

CARTER AND CARNARVON

THE SEARCH FOR TUTANKHAMUN

AFTER SIX FRUSTRATING YEARS OF SEARCHING FOR THE LOST BOY KING,
LORD CARNARVON WAS READY TO END HIS PARTNERSHIP WITH HOWARD
CARTER, BUT THEY DECIDED TO DIG FOR ONE MORE SEASON.
THEIR PERSEVERANCE PAID OFF WHEN THE PHARAOH'S TOMB WAS FOUND.

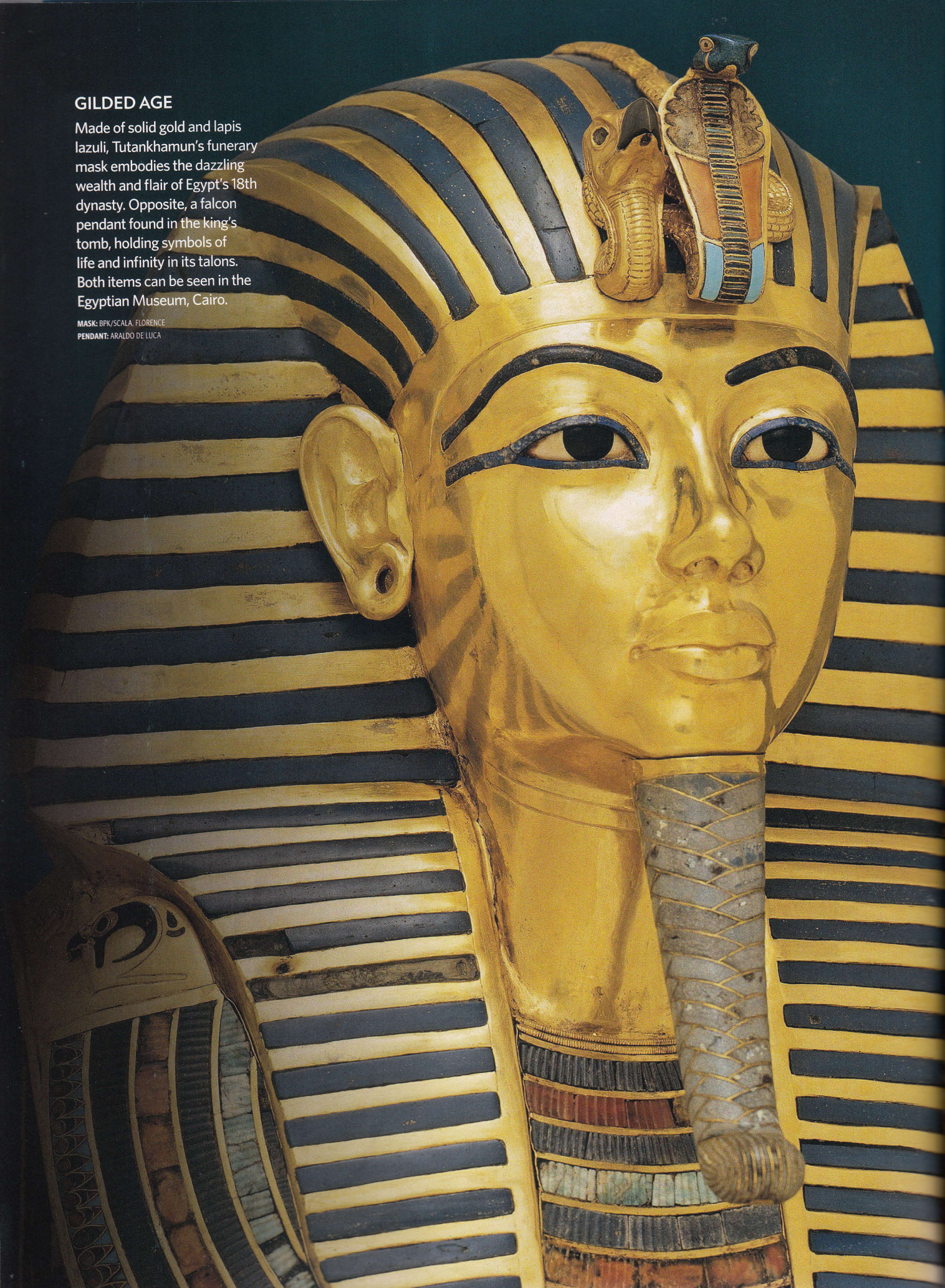
MAITE MASCORT

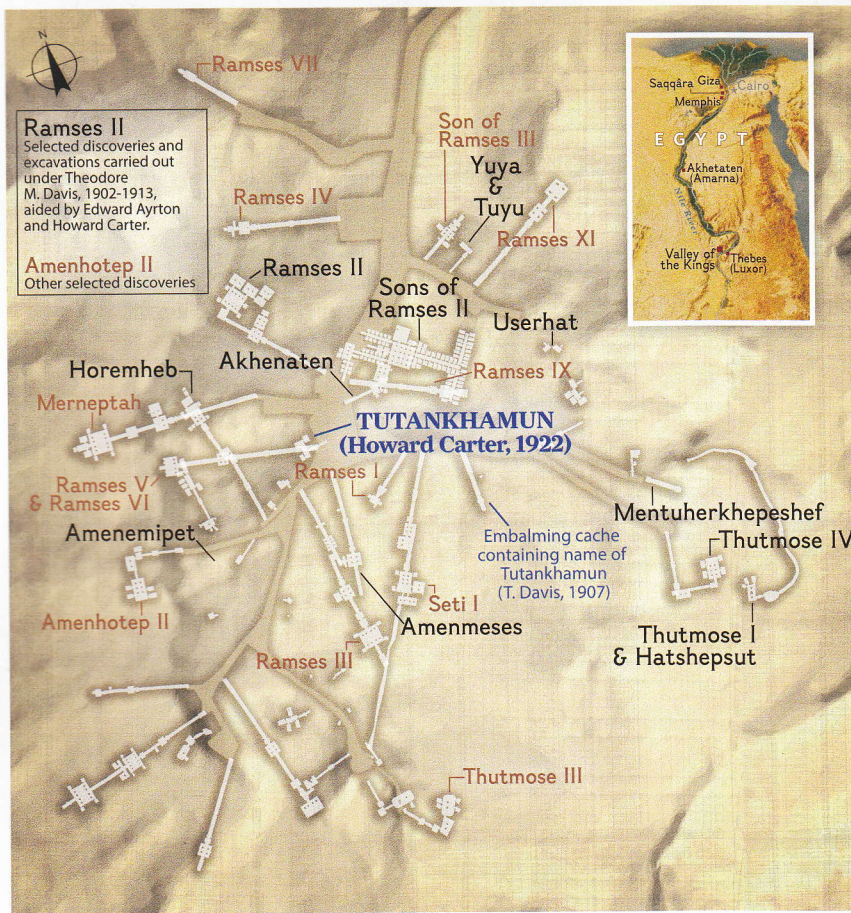


GILDED AGE

Made of solid gold and lapis lazuli, Tutankhamun's funerary mask embodies the dazzling wealth and flair of Egypt's 18th dynasty. Opposite, a falcon pendant found in the king's tomb, holding symbols of life and infinity in its talons. Both items can be seen in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

MASK: BPK/SCALA, FLORENCE
PENDANT: ARALDO DE LUCA





DEATH VALLEY

From 1902 Carter assisted Theodore M. Davis in piecing together the layout of the Valley of the Kings, excavating tombs from the pharaohs of the 18th dynasty to the Ramesside kings of the 20th dynasty.

EOSGIS.COM

A hunch fell on the group of British and Egyptian observers standing at the sealed doorway on November 26, 1922. Three weeks earlier, British archaeologist Howard Carter and his team had stumbled on a rubble-filled stairway in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt.

Following the excavations of the late 1800s, many archaeologists thought the valley had yielded all its secrets. However, Carter had a hunch that there was still more to find. Egyptians began to bury their royalty in the Valley of the Kings during the New Kingdom (circa 1539-1075 B.C.). Carter was searching for the tomb of an obscure king from the 18th dynasty. The boy king has since become Egypt's most famous pharaoh, but when Carter was digging, his name—Tutankhamun—was only spoken in scholarly circles.

Having cleared the debris from the stairs, Carter's team revealed the top of a doorway, sealed with plaster. Upon it were the undisturbed seals of the royal necropolis, a sight that made Carter's heart race with excitement. After ordering the staircase filled in, Carter sent a cable

to his patron—the wealthy Lord Carnarvon—that said: "At last have made wonderful discovery in valley; a magnificent tomb with seals intact."

Carnarvon hurried to Egypt to witness the opening of the tomb. As Carter and his team re-cleared the staircase to continue their work, the entire door was exposed, and the seals of Tutankhamun revealed. Carter's hunch was right. He had found the boy king. The door also bore signs of damage and repair, leading Carter to wonder if the tomb was indeed intact.

