

## Director's Note

Wandering through the shadowy, twisting corridors of the great carved tomb of Perneb is often among the vivid experiences of a childhood visit to the Metropolitan Museum. Many of us have happy memories of hours spent browsing in the Egyptian rooms, among a variety of objects whose owners seem more like acquaintances than ancient names and dates on labels; perhaps nothing else in the Museum seems so uncomplicated and so approachable.

The Metropolitan is soon going to offer its visitors the opportunity to study this collection in a superlative new installation that will emphasize its breadth and diversity. Next spring we will open the first of a series of galleries that have been completely redesigned to combine attractive display with the latest technical developments in climate-controlled cases and educational presentations. Ultimately everything in the Museum's distinguished Egyptian collection will be on view or easily available to scholars and students, reflecting the three thousand years of this civilization's cultural history. This program will culminate in 1978-1979 with the opening of the new wing housing the Temple of Dendur, whose sun-filled setting will suggest its original location on the banks of the Nile. The galleries will be introduced by an orientation room explaining the basic concepts of Egyptian art and culture; there will be an area devoted to changing exhibitions, and part of each gallery will provide supplementary information about the objects it contains.

The scope of these objects is extraordinarily wide, for one of the important characteristics of Egyptian archaeology is that humble belongings as well as princely ones accompanied their owners to the grave and have been preserved, allowing us a glimpse of simple ways of life as well as royal luxuries and priestly rituals. The Museum's collection is particularly comprehensive, for when the Egyptian Department was founded in 1906, the Trustees felt that the Metropolitan would have a better chance of forming a well-rounded collection if it sent its own archaeological expedition to Egypt, rather than relying on piecemeal acquisition. And so, for thirty years, the Museum's Egyptologists spent part of their time in Egypt, conducting excavations such as those featured in this issue of the *Bulletin*: with some triumphs, with some disappointments, with some magnificent finds, with many modest but nevertheless revealing ones. The new installation will present this varied and fascinating material chronologically, so that tools and schoolboys' tablets (corrected in red by their teachers) will be shown along with the golden sandals of a pharaoh's favorite.

When it was originally planned, this *Bulletin* was devoted to Egyptian archaeology to herald the opening of the first of these exciting new galleries. But now there is another event that it is appropriate to mention. Thanks to an agreement just signed, it is my great pleasure to be able to announce one of the most important exhibitions ever presented by the Metropolitan Museum: fifty treasures from the tomb of Tutankhamun will be sent from the Cairo Museum to America by the Egyptian Government.

Spectacular among history's great archaeological discoveries, Tutankhamun's tomb was found in November 1922. Four chambers were filled with

*On the cover: Good luck at last! A four-thousand-year-old tomb cache is found by the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Expedition*

*Frontispiece: The jackal god Anubis, the vigilant watcher over the dead, guards the entrance to the Treasury in Tutankhamun's tomb – one of Museum photographer Harry Burton's superb photographs of this great discovery*

objects both precious and beautiful, ranging from possessions he had enjoyed as a child to the elaborate provisions designed to comfort and delight him in the afterlife. Few have ever been shown in the United States, and their presentation here, and in five other museums throughout this country, will be an event of consummate importance.

In return for the loan of this show, the American museums will help in the renovation of the Cairo Museum, particularly the galleries now housing the Tutankhamun material, and will participate in the rescue of the lovely island sanctuary of Philae, "the Pearl of Egypt," whose shrines and temples are endangered by the waters of the Aswan Dam. Just as the majestic temples of Abu Simbel have been saved and are again open to public enjoyment, we are working to save Philae, whose popularity and splendor lasted into Roman times.

As you will see from twelve pages of photographs in this *Bulletin*, the Metropolitan Museum has an unusually strong interest in the Tutankhamun discovery. Our Egyptian Expedition was excavating only a short distance away when Howard Carter found Tutankhamun's tomb. Carter immediately asked the Museum to lend him the services of Harry Burton, the Expedition's talented photographer, so that each object could be properly documented. In reply, the Curator of the Egyptian Department offered to make available to Carter any of the Museum's staff that he needed, with the result that four members of the Metropolitan's Egyptian Expedition took part in this memorable event. The photographs in this *Bulletin* illustrate not only the magnificence of the find but also Burton's sensitivity and skill: he had to make these glass negatives under the most primitive of working conditions. We will be proud to put on display some of the pieces whose photographic portraits we have long admired, and anticipate with the keenest enthusiasm an exhibition of works of art as beautiful as they are historically significant.

Thomas Hoving  
Director

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When the Department of Egyptian Art was established at the Metropolitan Museum in 1906, it was established with a resolution to organize an archaeological expedition to Egypt to help the department acquire objects. The Expedition's staff accompanied its excavating activities with careful documentation, and a special graphic branch was devoted to copying paintings and reliefs in line drawings and full-color facsimiles. The scientific value of the excavations was considerable; they provided the Museum with important records concerning its discoveries, and a wide public with historical information. The commitment of the Trustees and individual donors was strong: from 1906 to 1936 the Expedition was supported by gifts, in particular from J. Pierpont Morgan and Edward S. Harkness, and by allocations from the Rogers Fund.

