

**Rifleman Charles Oliver Bates, 1894 -25<sup>th</sup> April 1917 (Aged 23)**

**Early life**

Charles Oliver Bates was born in Bromley, in the Poplar Borough of London, to Charles and Mary Bates. His father worked as a General Labourer at a gas works. He was the youngest of four children, and his elder siblings were Henry, Amy and Tom. In 1911, aged 17, Bates was working as a Clerk at a local coal office.



Photograph of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, London Irish Rifles during the First World War. Found at LondonIrishRifles.com

**University of London**

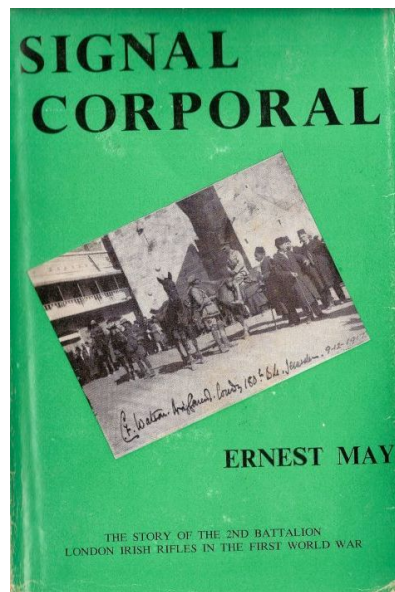
Bates worked as an Attendant at the University. He was able to take up his work for a short time before enlisting. He left his duties at the University, joining the 2/18<sup>th</sup> Battalion, London Regiment (London Irish Rifles) in October 1914, enlisting in Chelsea. His name is mentioned in the University's *Pro Patria* list, documenting his regimental details as of February 1915.

Record No.	Registry No.	Soldier's Name	Regiment, Rank, No.	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS			CHARGES			Date of Authority	To whom Authorised	Amount Authorised	No. of List in which advertised	
					Account and Date	£	s.	d.	£	s.					d.
481536	340377	Bates Charles Oliver	2/18 <sup>th</sup> Bn Ldn Reg 96	25.4.17 London	6.6.31	7	8	4	190	9/17	21.9.17	Sim note sent	7	8	4
			59128	Lead of wounds	6/17	1	2	11				9/17	9	10	-
			3069												

Bates' Register of Effects, found in Ancestry.co.uk Military Records

**The Great War**

The London Irish Rifles were given orders to be raised in London on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1914. Whilst still located in England, the battalion were stationed around London, moving to St. Albans in March 1915, to Bishop's Stortford in May, and on to Sutton Veny in January 1916. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1916, the London Irish landed at Le Havre, France. The unit was taken to the front almost immediately, and saw their first front line action near Vimy Ridge at the beginning of July. The London Irish remained in France until November. Travelling aboard the s.s. Caledonia and landing at Salonika in Greek Macedonia, the battalion spent six difficult months there until June 1917. Although Turkish forces were entrenched far enough away to create a 'no-man's-land' in-between, the battalion had to endure a very severe winter, and the cold and strong winds could cause a chill, particularly when men were exposed to the open. Spending cold nights in tents, several men were lost through exposure and exhaustion. Bates died of wounds in Salonika, on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1917. He was buried at the Karasouli Military Cemetery in Greece, and is commemorated at Senate House. In August 1920, Bates was among the names of the 18<sup>th</sup> London Regiment that were posthumously awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.



Signal Corporal by Ernest May tells the story of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, London Irish Rifles in the First World War.

