ACIVITY 2:

**Key figures in The History and Ritual of the British Unknown Soldier**

This text is a summarize of two documents about David Railton, the man who had the idea of build a grave for an Unknown British Soldier to remember and commemorate all the soldiers who fought and died in WWI.

The language used is formal, simple and free from any comment made by authors.

The ideal reader, while reading these two documents, expects to get information about David Railton’s biography and connection to the unknown soldier’s cult. So the documents’ main goal is to teach to the reader the main events that accompanied David Railton to become the first man to have thought of an unknown soldier’s burial.

David Railton was the son of [George Scott Railton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Scott_Railton), the first [Commissioner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commissioner) of [The Salvation Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Salvation_Army) and Second in Command after its founder. He concerned, like his father, for the poorest in society. He was educated at [Keble College, Oxford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keble_College,_Oxford),  and was further educated at Bishop's Hostel, in [Liverpool](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liverpool). He has joined the [Church of England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_England) in Liverpool in 1908 and tooked up the curacy of [Edge Hill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edge_Hill,_Liverpool) in Liverpool.

In 1910 he moved to [Ashford, Kent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashford,_Kent), and became Chaplain. He was awarded the [Military Cross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_Cross) in 1916 for saving an officer and two men under heavy fire.  
Railtonhad the idea of arranging for the body of an unknown serviceman to be transported back to England, and buried with full honors, in 1916, while he was serving on the [Western Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Front_(World_War_I)) during World War I.

After the War Railton became the vicar of St. John the Baptist Church at [Margate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margate), in August, 1920 he wrote to [Bishop Ryle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbert_Edward_Ryle), the [Dean of Westminster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Deans_of_Westminster), about the possibility of giving an unidentified soldier a national burial service in [Westminster Abbey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westminster_Abbey). In October 1920, his idea had been accepted by the Government. On 7 November 1920 six, according to other accounts four[unidentified](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unidentified_decedent)bodies, itwere examined to ensure that they were British before being placed in a plain coffin, then [Brigadier General](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brigadier_General) [L.J. Wyatt](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=L.J._Wyatt&action=edit&redlink=1), General Officer Commanding troops in France and [Flanders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flanders), chosen at random one of the bodies: this became the Unknown Warrior. He was placed in a new coffin with the inscription ‘A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914–1918 for King and Country’.

A year later, the Union flag which he had used during the war to drape over his makeshift altars – and over the bodies of soldiers killed in action - was donated to the Abbey. “The Padre's Flag”, as it is known, now hangs in St George's Chapel close to the Warrior's grave that became one of the most famous of the Abbey’s memorials.

While the project was going on,Railton became vicar of Margate in Kent. He had been working with different important religious authorities before he accidentally died falling from a train in 1955.

The main message given by the text is to describe a religious man who spent most of his time working up for this project and after lots of attempts he reached his goal and dream and today the Grave of the Unknown Warrior is one of the most famous of the Abbey's memorials. This man is a symbol of the salvation for all people who remembers the death of someone they loved thanks to the ritual of The Unknown Soldier.