After beginning at Lisht and in the Kharga Oasis, Curator Albert M. Lythgoe decided to seek a concession at Thebes, the richest archaeological area in Egypt. In 1910 a concession was granted, Herbert E. Winlock was made Director, and for twenty-four seasons members of the Expedition worked in that fabulous area. It was a time of great interest in Egypt and in the process of discovery. The accounts that the staff of the Expedition sent back to Museum members through the *Bulletin* became almost as eagerly awaited and cherished as the objects themselves. These objects would be placed in the galleries from time to time, together with explanatory information and restorations to help the visitor understand them.

The age of great discovery is past, just as the broad possibilities of acquisition, a major program of restoration, and even the days of excavation with seven hundred workmen are past. But the contribution of that excavated material to this collection is enormous. Very few Egyptian collections in the world have such a proportion of objects with context recorded, or have such a wealth of records to establish date, and the meaning of those objects to the ancient Egyptians.

A time of exhibition and care is our responsibility at present, to be followed by an intensive publication program. One cannot help but long for the age of discovery, however, and the chance to participate in it. The personal involvement was tremendous, and the reports of the Expedition members that follow reflect it.

Christine Lilyquist  
Curator of Egyptian Art

# Digger's Luck

H. E. Winlock  
(then Assistant Curator, and later  
Director of The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art)

From *Scribner's Magazine* (February  
1921) and *The Metropolitan Museum  
of Art Bulletin* (December 1920)

As soon as anybody finds out that you excavate in Egypt, their first question is bound to be: "And how do you know *where* to dig?" I have always found that if you answer truthfully and tell them that there is no more infallible rule for knowing where to dig than there is for knowing where to find a cook, they immediately put you down as incorrigibly flippant. What they want to hear about is an archaeological divining rod, or a story with a dream or table-rapping in it, and so I always beg the question.

But in the field with a couple of hundred workmen on your hands you can't wriggle out of giving some sort of an answer, and the way you arrive at it—or the way it answers itself—sometimes is most unexpected. Here is the story of the Egyptian Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum at Thebes, in Upper Egypt, in the winter of 1919/20, and the fluke that turned a very bad guess into a howling success.

Just before sunset on March 17, 1920, all of our guesses seemed to me very bad ones indeed. I was in no mood to take in the violet shadows creeping up out of the deep ravines of the mountain. I was absolutely indifferent to the silvery dust raised in the evening glow by two lumbering old water buffaloes, driven by a diminutive slip of a girl, shambling up across my path from the green fields to some cavernous tomb that was house and stable for a whole family. Men were coming back from the fields; gossiping women were returning from the wells with water jars precariously balanced on their veiled heads; lop-eared goats shuffled along the dusty paths, still smelling out wisps of parched straw, heedless of the surprising antics of the kids that bucked and jumped around them unaware of the seriousness of life.

I thought life was very serious indeed, for it was about time to write another letter home explaining why we hadn't

found anything yet; and leaving my nimble little mouse-gray donkey to pick his way through the pitfalls that beset our homeward path, I began to run over the situation as it stood.

We had dug for eight weeks in a valley where the mighty pharaohs of the Egyptian empire had been found hidden away some years ago, and we had found literally nothing.

Then we had taken a desperate chance on a big tomb cut in the cliffs. Its two dark, yawning entrances led into gloomy tunnels where great bats squealed like enormous litters of blind puppies every time we ventured into the mysterious twilight of the rock-cut chambers behind. In front of the entrances were mountainous piles of rock fallen from the crags above, and down below, in the desert valley, were traces of a gateway. We had looked the place over time after time, and many a long argument we had had before we had decided to risk a fortnight of the little cool weather left to us. The place had been dug over before, and we had copies of the discouraging reports of our predecessors there, but after all there had seemed a chance that some fragments of sculpture might be buried under those fallen cliffs in front. Harry Burton, who took the expedition's photographs, had been all for the place. He had noticed a big block of limestone lying in the rubbish in front and had persuaded Ambrose Lansing (director of the expedition) and me to help him heave it over to look at the under side, and when we saw the delicate tracery and brilliant coloring of a frieze pattern of four thousand years ago upon it, we had been won over to take the chance.

We had worked now for three solid weeks with all of our hopes centered on a big pile of rubbish on one side of the courtyard, and had found nothing whatever under it but the hammers and rollers some ancient quarrymen had left up there after they



*Above: The entrance to one of the corridors which we had believed would hardly repay the clearing*

*Far right: A photograph taken in the tomb before anything was touched: the noble sits on his porch taking the count of the cattle driven past him*

had smashed up the facade to get stones for some later building. We had left the men there for a few more days to clear out the fallen stones from the corridor so that we could make a plan of the tomb – our archaeological consciences demanded that of us. Otherwise we were finished, and our haunting question of where to dig was still unanswered.

I had gotten as far on my way home as the ruins of Medinet Habu – but no farther toward an answer to my question than I have told the reader. The walls of the old temple were turning pink in the sunset glow. The water wheel that drones and quavers all day under the palms nearby was silent for the night. Way up where the purple shadows were creeping out of the valleys in the tawny mountain I could see little specks of men and boys winding down the paths from the work at the tomb. The evening meal was being prepared and the bluish smoke of cook fires was beginning to float over Gurnet Murrai, where the tombs are crowded dwellings. At the house they would be getting tea ready and I was late.