18th LONDON		REGIMENT OR CORPS		of 19 20	
ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and/or British War Medal granted under Army Orders 107 & 102.					
SERIAL	NAME	Division of unit in which served	Change awarded (to be left blank)	Reason of denial of Medal	REMARKS
001180	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001181	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001182	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001183	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001184	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001185	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001186	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001187	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001188	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001189	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001190	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001191	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001192	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001193	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001194	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001195	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001196	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001197	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001198	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001199	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			
001200	BRUCE, William George	2/18th Bn Ldn Reg			

Service Medal and Award Roll, 1920. Found in Ancestry.co.uk Military Records

# Lance-Corporal Alfred Holdsworth Brown, 1884-1<sup>st</sup> November 1914 (aged 30)

## Early life

Alfred Holdsworth Brown was born in Fulham, London to Alfred Brown, a Commercial Clerk, and Martha Brown. He had two younger brothers, Richard and Charles, and a younger sister named Mary. The family lived in Hammersmith. In 1901, Brown was working as a Banker's Clerk.

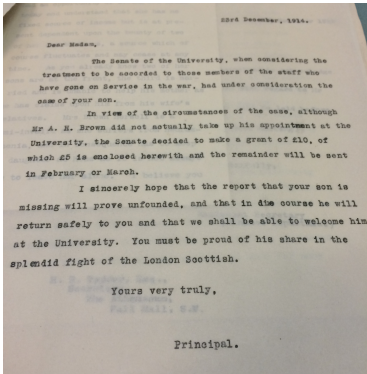


The London Scottish arriving in France, September 1914. Found at WWIPhotos.com, Photographs of the 14<sup>th</sup> London Regiment (London Scottish)

## University of London

Brown continued his career by working at the Athenaeum in Pall Mall as a Junior Clerk for a time, and was subsequently taken on as a Clerk Elect in the University of London's Extension Department. At that time, he enlisted in Kew and joined the 1/14<sup>th</sup> Battalion, London Regiment (London Scottish) 1<sup>st</sup> Division. The University's Chancellor, Sir Henry Miers, agreed that Brown's service in the regiment should not interfere with his new career.

His appointment to the University coincided with Britain's declaration of war on Germany early in August 1914, and along with the rest of his regiment he volunteered for active service. Brown never had the chance to take up his actual duties at the University, leaving on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1914 with just a month's pay, which he handed to his widowed mother. Along with his division, he moved on to mobilisation training at Abbots Langley.



A letter to Mrs. Brown from the Principal, documenting the grant she would receive due to her son's service amid reports that he was missing. Found in Senate House Library Archives, Central File series, 1914-15 Staff Records (ref. UoL/CF/1/15/636)

## The Great War

The decision was made that the London Scottish were to be sent to reinforce the Expeditionary Force in France, and on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1914, Brown and his battalion sailed for Le Havre. At such an early stage in the outbreak of war, doubts were expressed about the battalion's readiness for combat. For their first six weeks in France, Brown and his unit carried out duties away from the front line, such as construction and prisoner transportation. Following this, preparations were made for participation in the Battle of Messines in late October.

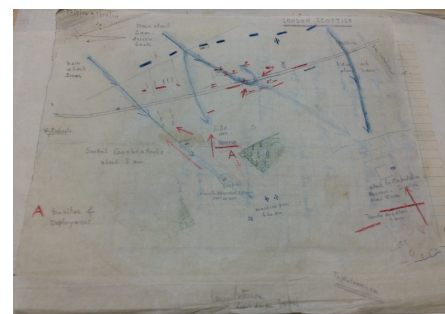
The London Scottish was given an opportunity to fight, and was tasked with recapturing the ridge between Messines and the town of Wytschaete. Against heavy odds and surrounded by German artillery fire, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division lost almost half of their 750 man battalion on the night of 31<sup>st</sup> October, 1914.

In a casualty list included in the unit's war diary of 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 321 men were listed as killed, wounded or missing. Brown was thought to have been among those killed during the early hours of November 1914. In correspondence between his mother and the University of London after the event, it was decided that the Senate would provide Mrs. Brown with a grant of £10, as Brown was unable to send any of his own pay to support his mother as he ordinarily had done. Although his mother and the University had hoped to receive positive updates of his condition, good news was not forthcoming and Brown was officially declared as wounded and missing.

