *Battle of El Caney
Awards	Medal of Honor

Oscar Brookins was born on 19 July 1869 in Byron, Wisconsin. He served in the United States Army during the Spanish–American War. He received the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Battle of El Caney as a Private with Company C, 17th United States Infantry.

The Battle of El Caney was fought on 1 July 1898, during the Spanish–American War in southeastern Cuba. The resulting attack succeeded in capturing the town, fort and blockhouses and protected the right flank of the main American attack on the Heights of San Juan to the south.



"The Capture of El Caney" by Howard Chandler Christy

At El Caney, Cuba, 514 Spanish regular soldiers, together with approximately 100 armed Spanish and Cubans loyal to Spain under the command of General Joaquín Vara del Rey y Rubio were instructed to hold the northwest flank of Santiago against the American 2nd Division, Fifth Army Corps commanded by Brigadier General Henry Ware Lawton.

Denied promised reinforcements from Santiago, Vara de Rey and his forces held over 6,000 Americans from their position for nearly twelve hours before retreating, preventing General Lawton's men from reinforcing the U.S. assault on San Juan Hill.

The American forces also lacked effective support fire, as the single Gatling Gun Detachment had been sent to support the troops assaulting San Juan heights. The relatively short range of the American gun battery— together with the signature cloud of black smoke generated with each volley—forced gun crews to endure a fusillade of Mauser rifle fire from the Spanish defenders. During the fighting, General Vara del Rey was wounded in both legs and was captured by American troops. While being evacuated on a stretcher, Vara del Rey and his American escorts came under intense Spanish fire, killing the stretcher bearers and several American officers accompanying the group. The fighting ended about 5:00pm with the withdrawal of the Spanish troops.

Oscar Brookings Medal of Honor was presented on 22 June, 1899.

Oscar Brookings died on 18 August, 1938 and is buried in Sunset Cemetery in Galloway, Ohio.



Citation

For The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private Oscar Brookins, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 1 July 1898, while serving with Company C, 17th U.S. Infantry, in action at El Caney, Cuba. Private Brookins gallantly assisted in the rescue of the wounded from in front of the lines and under heavy fire from the enemy.