**The Dean of Westminster**

Sir Herbert Edward Ryle was a British author, Old testament scholar and successively the Bishop of Exeter and the Dean of Westminster. He was born in London in 1856 and he got educated at King’s College, Cambridge. He was elected a Fellow of King’s College, Cambridge and began his career as a teacher.

He thought at the University of Cambridge and published lots of books before he became in December 1910 the Dean of Westminster. He was installed in Westminster Abbey in April 1911, at a time when the building was being prepared for the coronation of King George V. Under his guidance and with the help of his advisers, the dignity of the Abbey notably increased. During World War 1 Ryle used to take the midday service of intercession personally, and he was responsible for the many special services held in wartime.

The idea of a Tomb of The Unknown Warrior was first conceived in 1916 by the Reverend David Railton, who, while serving as an army chaplain on the Western Front, had seen a grave marked by a rough cross, which bore the pencil-written legend 'An Unknown British Soldier'. He wrote to Dean Ryle in 1920 proposing that an unidentified British soldier from the battlefields in France should be buried in Westminster Abbey to represent the many thousands of dead soldiers. There was initial opposition from King George V  and others but a surge of emotional support from the great number of bereaved families ensured its adoption. Ryle himself composed the inscription of the tomb.

Ryle withheld permission for the remains of Lord Byron to be interred in the Abbey on the grounds that he considered Byron to be an inappropriate person for such an honour.

Ryle was created KCVO in 1921. He was dean at the Wedding of Prince Albert, Duke of York, and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon.

He had never been strong and had a history of heart trouble. He died in 1925. He was buried on 25 August in Westminster Abbey close to the tomb of The Unknown Warrior.

Dean Ryle Street in Westminster is named after him.

**L.J. Wyatt**

L.J.Wyatt is remembered to have taken part in the selection of one of the bodies of unknown soldiers to be buried in Westminster Abbey. Under the most important information about.

On 7 November, 1920, Brigadier General L.J. Wyatt, General Officer Commanding British Troops in France and Flanders, entered a hut near the village of St Pol, near Ypres in northern France. In front of him were the remains of four bodies, all of them lying under Union flags.

Earlier that afternoon, the bodies had been disinterred from unmarked graves in each of the main battlefields, the Aisne, the Somme, Arras and Ypres. Four blank crosses had been chosen from the forest of crosses that now covered the shell-pocked French landscape.

As well as coming from unmarked graves, the bodies all had to belong to soldiers who had died in the early years of the War. The orders given to the exhumation parties were very clear on this point. The bodies had to be as old as possible in order to ensure they were sufficiently decomposed to be unidentifiable.

Wrapped in old sacks, the four dead soldiers had been brought to St Pol, where they were received by a British clergyman and two undertakers who had travelled to France for the occasion. There, the remains were examined to make sure they bore no identifying marks, then placed inside the hut for the remainder of the day.

In some reports of what happened next, Brig Wyatt was described as being blindfolded. There were also reputed to have been six bodies rather than four. However, the brigadier makes no reference to being blindfolded in his account of what happened, and insisted that he saw only the remains of four bodies when he stepped into the hut as midnight struck.

There, the brigadier lifted up his lantern to take in the scene. Then he simply reached out and touched one of the Union flags. That was it; he had made his choice. He had picked a body to go inside the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior.

In death, the body was to enjoy a fate that would, in all probability, have been unthinkable in life. Feted by the King-Emperor, attended with the most lavish pomp and solemn ceremony that the country could muster, this anonymous collection of bones was about to become the focus of a nation's grief.

After Brig Wyatt had made his choice, the Union flags were folded away. Then the three bodies were loaded onto the back of a truck, tipped into a shell hole beside the road near the town of Albert – and promptly forgotten.