The next day, the team assembled to open the tomb. With Carnarvon and other observers looking on, Carter drilled a small hole in the top corner of the doorway and placed a candle inside. The candle flickered, and Carter peered in. As his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness beyond, he heard Carnarvon asking: "Can you see anything?"

"Yes," Carter replied. "Wonderful things. Wonderful things!"

The Boy King

Tutankhamun reigned for only nine years, and his short reign may be what kept grave robbers

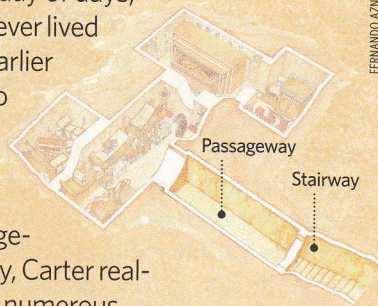
HOWARD CARTER POINTS OUT THE ENTRANCE TO TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB TO AN EGYPTIAN CIVIL SERVANT.
HULTON/GETTY IMAGES



"THE MOST WONDERFUL DAY"

STAIRWAY TO A LOST WORLD

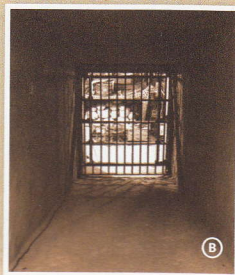
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1922, was "the day of days," Carter wrote, "the most wonderful I have ever lived through." Having discovered a stairway earlier that month, Carter had a hunch he was onto a major find because workers' huts from the 20th dynasty were still intact above the site. Signs of past plundering could be seen on the door at the end of the passageway. Peering through the door that Sunday, Carter realized the goods, although ransacked, were numerous.



FERNANDO AZNAR



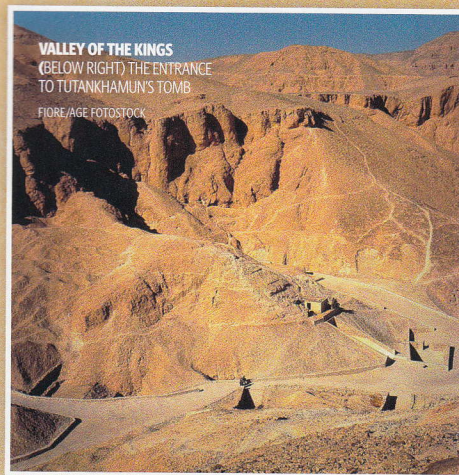
HULTON/GETTY IMAGES



HARRY BURTON/THE GRIFFITH INSTITUTE

Sightseers and Tomb Raiders

The announcement of Carter's find caused a sensation in Luxor. **A** Curious Egyptian officials gather at the tomb's entrance. **B** As a security measure, Carter had a steel grille fitted at the end of the entrance passage to keep out would-be plunderers.



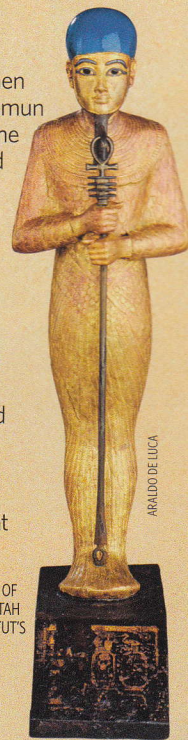
VALLEY OF THE KINGS
(BELOW RIGHT) THE ENTRANCE TO TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB
FIORRE/AGE FOTOSTOCK

FROM DAVIS TO CARTER

The Search for the Lost Pharaoh

1907

Theodore M. Davis finds linen bearing the name Tutankhamun in an embalming cache in the Valley of the Kings. The find alerts scholars—including Carter—to the possibility that his tomb lies nearby.



STATUETTE OF THE GOD PTAH FOUND IN TUT'S TOMB
ARALDO DE LUCA

1913-14

In poor health and convinced that the Theban Royal Necropolis had been emptied of its treasures, Davis gives up his archaeological permit. A few months later, Lord Carnarvon obtains a permit at Carter's insistence.

1917-1921

Carter resumes the full-scale search for Tutankhamun's tomb in the Valley of the Kings after work had been halted by World War I. He makes little progress.

1922

On November 4, three days after the start of the digging season, a worker chances on a step cut into the ground. Later that month, after the rubble is completely removed, Tutankhamun's seal is revealed on the door.