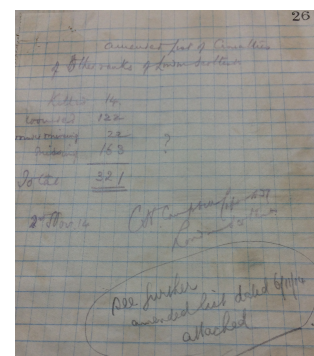
He was commemorated at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Ypres. His name also appears at Senate House, and on the War Memorial in his home town of Richmond. In May 1920, the British Army ordered that Brown and other fallen members of the London Scottish were to be given posthumous entitlement to the Victory Medal and the British War Medal.



A postcard from France concerning Brown's payment from the University, found in Senate House Library Archives, Central File series, 1914-15 Staff Records (ref. UoL/CF/1/15/636)



Hand drawn map of operations of the London Scottish, during the end of October 1914. Found in The National Archives War Diaries series (ref. WO 95/1266/2)



A regimental record following the Battle of Messines, listing the number of killed, wounded and missing members of Brown's regiment. Found in The National Archives War Diaries series (ref. WO 95/1266/2)

## Early life

John Lilburne Davison was born in Portobello, Midlothian, Scotland, to Jessie Weir Davison and Reverend William Hope Davison, a congregational minister from Bolton, Lancashire. He was the second youngest of six children. His older siblings were William, who also gave his life during the Great War, Emilin, Marjorie and James, and his younger brother was named Andrew. From 1899-1901, he attended George Watson's College, a school in Edinburgh. The family subsequently moved to Bolton, and Davison attended the Bolton School. In 1911, Davison worked as an Assistant Librarian, becoming Chief Assistant at the Astley Bridge Library.



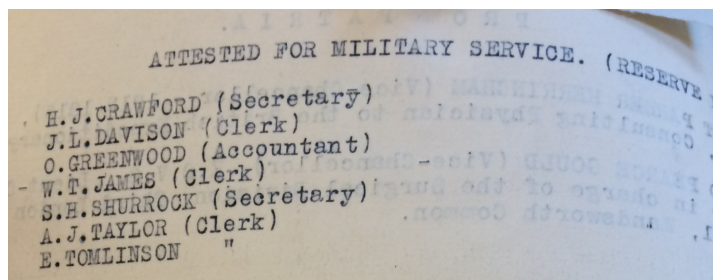
Photograph, found at GWC.org.uk, George Watson's College War Records



Troops of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion resting on their way back from the trenches, near Albert, May 1917. Found in Imperial War Museum, Ministry of Information First World War Official Collection

## University of London

Davison was hired a Clerk in Goldsmith's Library of the University of London. He was living in Wimbledon at this time. Although he was of age to join the army in active service during his employment, he was not given permission to enlist until February 1916, at which point his employers at Goldsmith's Library allowed him to leave. He was attested for military service along with six other members of the University's administrative staff, initially to a Reserve Battalion.



Attestation for military service, 1916. Found in Senate House Library Archives, Central File series, 1915-16 Staff Records (ref. UoL/CF/1/16/636)

REGIMENT OF CORPS		ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Victory Medal and/or British War Medal granted under Army (Orders) 8 301 of 1916		of 10	
Regt. No.	Rank	NAME	Service No.	Remarks	Remarks
808008	Pte	DAVISON, John	808008	Infantry Base Depot	
808008	Pte	LITSHLAND, Frank	808008	Infantry Base Depot	
808008	Pte	WILLIAMS, Alfred	808008	Infantry Base Depot	

Service Medal and Award Roll, 1921. Found in Ancestry.co.uk Military Records

## The Great War

Having been granted permission from the University, Davison enlisted in Middlesex, London in April 1916, and joined the 7<sup>th</sup> Kings Shropshire Light Infantry as a Signaller. He served in the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders. The 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion served entirely on the Western Front in the war, firstly in the Ypres Salient in late 1915 and early 1916. The battalion was heavily involved in the Battle of the Somme, firstly appearing at the Battle of Bizentin Ridge in July 1916 and at Serre on the Ancre in November, one of the concluding attacks of the Somme Offensive. The battalion also served at Arras and the Battles of the Scarpe in April and May 1917. Returning to the Ypres sector, the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion fought at Polygon Wood in Flanders, where Davison was hit by shrapnel and killed on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1917. Of the eight battalions of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry which saw active service overseas, the 7<sup>th</sup> suffered the most casualties, and gained the most war honours.