From among the passers-by on the path there broke into my thoughts a cheerful voice saying: “May thy night be happy.”

I looked around and recognized one of our workmen, Abdullahi. “And may thine be happy and blessed,” I replied, without checking my donkey, who was far more interested in getting home to his evening clover than in stopping for wayside greetings.

But Abdullahi felt otherwise. He must shake hands and evidently wanted to stop and chat.

“I am going home,” he informed me, and I said that that seemed evident. “And when I get my blankets I am going back to spend the night at the tomb.” For the life of me I couldn’t remember whether we kept guards up there at night to look after the

equipment, but I supposed we must, and as I started on again I laughingly hoped he had something to watch. “The Headman Hamid says I must tell no one, but your Honor will see something up there,” Abdullahi called after me.

He had charged his voice with all the mysteriousness he could put into it and his whole manner would have been strange enough to impress me at any other time, but I was convinced of failure, and when I remembered that Abdullahi belonged to one of the gangs which were clearing those corridors, I knew perfectly well there could be nothing to it all.

At the house I met Lansing and our associate Walter Hauser coming out. They said they were going up to the work, and showed me a scrap of paper with a hastily scribbled note from Burton: “Come *at once* and bring your electric torch. Good luck *at last*.” This seemed preposterous. Surely it was another false alarm, and we had had so many of them. However, there was Abdullahi and his mysteriousness, and I decided to let my tea wait a while and go along with them, but I refused to have any hopes, and the three of us got ready all sorts of sarcasms for Burton’s benefit as we trudged along.

A little knot of Egyptians were standing around the mouth of the tomb in the twilight. Inside in the gloom we could just make out Burton and the head men. There was something in the air that made our sarcastic remarks sound flat. Burton pointed to a yawning black crack between the wall of the corridor and the rock floor. He said he had tried to look in with matches but they didn’t give light enough and told us to try the torches.

At least a hole here was unexpected, but we had looked into so many empty holes. Anyway, I got down flat on my stomach, pushed the torch into the hole, pressed the button, and looked in.

The beam of light shot into a little world of four thousand years ago, and I was gazing down into the midst of a myriad of brightly painted little men going this way and that. A tall, slender girl gazed across at me perfectly composed; a gang of little men with sticks in their upraised hands drove spotted oxen; rowers tugged at their oars on a fleet of boats, while one ship seemed foundering right in front of me with its bow balanced precariously in the air. And all of this busy going and coming was in uncanny silence, as though the distance back over the forty centuries I looked



across was too great for even an echo to reach my ears.

I was completely stupefied when I gave the torch to the others and one by one they looked in through the crack. It was almost night now and we saw that we could do nothing until the morning. While the other two went back to the house to get sealing wax and cord, Burton and I sat down dazedly to talk it over. He told me how he had been coming down from the mountaintop, where he had been taking photographs, and had stopped at the work to dismiss the men, as usual. As he expected, they had cleared most of the fallen stone from the corridors, but just before he had come along one of the men in this one had noticed that the chips had an unaccountable way of trickling into a crack as fast as he dug. At first the man hadn't paid much attention. It was just one of those crazy whims of the Americans that had made them want to dig out such a place anyway. Still he had called the head man of his gang and together they were scraping away the stones from the crack when Burton had arrived.

When we left the tomb for the night the crack was stopped up with stones and stretched across with strings securely sealed with sealing wax. The gang, which was working in the corridor, had received all sorts of instructions about keeping some one on watch all night. None of them slept a wink for the next three nights, I am sure, sitting in the starlight in front of the tomb discussing the backsheesh they hoped to get. We were no less excited. That night we sat up late discussing what the place could be and each one of us dwelling at length on some marvel he alone had seen. I believe someone claimed to have seen Santa Claus and his eight



*The left-hand corner of the chamber:  
a granary and a fleet of boats as  
found*



tiny reindeer – or possibly I dreamed I had seen him. Anyway, I for one woke up in the morning with a raging headache that was made no better by trying to seem masterfully calm.

In the morning our work began, and three terrific days followed. Burton rigged up mirrors to throw sunlight down the corridor and took a photograph of the crack in the rocks. Then we dug in front of it and found in the floor of the corridor a little pit, about a yard square and waist-deep. It had been carefully filled with chips of the very rock it was cut in, and both ancient thieves and modern archaeologists had taken this filling for the living rock of the mountain and passed over it. The side of the pit under the wall of the corridor was built up of mud bricks, and when we had photographed them and taken them away we were looking down into a little low chamber about three yards square and scarcely four feet high into which no man had entered for four thousand years. Rock had fallen from the roof – in doing so it had opened up the crack we had looked into the night before – and had upended one of the boats and broken others, but except for this nothing had been disturbed. Our only fear was that as fresh air got into the chamber more would come tumbling down, and we were torn between a desire to get everything out safely before we had a catastrophe and to get a complete set of photographs and plans of everything just as we found it. It was just luck that made both possible, for after we were finished tons of rock began to fall in the tomb.