THE BOY KING'S SHRINE SECURED WITH AN INTACT ROPE, PHOTOGRAPHED ON DISCOVERY IN 1922
BRIDGEMAN/ACI



DIVINE BLESSINGS

Tutankhamun's pectoral, made of gold, ivory, and carnelian. The king stands before Amun, who offers him the ankh, a symbol of life. Egyptian Museum, Cairo

ARALDO DE LUCA

from the contents of his tomb. Born around 1342 B.C., Tut descended from two important kings: Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV, the latter better known as Akhenaten. Amenhotep III ruled Egypt for nearly four decades at the height of the 18th dynasty, while Akhenaten radically reshaped Egyptian religion and art by discarding the old gods and devoting Egypt to one deity, Aten, the sun disk. His 17-year reign was marked by highly stylized artworks that prominently featured this symbol.

After Akhenaten's death, the young Tutankhamun became king. Egypt dismantled the legacy of his father, returning to the old religious and artistic traditions as well as smashing his monuments and statues. The boy king's reign was short, just under a decade. At age 15 or 16, he died under mysterious circumstances and was hastily entombed with all the pomp and splendor befitting a king.

Because of his link to Akhenaten, Tut's reign was eventually struck from the record by his successors. By attempting to write him out of history, they inadvertently preserved his legacy. Because thieves did not know his name, they were unlikely to look for his tomb. Because Tut's tomb was intact, his name will live forever.

Rise and Fall

Carter's glimpse of Tutankhamun's grave goods that day was a rare reward in a life marked by setbacks and financial difficulties. Born the youngest of 11 siblings in London in 1874, Howard Carter was the son of a respected but not terribly wealthy painter. Brought up by his aunts, Carter later wrote that a weak constitution "debarred me from public-school [the British term for private school] life and games"—a statement now believed to be a half truth. He was certainly a sickly child, but it is likely that Carter did not, in fact, receive much in the way of formal schooling.

Even so, following in his father's footsteps, Howard showed a natural talent for drawing and painting. Thanks to family connections, at age 17 he was recommended to Percy Newberry, a renowned Egyptologist who was looking for an artist for an archaeological expedition to Egypt. After an apprenticeship of three months at the British Museum, Carter set off for the Nile, where he was employed on a major excavation in Akhetaten (Amarna), the city built by Akhenaten.

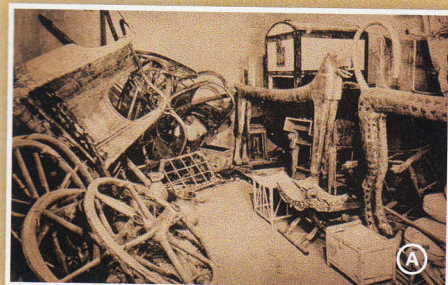
Exposure to Egyptian monuments changed Carter's



S. VANNING/GETTY IMAGES

HOWARD CARTER AND HIS TEAM WRAP ONE OF THE ANTECHAMBER'S TWO SENTINEL STATUES BEFORE MOVING THEM TO THE LABORATORY.

BRK/SCALA, FLORENCE



BRIDGEMAN/ACI



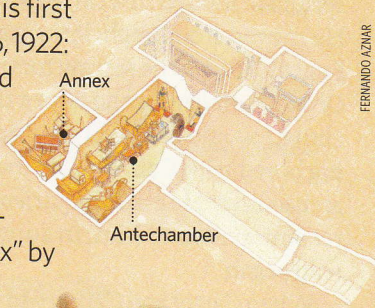
AKG/ALBUM

"A SIGHT SURPASSING ALL PRECEDENT"

THE ANTECHAMBER AND ANNEX

CARTER RECORDED his astonishment at his first glimpse of the antechamber on November 26, 1922:

"It was a sight surpassing all precedent, and one we never dreamed of seeing." On entering the room the next day with an Egyptian civil servant, Carter discovered another chamber alongside. Used as a kind of storeroom, this chamber was dubbed the "Annex" by Carter's team.



FERNANDO AZNAR

Tidying Up

The funerary objects in the **(A) ANTECHAMBER** had been partly looted by thieves in ancient times. There was a vast number of different items, all jumbled up together, including life-size figures, golden beds, alabaster cups, disassembled chariots, and a richly decorated throne. Looters had also been through the **(B) ANNEX**, Carter quickly discovered. This chamber was full of ushabti (funerary figurines), furniture, receptacles, and other items. Carter made an inventory of the hundreds of objects in the rooms, giving each of them a number.