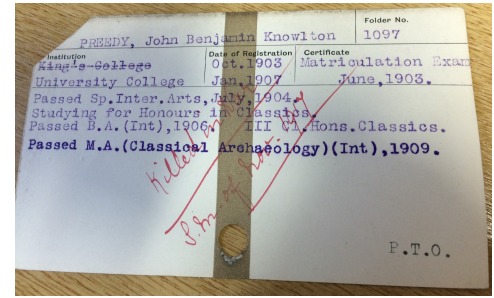
He features in *De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour*, in which his Commanding Officer wrote to his family: "I am grieved to have to tell you of the death of your son in action. It would be idle to attempt to tell you how highly esteemed he was. His noble character, unassuming bearing, intelligence and efficiency in his work soon came to my notice. He was a keen and untiring worker, and a man in the highest sense of the word. I can assure you that his loss is deeply mourned by his fellow signallers and myself, for he was respected and loved by us all. We know that quite recently he had lost a brother; both his comrades and myself tender to you our heartfelt sympathy in this second loss that you have been called upon to bear." Davison was interred at Belgium's Tyne Cot Memorial. His name appears on the Senate House memorial, and also on the Bolton County Borough Roll of Honour, 1914-1918. In March 1921, Davison and two other privates in his regiment were named as eligible recipients of the Victory Medal and the British War Medal. In his will, the effects of £102, eight shillings and sixpence were left to his father William.

## Early life

John Benjamin Knowlton Preedy was born in the Hampstead District of London. He was the son of John Knowlton Preedy, a hat maker, and Emily Elizabeth Preedy of Highgate. In 1891, the family boarded for a time with a family friend at Chequers Lane in Walton on the Hill. He attended Dulwich College from 1895-1900 and by 1901, aged 17, he was attending boarding school in Cowley, Oxfordshire.



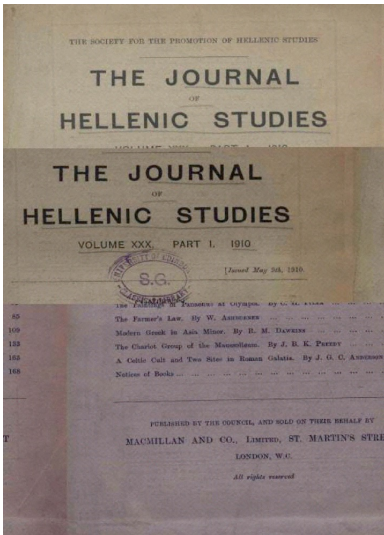
Photograph, c. 1916.  
Found in Senate House Library Archives, University Library series (ref. UoL/UL 12/23)



University of London matriculation card, found in Senate House Library registration details

## University of London

Joining the University of London, Preedy took his matriculation exam in June 1903, and registered at King's College in October 1903. He studied for Honours in Classics, in the Faculty of Arts. He passed his B.A. in 1906, gaining a Third Class Honours in Classics. He left King's College after gaining his degree, but returned to his studies at M.A. level and registered at a different college, University College, in January 1907. His M.A. was in Classical Archaeology. The title of his thesis was "The Chariot Group of the Mausoleum". This title was accepted (although it was late) on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>, 1909 and was approved a week later on February 1<sup>st</sup>. He passed his M.A., and left University College in 1909. In 1910, his thesis was published in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, one of the foremost periodicals in the Classical scholarship field. In 1911, aged 27, Preedy was boarding with the Smith family, a wife and daughter living in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. He was working as an Assistant Schoolmaster there, at the County Grammar School of King Edward VII. Here, Preedy organised sports games and the school's first Scout troop. Because of his time here, Preedy was later honoured as one of the former masters of the school who gave their lives in the Great War, and a plaque bearing his name was installed in the main reception of the school. Later in 1911, he returned to London and was employed by the University of London as a Secretary in the Extension Department.