We photographed, we planned, we carefully cleared away chips of fallen stone, and then we lifted out one or two of the boats or a group of little men and began all over again. One night will always remain a weird picture in my mind. Lansing and I had gone up to clear away more of the fallen shale to get ready for Burton's

photographs in the morning. From afar off we began to halloo to the guards, for we had lent them a couple of revolvers and we were afraid of the zeal they might show in their use in the dark. Duly challenged, we made our way up the slope and inside the tomb, and lit candles to work by. For hours we worked away, the shadowy workmen pattering bare-footed back and forth from the flickering candlelight out to the open, where the brilliant desert stars seemed to hang right down to the mouth of the gloomy tunnel.

As we worked along through those three days and nights we began to realize what it was that we had so unexpectedly discovered. The tomb was that of Meketra, a great noble of four thousand years ago. He himself had been buried in a gilded coffin and a sarcophagus of stone in a mortuary chamber deep down under the back of the corridor, where the thieves had destroyed everything ages before our day. Only this little chamber had escaped and it was turning out to be a sort of secret closet where the provision was stored for the future life of the great man.

He could not conceive of an existence in which he would not require food and drink, clothing and housing, such as he was used to in this life, and being a rich man, naturally he wanted an estate in eternity like that which he had owned on earth. His philosophy carried him beyond that of the savage chieftain who expects a horde of servants to be slaughtered at his grave. He attained the same end by putting in his tomb a host of little wooden servants, carved and painted, at their daily tasks, working before little portraits of himself. The spirits of these little servants worked eternally, turning out spirit food or sailing ships upon a spirit Nile, and his soul could enter any one of the little portraits of himself at will to reap the harvest of their labors. In short, we

had found a picture of the life the great noble hoped to live in eternity, which was nothing more or less than the one he had led on earth forty centuries ago.

The first thing we had seen when we had peeped through the crack had been a big model nearly six feet long, showing the noble seated on a porch among his scribes, taking the count of his cattle as they were driven past. In the back of the room we found, under a lot of other models, neatly stacked, the stable where these same cattle were being fattened, and finally when we came to move one big box-like affair in the far corner – a model I had tried my best to get a peep into and almost fallen headlong in the process – we found it was the butcher shop where the cattle's life history ended. The night we worked in the tomb by lamplight we got a peep into a granary where diminutive scribes sat writing down the quantity of grain being measured and carried to the bins by hard-working laborers. And later we ran across the bakery where the grain was ground and made into loaves and the brewery where the home beverage was being fermented in tall crocks and then decanted into round-bellied jugs. Lansing extricated two canoes manned by fishermen, who hauled a miraculous draft of painted wooden catfish and perch in a seine, and I picked the fallen stones out of two gardens in which copper ponds – that would hold real water – were surrounded by little wooden fig trees and cool, shady porches. Then there was a carpenter shop and another shop where women spun thread and wove cloth. The very threads on their distaffs and spindles – frail as cobwebs though they were with age – had remained unbroken in that eternal stillness.

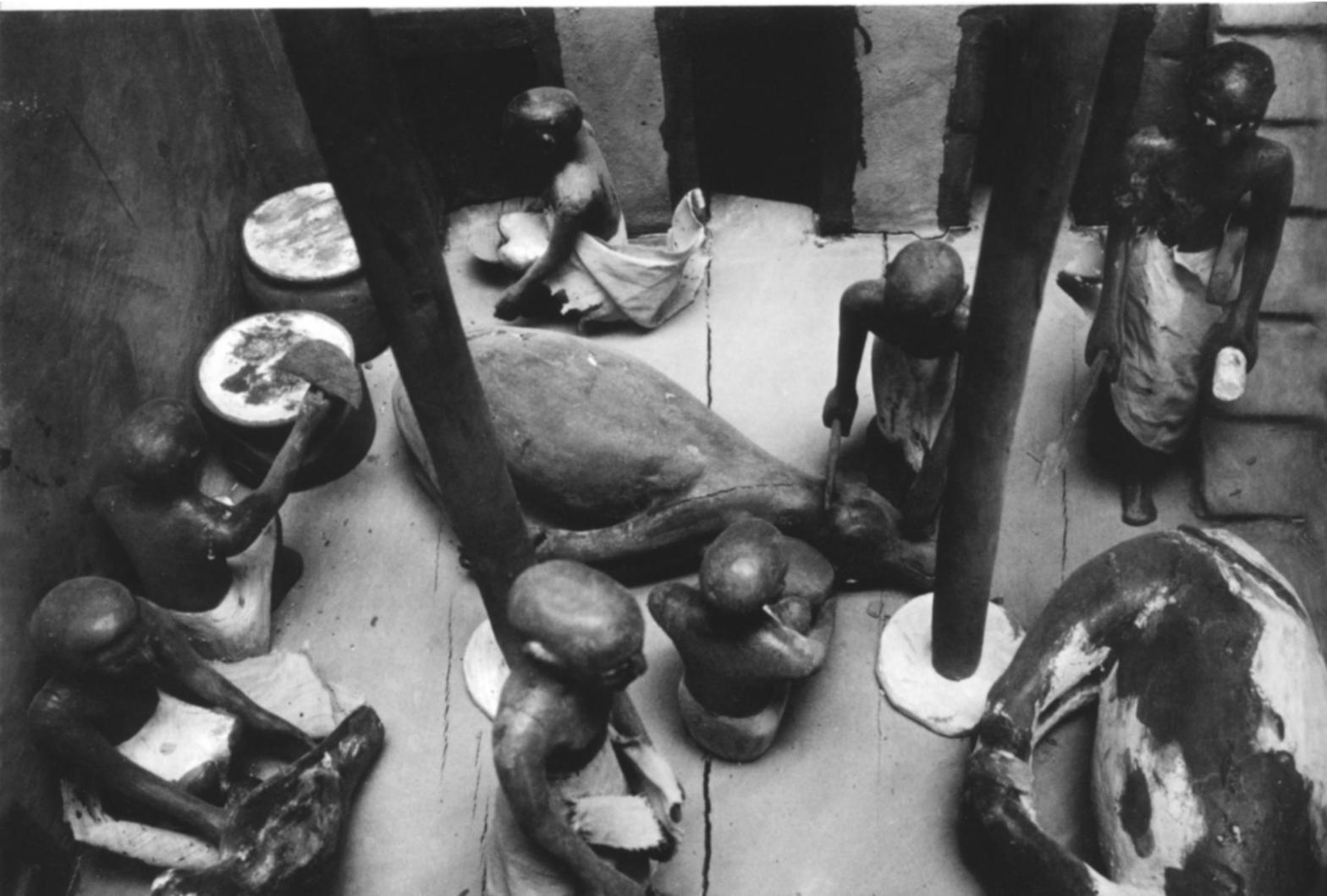
The business of the great man entailed a lot of traveling, and his idle hours were passed in pleasure sails or fishing trips on the Nile or on the

