**ACTIVITY II**

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

This text is the result of two documents’ synthesis about David Railton, his role during the First World War and the events connected to the history of the Unknown soldier.

The ideal reader is one that is interested in the topic and approximately knows about the Great War and the cult of the Unknown soldier: therefore, he expects the text’s use of language to be formal, informative and free from any comments made by the author.

So the documents’ main goal is to inform the reader about the main events that accompanied David Railton to become the first man to have thought of an unknown soldier’s burial.

It has been said that David Railton was born on 13 November 1884 in London and got educated at Keble College, Oxford and further in Liverpool. He shared his father’s faith and concern about the poorest in society. Having joined the Church of England, he became a temporary chaplain to the Forces in 1910.

He then became a chaplain to the 2nd Battalion on the Western Front during the 1914-18 war. He is furthermore reminded to have received the Military Cross in 1916 for saving an officer and two men under heavy fire.

In 1916, he noticed a grave with a rough cross on which were pencilled the words 'An Unknown British Soldier'. He then got the idea of an unknown man’s symbolic burial in England to commemorate thousands of missing men who knew no grave. In 1920 he wrote to the Dean of Westminster who accepted his idea, which also was encouraged by the government: on 11 November 1920 David Railton saw his dream become reality.

While the project was going on (Brigadier Wyatt chose one of the dead bodies to be sealed and transferred to Westminster Abbey), Railton became vicar of Margate in Kent. He had been working with different religious authorities before he accidentally died by falling from a train in 1955.

Reading and analyzing these two documents, the ideal reader can understand how this person concerned the people who suffered fighting at the front and, thanks to a symbolic burial representing them, he wanted to ease the pain of their parents and friends.

The main message conveyed 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. Today the Grave of the Unknown Warrior is one of the most famous of the Abbey's memorials.