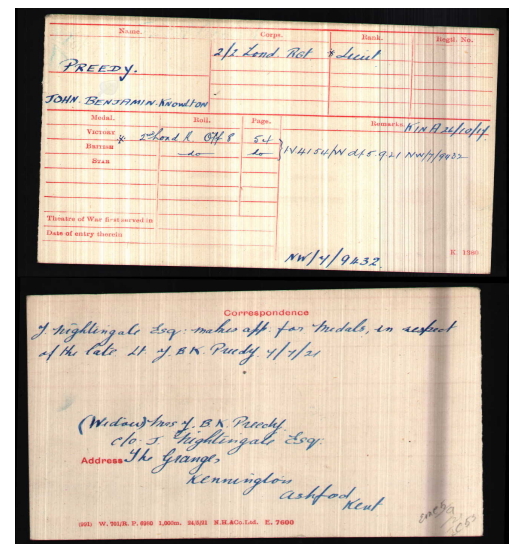


Journal in which his thesis was published. Found at Journals.Cambridge.org, *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 30, Issue 1. (1910)

## The Great War

Preedy joined the University's Officer Training Corps on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1914. The School of Instruction for Officers was formed for 100 officers in 1915, and held courses at various London locations throughout the year. Preedy assisted at the school and to the end of 1915, eight monthly courses were held and more than 900 officers passed through the school. He remained with the University until 1917, and married Florence Annie Nightingale in Pancras on 31<sup>st</sup> March of that year. They had a son together, John Robert Preedy. Preedy left London in 1917, serving as a Lieutenant in the London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers), 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. His unit was involved in fighting on many fronts, including The Battle of the Scarpe, the Battle of Langemarck, and The Battle of Broodsiende, fought around the Ypres Salient. In late 1917, the small town of Poelcappelle formed part of the Third Battle of Ypres. Preedy was killed in action on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1917, at Poelcappelle. He was awarded a Victory Medal and a British War Medal. The application for these medals was made in 1921, by the Nightingale family. He is buried at the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium.

The Preedy Memorial Library is a trust fund established in his memory. In July 1922, Mrs. Emily Preedy provided a loan to the University of London, the annual interest of which was to be applied to the purchase of some works on archaeology and art to be kept in the University Library, in memory of her son. He was particularly interested in those subjects and the collection also includes some volumes from his own library, presented by Mrs. Preedy in 1924. His name appears on the memorial at Senate House, in Leicestershire where he had been a schoolmaster, and on the Horsforth Cenotaph in Yorkshire.



Preedy's medal card, found in Findmypast.co.uk War Records



Memorial at County Grammar School of King Edward VII, Melton Mowbray. Found at LeicestershireWarMemorials.co.uk



Photograph, found in Senate House Library Archives, Central File series, 1916-17 Staff Records (ref. UoL/CF/1/17/636)

## Early life

Harry Alden Whitby was born in Kingston upon Hull in Yorkshire and raised in Sculcoates, a suburb of the city. He was the son of Stafford B. Whitby, a hosiery manufacturer, and Harriet 'Hettie' Whitby, who assisted her husband in the business. He had an older brother, George, and a younger sister named Elsie. Whitby was educated at the Hull Grammar School.