*On either side of the tomb chamber stood the statues of two girls dressed in fancifully colored garments, bringing offerings – one with a basket of wine jugs and the other with a basket of meats and breads upon her head, and each with a live duck in her hand. They are carved of wood, half life-size and practically as perfect as the day they were made*



still backwaters of the marshes. On the celestial Nile he would want to go voyaging or yachting, too, and therefore a dozen model boats were put in the chamber. We found them setting sail, the captain bossing the sailors who sway on the halyards and set the backstays. A man throws his whole weight against the pole as they put off from the bank and another stands by in the bow with a fender in case they bump against another vessel. When they travel downstream against the north wind the mast and sail are lowered and the crew man the sweeps. The noble himself sits under the awning in front of the cabin smelling a lotus flower while his son sits on deck beside him and they both listen to a singer and an old blind harper. Inside the cabin squats a steward beside the bunk, under which are shoved two little round-topped leather trunks. A kitchen boat follows, and the cooks get ready a meal to be served when evening comes and they are moored to the bank. There were yachts, to be sailed with the wind or paddled against it, and a low raking skiff, from the bow of which two men are casting harpoons while others land an enormous fish over the side.

Thus had the great man lived and so did he expect to live after he had gone to his "eternal abode," as he called it. Finally, the funeral day had come. His body was brought across the river from his mortal home in Thebes, through the green fields where the wondering farmers leaned on their hoes to watch it pass, and then up through the rocky gorges to his tomb. A long procession followed him, each model borne on the head of one of his serfs, and a crowd of girls and women from his estates brought baskets of wine and beer and baked meats for the funeral banquet. Even their contributions were expected to go on forever, and statues of two of them, half life-sized, had been made to go with the models in the chamber.



*In one room of the stable in which the cattle are fattened, the stall-fed beeves are lined up at the manger; in the other the already fat animals are being fed by hand, and one has so nearly got to his limit that he lies upon the floor while a cowherd stuffs food into his mouth*

*In the slaughterhouse, the beeves have been led into a columned hall, two stories high and open to the air high up on one side. They are thrown on the ground and trussed up for butchering; a scribe with pen case and papyrus roll is present to keep the accounts; a head butcher superintends the killing and two men make blood puddings over braziers in the corner. On a balcony at the back the joints of beef "hang" on lines to ripen*

*The models in the Metropolitan Museum are the cattle stable, the butcher shop, the granary, the brewery and bakery, a house model, a girl bringing an offering of food, the sporting boat, two traveling boats, two yachts, a kitchen tender, and a procession of offering bearers*

There we found them, towering above the hordes of miniature men and beasts, looking over at us with grave, wide-open eyes. Four thousand years they had stood thus silent.

