

Homework for 09.02.2017

ACTIVITY I

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

The purpose of the documents is to inform the reader about the events all around the history of the chaplain David Railton. The language used is formal, simple and free from any comment made by authors.

The ideal reader is one that is interested in the topic and approximately knows about the First World War and the cult of the Unknown soldier.

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.

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.

Afterwards he became a curate in Folkestone in Kent before becoming a chaplain to the 2nd Battalion on the Western Front during the 1914-18 war. David Railton is 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. To do that he had to convince the main authorities of that time.

In 1920 Railton wrote to the Dean of Westminster Ryle and his proposal was accepted with enthusiasm by the Reverent and the government: on 11 November 1920 David Railton saw his dream become reality.

While the project was going on (Brigadier Wyatt chose the body to be sealed and transferred to Westminster Abbey), 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.