WHITAKER, Owen ...	...	...	...	19 Sept., 1914.
WHITBY, Harry Alden ...	B.A.; Univ. Coll. ...	Temp. 2nd Lt.	13th (S.) Batt. The King's Royal Rifle Corps.	12 Sept., 1914
WHITE, Archie Cecil Thomas ...	B.A.; King's College	Temp. 2nd Lt.	6th (S.) Batt. Yorkshire Regt....	28 Nov., 1914.
...	...	Temp. 2nd Lt.	6th (S.) Batt. Princess Charlotte	...

Commission to the King's Royal Rifle Corps, September 1914, found in Senate House Library Archives, Military Education Committee minutes, 1914-17 (ref. UoL/ME 1/1/3)

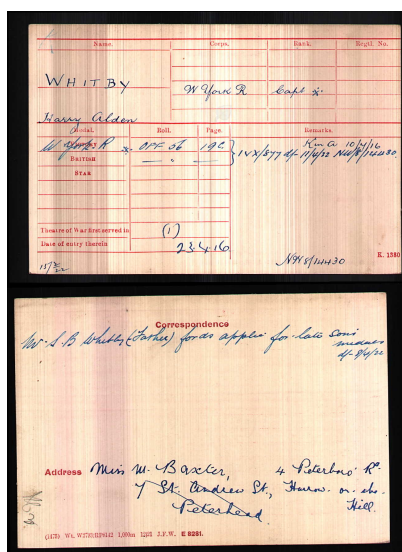
## University of London

Whitby was matriculated at University College in 1905, and achieved his B.A. degree in 1908. He attended lectures at the University of Paris, and spent two and a half years in Germany. In 1911, Whitby was teaching at Crewkerne Grammar School, and subsequently found work as an HM Inspector of Schools. He returned to University College in November 1913, to study History at M.A. level. He was subsequently hired as a Secretary in the Academic Department in July 1914, and was to begin his work in September. He also signed up as a cadet in the Officer Training Corps. He did not have the chance to take up his duties in the department, as he received his commission almost immediately after starting work. In the circumstances, the Secretary post was to be kept open for him in case he should return. Whitby was engaged to Miss Mary Baxter, and their marriage was postponed as he was ordered to the front.

## The Great War

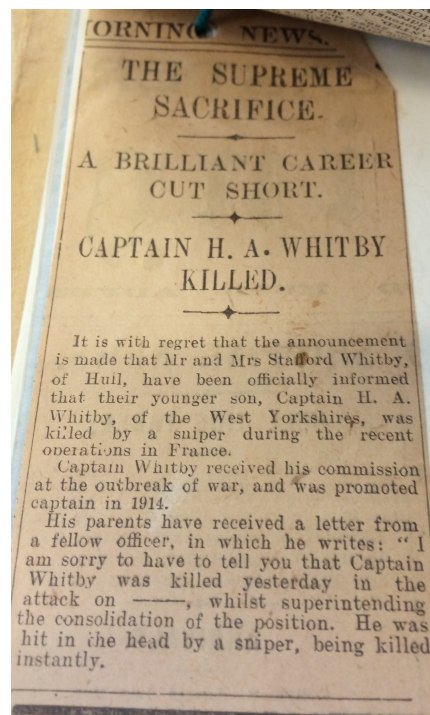
Whitby was appointed as a temporary Second Lieutenant in the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The King's Royal Rifle Corps, and was commissioned on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1914. The 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment was formed in York, on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1914. Moving south, the infantry were engaged in constructing defences to the south of London, before proceeding to France in August 1915. Whitby joined up with the regiment in September 1915, having been promoted to Captain. At this time, the regiment were being guided in trench familiarisation. Later taking over some of the front line sector, the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion were involved in the Battle of Loos and in the Battle of Albert, during the early stages of the Somme Offensive. Whitby was killed in action by sniper fire during this campaign on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1916, whilst leading his men in a successful attack on the village of Contalmaison. He was subsequently praised for his courage and his role in carrying out the assault.