Four thousand years is an eternity. Just saying it over and over again gives no conception of the ages that have gone by since that funeral. Stop and think of how far off William the Conqueror seems. That takes you only a quarter of the way back. Julius Caesar takes you halfway back. With Saul and David you are three-fourths of the way, but there remains another thousand years to bridge with your imagination. Yet in that dry, still, dark little chamber those boats and statues had stood indifferent to all that went on in the outer world, as ancient in the days of Caesar as Caesar is to us, but so little changed that even the fingerprints of the men who put them there were still fresh upon them. Not only fingerprints but even flyspecks, cobwebs, and dead spiders remained from the time when these models were stored in some empty room in the noble's house waiting for his day of death and burial. I even suspect that some of his grandchildren had sneaked in and played with them while they were at that house in ancient Thebes, for some of them were broken in a way that is hard to explain otherwise. Possibly that is a wild guess, but at any rate there is no doubt of what had happened to them in the little chamber in the tomb on the day of the funeral. After all of the models had been stowed away and the masons had come to brick up the doorway, they had found one of the boats in their way. So one of them picked it up and laid it to one side on

top of the granary, and under bow and stern he left a great smear of the mud he had just been mixing for mortar. There those smears still remain.

The letter to the Museum that had seemed so much of a task when I was riding home that evening and met Abdullahi had turned out to be a very easy one to write after all, and the tomb which we were going to abandon kept our workmen busy for four weeks more. We cleaned it up from the gateway at the bottom of the slope, right up the causeway, through the courtyard and inside to the bottoms of the pits. Not a square foot was neglected, nor did we have any reason to regret our labors. To one side of the courtyard we found the little tomb of Wah, a retainer of the great noble, absolutely intact, which in itself would have been no mean return for our season. The place which had been left unfinished by two other expeditions, and which we ourselves had almost left, discouraged, had finally panned out a success.

The little models had to be parted after all these ages together. Half of them went to the Egyptian Government, under the terms of our concession, and are now in the museum in Cairo. The others can be seen in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. If any reader should see them there in their glass cases he will get a far better view of them than we did with our electric torches flashing through that crack in the rock – but none of us would swap places with him. They meant too much to us that evening when we were wondering where we would dig next.



*At the granary the ever-present clerks sit in the courtyard with papyrus rolls and tablets keeping the account, while two men scoop up the wheat in measures and load it into sacks, and others carry it up the stairs to dump it into three capacious bins. By the front door there sits a boss with cane in hand superintending the work and watching that no one leaves before the time is up*



*Two model gardens were provided for the soul of the great man. Just as when we make a child's doll house we leave out lots of details like stairways and put all of our attention on the more important and showy rooms, so the ancient model-maker has devoted all his pains to show only those parts of the house and garden which would most delight the heart of his patron. There is the high wall which shuts out the outside world. Within, a little oblong pool – of copper so that it will hold real water – is surrounded by fruit trees, and facing it is a cool deep porch with gaily painted columns. At the back of the porch a great double state-doorway with a fanlight above, a smaller door for everyday use, and a tall latticed window give a semblance of the façade of the house itself. The trees, made of wood with each little leaf carved and pegged in place, are typical of the naive realism of all of the models. The fruit is shown, not growing from the twigs but from the main stems and branches so that there shall be no doubt but that the sycamore fig is intended*



*The bakery and brewery are combined in one building. In the first room two women grind the grain into flour and a man makes it into cakes of dough, while another treads into a mash in a barrel. Nearby, the rising mash stands in four tall crocks while the yeast ferments, and when it has finished working, another man pours it into a row of stoppered jugs which stand along the wall. In the other room is the bakery. Men are cracking the grain with pestles; women grind the flour; men mix the dough and make fancifully shaped loaves and cakes, while others bake in ovens*

*The carpenter's shop is a half-roofed-over court with a furnace for sharpening tools and a tremendous tool chest full of saws, adzes, chisels, and drills beneath the shed. Around the sides of the open court squat gangs of carpenters squaring great timbers with adzes and smooth-surfacing them with blocks of sandstone. In the middle of the court a sawyer has lashed a balk of timber upright to a post while he rip-saws it down into boards, and another carpenter sits astride of a plank cutting mortise holes in the edge with mortising chisel and mallet*

*In the weaving shop three women prepare the flax and put it into buckets for three others who spin it, standing with their distaffs in their left hands and turning their spindles with their right hands against their knees. When the spindles are full they cross to the opposite side of the shop to stretch the newly spun thread out on three pegs on the wall. Meanwhile, other women weave cloth on two looms stretched out on the floor*



A great man like Meketra would be required to journey up and down the river to administer his scattered estates and to fulfill his duties in the king's administration. Travel, as always in Egypt, was wholly by boat, and a man of high rank would have owned his own vessels for travel and others for pleasure, for the river and the marshes were the playgrounds of the Egyptians. Half the models we found, therefore, are ships and boats to fulfill the needs of Meketra in a future state which was to be but a repetition of his mortal life. He lived a generation or two before the new cult came into Upper Egypt which required a man to prepare a mystic barge to accompany the Sun on its journeys and it is doubtful whether he even intended any of these boats to represent his funeral float. They are, in fact, models of the everyday ships which plied up and down the river four thousand years ago.