GOLDEN GUARD FOUND IN THE ANTECHAMBER, ONE OF TWO THAT GUARDED THE ENTRANCE TO THE FUNERARY CHAMBER. S. VANNINI/GETTY IMAGES



S. VANNINI/GETTY IMAGES

The Long Game

Above, a set of *senet*, a board game, was one of four left in the tomb so the king could continue playing in the afterlife. The craftsmanship of these and other items such as a stool (left) made a deep impact on Carter. "We were astonished by the beauty and refinement [of these objects] . . . surpassing all we could have imagined."

HUMBLE JARS, HIDDEN CLUES

SIGNS THAT TUTANKHAMUN was buried in the Valley of the Kings were first detected by the wealthy American archaeology enthusiast, Theodore M. Davis. Overseeing digs there between 1902 and 1913, Davis was helped by top Egyptologists, including at times Howard Carter himself. In 1907, under the supervision of Davis, Edward Ayrton found jars in a pit, one containing a piece of linen with the inscription: "The good god, Lord of the Two Lands, Nebkheperure [an alternate name for Tutankhamun]."

The jars, of little interest to Davis, ended up in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. Carter, however, paid close attention to the find. Although Davis thought he had found Tutankhamun's actual tomb, Carter regarded it as too lowly. The tomb had to be nearby, waiting for him to discover it. A year after he did so, the pit was identified as an "embalming cache," containing items left over from the mummification of the king.



KERCHIEF FOR A KING

The discovery of objects used in Tutankhamun's embalming, such as this cloth, alerted Carter to the possibility his tomb lay nearby. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

GIFT OF THEODORE M. DAVIS

professional life, as he turned from art to archaeology. His career took off: He became an inspector with the Egyptian Department of Antiquities and eventually rose to become chief inspector for northern Egypt. By the early 1900s he was working for American archaeology enthusiast Theodore M. Davis in the Valley of the Kings. Named in hieroglyphs as "The Great and Majestic Necropolis of the Millions of Years of the Pharaoh, Life, Strength, Health in the West of Thebes," the Valley of the Kings was known in ancient Egypt as the Great Field. It was regarded (incorrectly it seems) as ideal for royal interments because its remoteness was thought to deter grave robbers.

In 1904 Carter's archaeology career almost ended. A group of drunken tourists at the necropolis of Saqqara caused a disturbance, and Carter ordered them to leave. They complained to their ambassador, who demanded an apology from Carter. He refused and was forced to resign. At age 31, with no job and no money, Carter had to leave archaeology behind; he eked out a living by painting watercolors for tourists.

Promising Partnership

The year before the Saqqara incident, George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Herbert, the

wealthy fifth Earl of Carnarvon, had taken up residence in a Cairo hotel. A collector of racing cars and horses, Lord Carnarvon had been seriously injured in a car accident in Germany. He moved from Highclere Castle in southern England (today the setting for the period drama *Downton Abbey*) in the hopes that Egypt's arid climate would help him recover. Quickly growing bored with Cairo life, he took an interest in archaeology. He made inquiries, and Carter was recommended to him. In 1907 their partnership began.

When Carter and Carnarvon joined forces, the concession to dig in the valley was held by Theodore Davis. Davis's work had uncovered several artifacts that intrigued Carter. In a stash of embalming material in the valley, Davis found linen and other items bearing the name of Tutankhamun. Carter saw these as indications that Tutankhamun's tomb could be nearby. Davis was certain that there was nothing more to be found, so he gave up the concession. Carter and Carnarvon quickly snapped it up.

Unfortunately, the excavation permit was awarded in 1914, and



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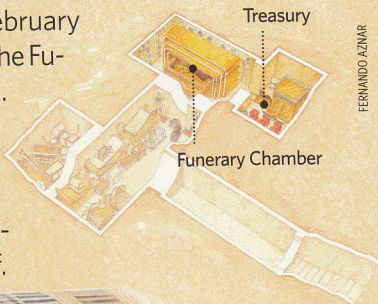
HOWARD CARTER (LEFT) AND LORD CARNARVON POSE AFTER BREAKING DOWN THE WALL TO THE FUNERARY CHAMBER ON FEBRUARY 16, 1923. THE OUTER SHRINE CAN BE SEEN BEHIND.

COBBIS/GETTY IMAGES

“AN ASTONISHING SIGHT”

INSIDE THE FUNERARY CHAMBER

A **SECOND GREAT DISCOVERY** came on February 16, 1923. Carter made a hole in the wall to the Funerary Chamber and held a lantern through. “An astonishing sight its light revealed . . . a solid wall of gold.” After knocking down the partition, they found the space filled with a huge, golden outer shrine. Somewhere inside, lay the boy king’s body itself.