He was buried in the Pozieres British Cemetery, Ovillers-la-Boisselle. In addition to the memorial at Senate House, his name can be seen in his hometown, on the Kingston upon Hull memorial 1914-1918. Whitby was awarded the British War Medal and a Victory Medal for his service with the West Yorkshire Regiment. His father made the application for these medals, which were addressed to his fiancée, Miss Baxter. In his will, it was requested that the amount of £392, 5 shillings and twopence was to be left to his father.

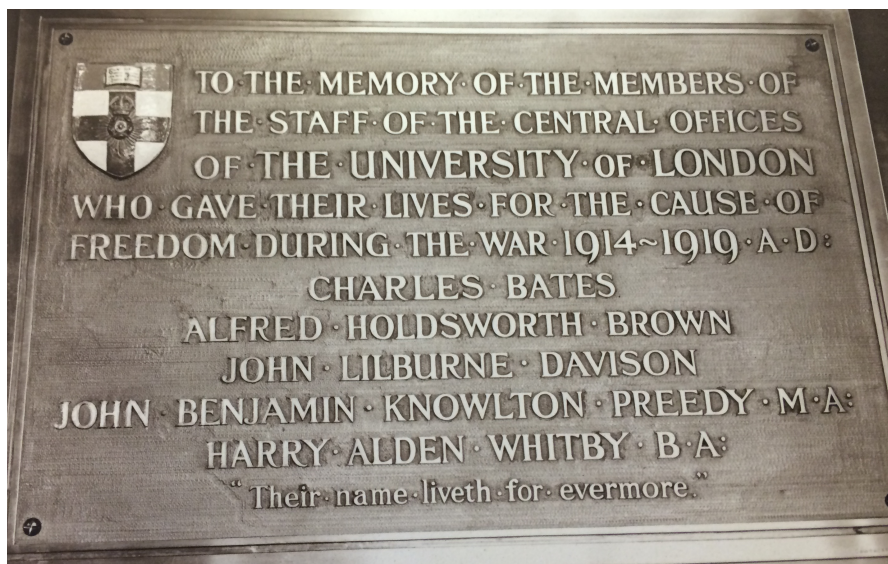


Whitby's medal card, found in Findmypast.co.uk War Records

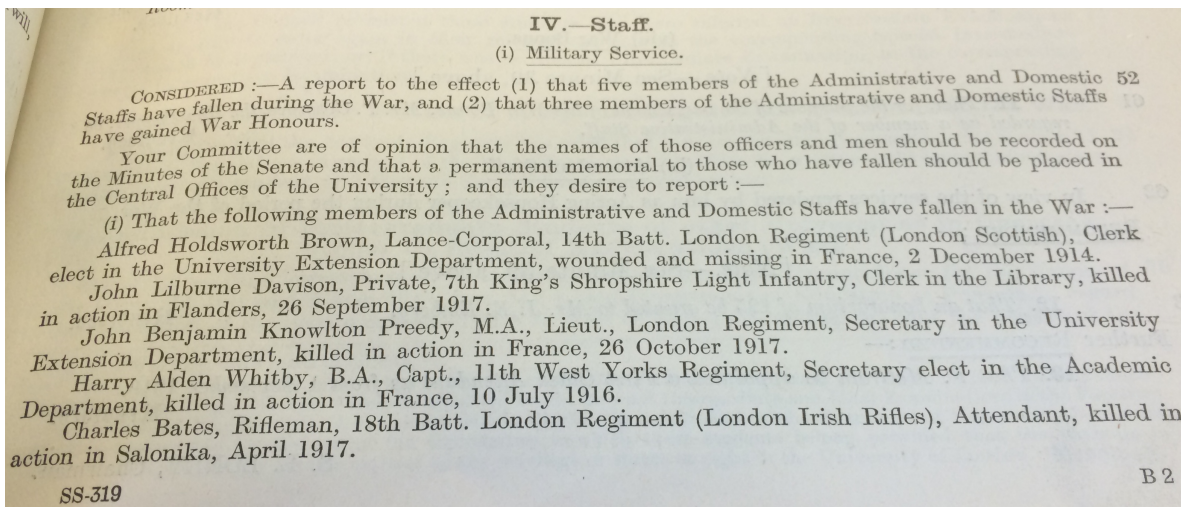
*Mr. & Mrs. Stafford B. Whitby and Family are deeply touched with the many very kind expressions of sympathy in their great sorrow. Nevertheless, they are thankful to God that their son Harry lived 27 years of strenuous and glorious life, the memory of which will be for ever cherished by them. His fiancée, Miss Mary Baxter, joins in all their heartfelt thanks.*