One great interest of these models is the information they supply on rigging and sailing. In the first place they were originally very complete and accurate, and in the second place they are so well preserved that most of them still show ropes and knots intact. For instance, the steering oar can now be studied fully for the first time; one summer I created no end of excitement on the Maine coast by rigging up a New England dory with an exact replica of an Eleventh Dynasty steering gear. The dory was very much of the type of one of these ancient boats. Two great oars were made like those on the yachts; rudder posts were erected, and the oars put in place. The ends of the oar looms were bound to the tops of the rudder posts with loose lashings, and others held the oars down to the rests aft and kept the blades under water. Lines with clove- and half-hitches about the oar looms near the blades were brought inside the stern and

made fast. They took all of the strain off of the rudder posts when underway. Tillers through the oars descending vertically rotated the oars on their axes. To steer, you threw the tiller, like a modern one, in the direction opposite the one you wanted to go. The oars were turned over and, their under sides making a drag in the water, the bow turned smartly if the boat had even moderate way on. Every rope was found to have its purpose and even the size of the oar and its distance aft of the turning point of the boat were seen to have been carefully thought out.

There are four traveling boats – thirty- or forty-footers supposedly, but in the models about four feet long – with crews of from twelve to eighteen sailors besides helmsmen, bowsmen, and captains. Going up river with the prevailing northerly wind, they set a great square sail and we see the little sailors making fast the backstays and hauling on the halyards.

Coming down the river with the current, against the wind, the mast of the traveling boat was lowered in a rest, the sail stowed on the deck, and the crew got out the sweeps. They start their stroke with one foot on the thwart in front and then, all together heaving on their oars, they end it sitting on the thwarts behind them.

The river boats of those days were none too large and cooking meals upon them would have been too much of a nuisance for the great man. The kitchen therefore was upon a second boat which followed behind and was moored alongside at mealtimes. On board women ground flour; men baked – sometimes standing in the dough vat and kneading with their feet while they rolled loaves with their hands; and in the cabins joints of meat were hung up and racks of beer and wine were stowed.

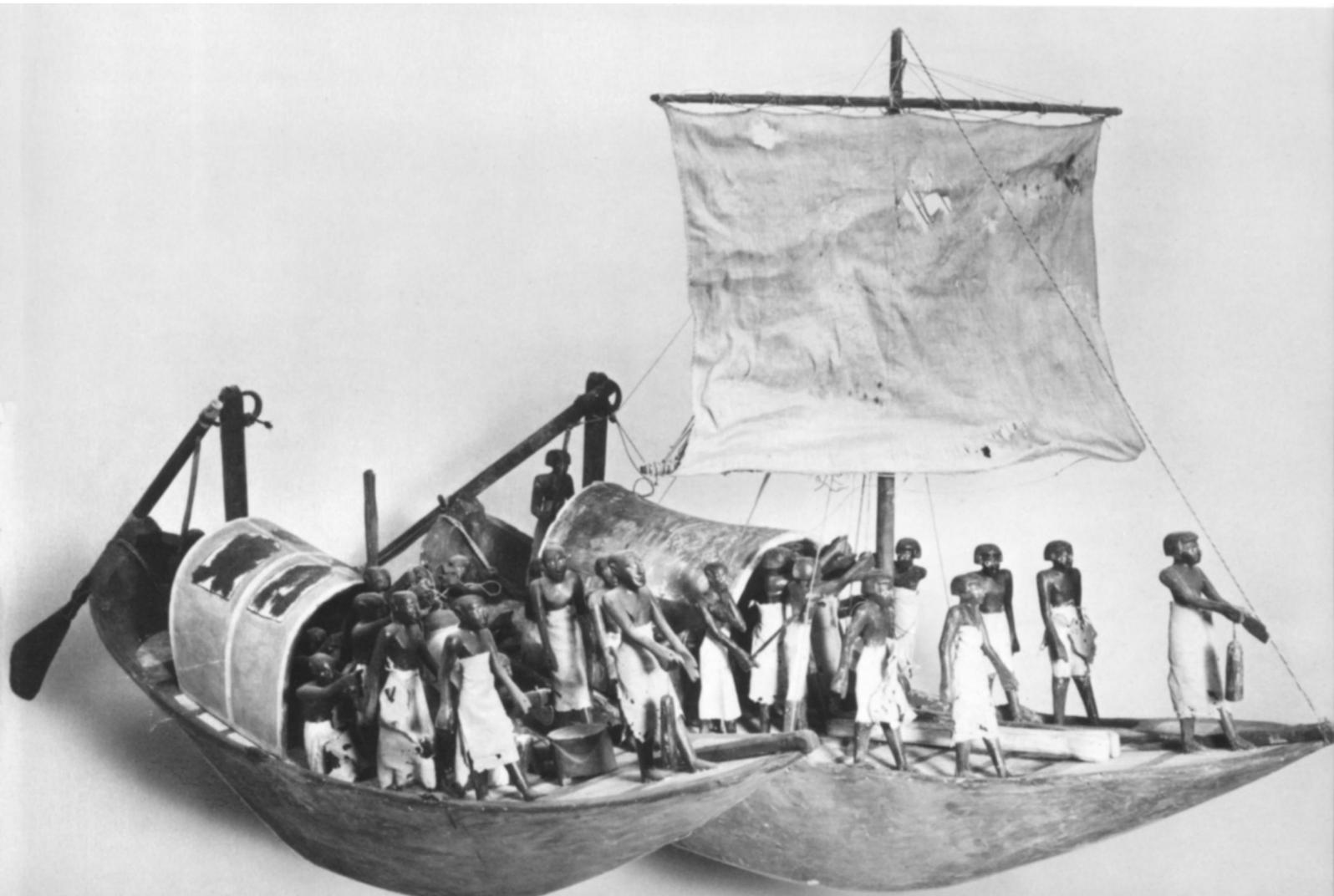
Right: Getting up sail on a traveling boat, alongside of which lies the kitchen tender