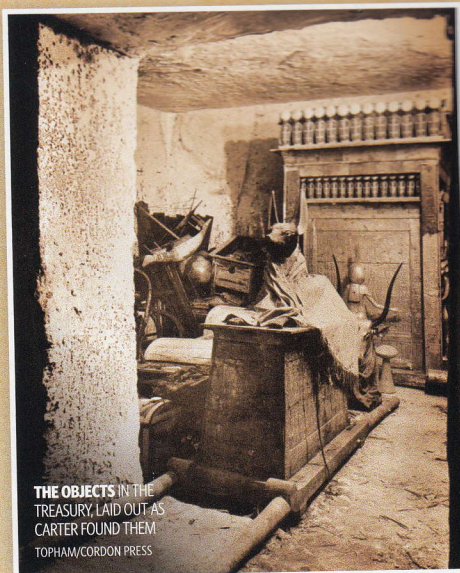
FERNANDO AZNAR



ARAIDO DE LUCA

An Embarrassment of Riches

Carter was overwhelmed by the quantity of beautiful objects he found in the Treasury. Items included a statue of Anubis (left), an alabaster chest (above), model boats, and miniature golden caskets.



THE OBJECTS IN THE TREASURY, LAID OUT AS CARTER FOUND THEM.

TOPHAM/CORDON PRESS

Royal Treasury

To the east of the Funerary Chamber, Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter saw a low door leading to a smaller room. Carter called it the Treasury, since “a single glance sufficed to tell us that here, within this little chamber, lay the greatest treasures of the tomb.” The room was packed with dazzling works of art, but what fascinated Carter most was the pharaoh’s golden canopic chest (below), “the most beautiful monument that I have ever seen—so lovely that it made one gasp with wonder and admiration.” Made of gilded wood, the shrine contained the alabaster jars holding the king’s mummified organs. Standing guard outside were the gilded statues of four goddesses, Selket (below), Isis, Nephthys, and Neith.



S. WANNING/GETTY IMAGES

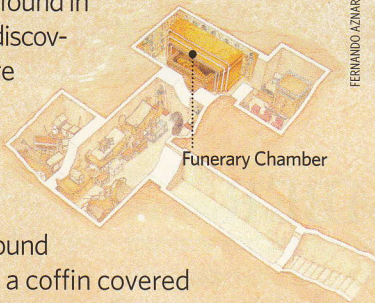


HOWARD CARTER
REMOVES THE RESIN
COVERING ONE OF THE
KING'S INNER COFFINS.
BPK/SCALA, FLORENCE

"THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EVER SEEN"

4 STUNNING SARCOPHAGI

THE MASSIVE GOLDEN shrine Carter found in the Funerary Chamber was—he soon discovered—filled with treasure: Two more shrines, the second of which is shown below. It took more than a year to separate them, revealing an enormous quartzite sarcophagus. In February 1924, Carter raised the 1,300-pound lid with a pulley system. Inside was a coffin covered with a thin linen shroud, and inside that, he later discovered were two more human-shaped coffins, nested one in the other, like Russian dolls.



FERNANDO AZNAR



The Second Casket ▲

Owing to problems with the Egyptian authorities, Carter was unable to resume his research until fall 1925. He then turned his attention to the second and third coffins inside the outer one. The second was made of wood with encrusted marquetry covering the sides (above) and front (right). Overwhelmed, Carter said it was one of the most beautiful caskets ever seen.



**THE SECOND OF
THREE NESTED
OUTER SHRINES**
ARALDO DE LUCA

Vulture and Cobra.
Symbols of Upper
and Lower Egypt

Rod and Flail.
Symbols of the
royal power the
pharaoh held.

Nekhbet, the vulture
goddess of Upper
Egypt, protects the
pharaoh with her
outspread wings.

Shen. This
knot is a symbol
of rebirth.

Nemes. This royal
striped headdress
draped over the
shoulders.

Beard. Its
curved shape
identifies the
king with Osiris,
god of the dead.

Wadjet, the
snake goddess
of Lower Egypt,
protects the king.