Family obituaries, found in Senate House Library Archives, Central File series, 1916-17 Staff Records (ref. UoL/CF/1/17/636)



War Memorial at Senate House



Report documenting that the five members of the Administrative and Domestic Staff of the University of London who fell during the Great War should be granted a permanent memorial. Found in Senate House Library Archives, Senate Series, Senate Minutes 1919-20 (ref. UoL/ST/2/2/36)

Archival sources consulted:

Senate House Library Archives Groups: Senate (ST), Academic Council (AC), Central File (CF), Central Registry (CR), Finance and General Purposes Committee (FG), Vice-Chancellor and Principal (VP), University Library (UL), Military Education Committee and Officer Training Corps (ME)  
 Senate House Library items, 1905-1920: Matriculation Data, Rolls of War Service, Memorial and Staff Photographs, Registries of Staff Appointments, Senate Minutes, Academic Council Minutes, Vice Principal Reports, Military Education Committee Minutes, Officer Training Corps Annual Reports, Wartime Correspondence, Staff Correspondence  
 The National Archives: WO 95, British Army War Diaries Series, 1914-1922

Online sources consulted:

1914-1918.net: The Long, Long Trail: The British Army in the Great War of 1914-1918  
 Ancestry.co.uk: Census and electoral rolls, Birth, Marriage and Death data, Military records, Newspapers and Periodicals, Tax, Criminal, Land and Wills  
 BoltonRemembers.org: Bolton County Borough Roll of Honour, 1914-1918  
 CWGC.org: Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
 GWC.org.uk: George Watson's College War Records  
 EveryManRemembered.org: Memorial and Remembrance details  
 FindMyPast.co.uk: Birth, Marriage, Death and Parish Records, Census data, Military, armed forces & conflict records  
 Hertfordshire-Genalogy.co.uk: The London Scottish in the First World War  
 IWM.org.uk: Imperial War Museum First World War Collections  
 Journals.Cambridge.org: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 30, Issue 1. (1910)  
 LeicestershireWarMemorials.co.uk: Memorial at King Edward VII School  
 London.ac.uk: University of London Library Trust Funds, Preedy Memorial  
 LondonIrishRifles.com: The London Irish Rifles Association  
 Roll-Of-Honour.com: First World War Memorial data  
 ShropshireRegimentalMuseum.co.uk: The King's Shropshire Light Infantry, 1914-1918  
 WWIHull.org.uk: Kingston upon Hull War Memorial 1914-1918  
 WWIPhotos.com: 14<sup>th</sup> London Regiment (London Scottish)  
 WartimeMemoriesProject.com: 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion. West Yorkshire Regiment  
 YorkshireIndexers.info: Horsforth Cenotaph data

Print sources consulted:

Simon Fowler, *Tracing Your First World War Ancestors* (Newbury, 2003)  
 Ernest May, *Signal Corporal* (London, 1972)  
 H.C O'Neill, *The Royal Fusiliers in the Great War* (London, 1922)  
 Arthur S. White, *A Bibliography of Regimental Histories of the British Army* (London, 1988)  
*De Ruwigny's Roll of Honour, 1914-1919*  
*The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 27, Issues 1-2 (2010)  
*University of London Officers Training Corps, Roll of War Service, 1914-1919* (London, 1919)