ROMANO MATTIA

Reverend David Railton

In the present text I’m going to analyze two articles about Reverend David Railton: “Reverend David Railton” and “David Railton and the Unknown Warrior”.

Thanks to these documents I am able to discuss about the figure of the Reverend Railton (1884 - 1955), an important figure about the Unknown Soldier’s history.

During the First World War, in 1916, David Railton was working as chaplain to British forces in France.

In a garden at Erkingham near Armentierés, one day, he saw a make-shift grave marked by a rough cross which was written "An Unknown British Soldier".

When the war finished he became vicar of Margate in Ken and, in August 1920, he wrote to the Dean of Westminster, Herbert Ryle, to convey a remembrance of the grave in Erkingham.

A year later, after the support of the King George V and the government, David Railton saw his dream become reality.

On the morning of November 11, in London, six black horses drew the carriage that contain the body of the Unknown Soldier.

The King, his three sons and the members of the Royal Family then followed the coffin through the streets to the entrance of Westminster Abbey.

Today the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior is one of the most famous Westminster Abbey's memorials. Indeed, in the following week to the burial 1,2 million people visited the tomb.

In all the texts that I analyzed the writers use a formal language to explain the facts in a simple and objective way. Indeed the authors don’t write any personal opinion of the events.

In conclusion, thanks to these documents I am able to connect, in a correct way, the figure of the Reverend David Railton to the ritual of the Unknown Soldier.