Cartouche with
the king's name:
"The living image
of Amun"



S. VANNI/GETTY IMAGES

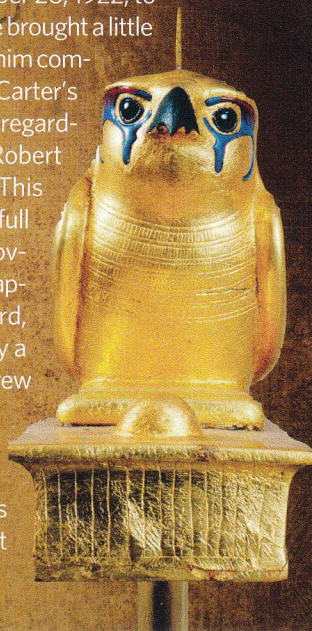
The Third Casket

The innermost coffin was—an astonished Carter reported—"an incredible mass of pure gold." Inside it lay Tutankhamun's mummified body, where it had rested undisturbed for more than 3,000 years. Adorning the head and shoulders of the mummy was one of the world's greatest treasures and perhaps the tomb's most famous find: Tutankhamun's solid gold funerary mask.

S. VANNI/GETTY IMAGES

THE CURSE AND THE CANARY

WHEN HOWARD CARTER arrived in Luxor on October 28, 1922, to begin his final season in the Valley of the Kings, he brought a little pet with him: a canary he bought in Cairo to keep him company and brighten up his home with its singing. Carter's Egyptian workmen became fond of the creature, regarding it as a symbol of good luck. Archaeologist Robert Winlock reported one of the workers saying: "This year we will find, *inshallah* [God willing], a tomb full of gold." In November Carter and his team discovered Tutankhamun's tomb. But then something happened that scared the Egyptians: The golden bird, as they called Carter's canary, was devoured by a snake. Since the Egyptians believed that snakes grew inside the heads of the ancient kings, they thought it was the pharaoh's revenge for disturbing his eternal rest. They were also convinced it was a portent of a forthcoming death. Lord Carnarvon's sudden demise just months later only fueled what would become known as the mummy's curse.



PROTECTIVE FALCON

A standard bearing the falcon god Gemehsu, placed in Tutankhamun's tomb as a funerary offering. Egyptian Museum, Cairo

S. VANNINI/GETTY IMAGES

the outbreak of World War I disrupted exploration, although Carter did manage to explore the tomb of Amenhotep III, Tutankhamun's grandfather, in 1915. It was not until December 1917 that he was able to resume work and finally search for the resting place of the boy king. Carter employed a systematic method he had developed during his many years in the field: a meticulous division of the site into a grid.

For years Carter and his team scoured the rocky landscape, scarred with the trenches of previous digs. Discoveries were thin on the ground. In 1922 a frustrated Carnarvon informed Carter he would not continue to finance the work. Carter pleaded with him to reconsider; moved by his passion, Carnarvon agreed to fund one last season. On November 1, 1922, Carter resumed digging in the Valley of the Kings. On November 4, they found the stairway that led to the unopened tomb of Tutankhamun.

Blessings and Curses

Carter described his first glimpse some years later: "Details of the room emerged slowly from the mist... strange animals, statues and gold—everywhere, the glint of gold." The room Carter saw is now known as the antechamber. By early

the next year its contents had been logged and removed, leaving just two statues guarding the door to another area, which Carter had a hunch must be the burial chamber.

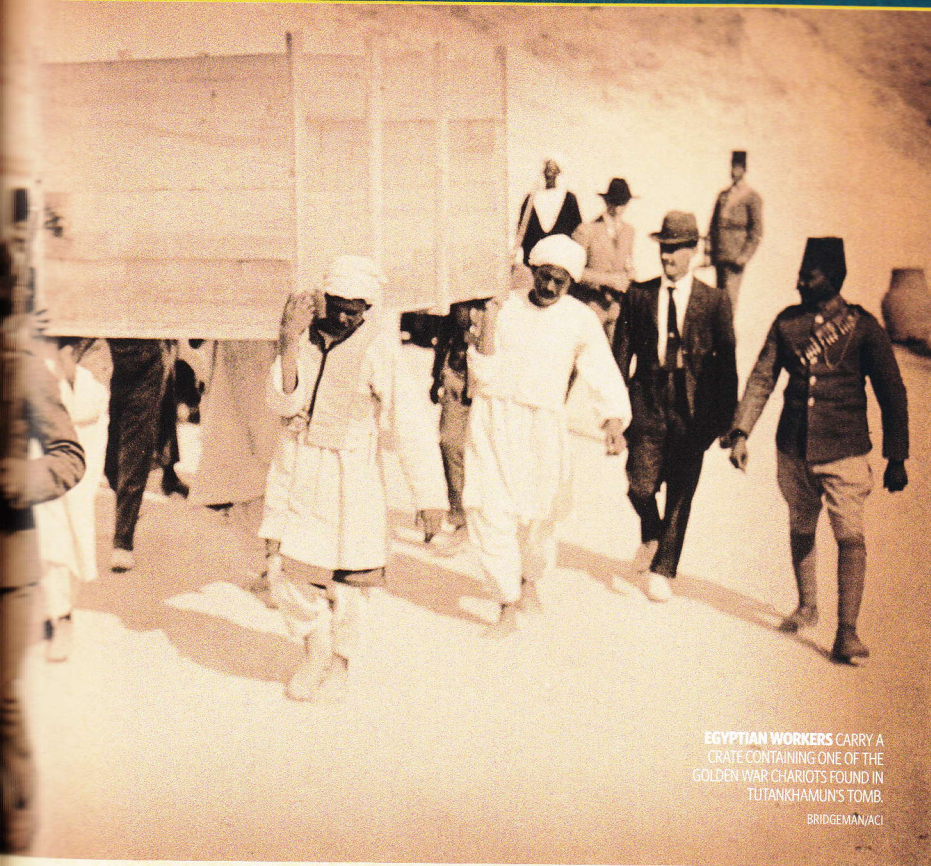
That door was opened in February 1923, and the room was found to be entirely taken up with three nested shrines. Deep inside these lay a series of gold sarcophagi, at the heart of which lay the mummy of King Tut wearing his golden funerary mask. Abutting the burial chamber was another, smaller room, which became known as the Treasury. Containing the most precious of Tutankhamun's royal possessions, it had successfully eluded grave robbers for an astonishing 3,000 years.

Carnarvon died a few months after the discovery, from an infected mosquito bite. But Carter would survive to complete his work. He continued with the task of inventorying the myriad contents of the tomb, completing his work in 1932. He spent his final years preparing the results for publication, and died in London in 1939, age 64. Carter's perseverance and good fortune uncovered a little-known pharaoh and made him a phenomenon. ■

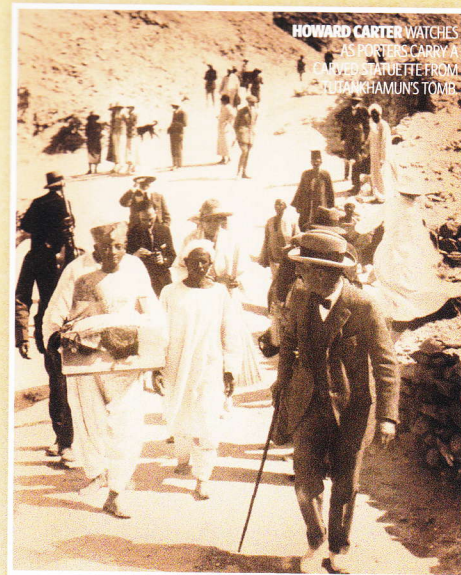
EGYPTOLOGIST MAITE MASCORT HAS WRITTEN EXTENSIVELY ON HER RESEARCHES AT THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CITY OF OXYRHYNCHUS.



S. VANNINI/GETTY IMAGES



EGYPTIAN WORKERS CARRY A CRATE CONTAINING ONE OF THE GOLDEN WAR CHARIOTS FOUND IN TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB.
BRIDGEMAN/ACI



HOWARD CARTER WATCHES AS PORTERS CARRY A CARVED STATUE FROM TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB.

BETTMANN/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES

Transporting Tut's Treasures

At the end of each archaeological season, the inventoried items had to be transported to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The objects were placed on wagons that were moved on railway tracks. Carter only had a limited number of these tracks, over which the wagons were pushed as far as possible. The tracks from behind were then moved to the front, and so on, until they reached the Nile—a journey of a few miles that took many hours. Boats carried the cargo to the capital. The two most iconic items in the tomb, the golden casket and the funerary mask, were transported in a specially equipped carriage, escorted by soldiers.

THE LONG INVENTORY

FROM TOMB TO MUSEUM

BACKED UP BY A SPECIALIST team, including archaeologists Arthur Mace, chemist and Egyptologist Alfred Lucas, and the photographer Harry Burton, Carter spent 10 years analyzing the contents of the tomb, which contained more than 5,000 objects. Each one was inventoried, photographed in situ, briefly described, and moved to a makeshift laboratory nearby.



The Long Haul

Carter was personally involved in removing the most valuable items from the tomb, such as the funerary bed decorated with the head of the hippopotamus goddess Ammit (above) and the painted bust of Tutankhamun (right).



BRIDGEMAN/ACI



S. VANNI/GETTY IMAGES