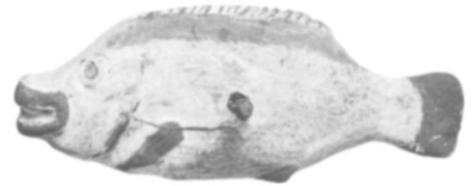
A sort of humorous fidelity inspired the maker of these ships. In the cabin of one sits a cabin steward beside a bunk under which are tucked two little round-topped traveling trunks very much like those of a century ago





*On each of the traveling boats Meketra sits in his chair at his ease smelling a lotus bud. Beside him is a singer, patting his mouth with his hand to give his voice a quavering, warbling sound; in one case the singer is accompanied by a blind harper whose harp sits in a little wooden stand between his knees*

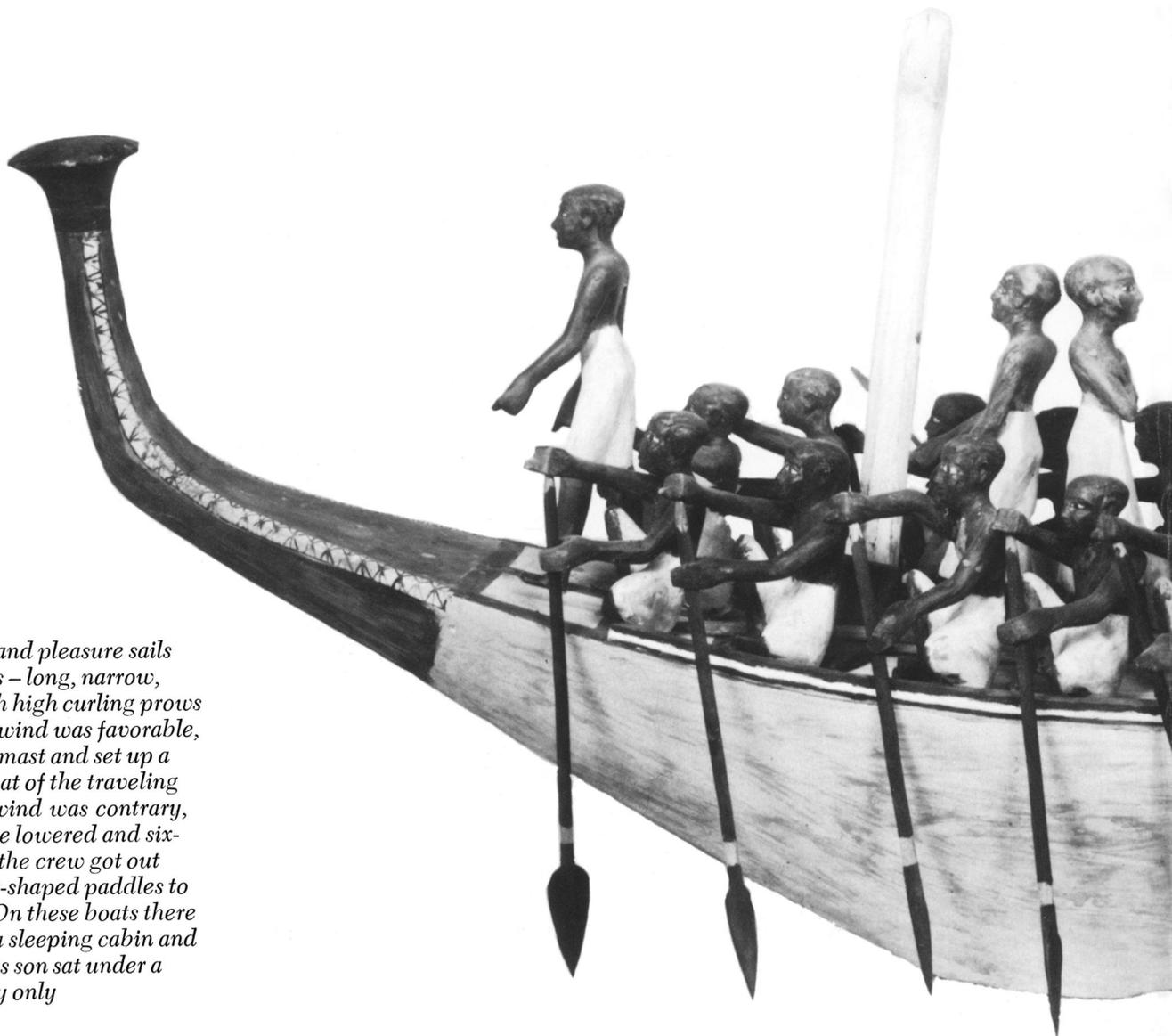




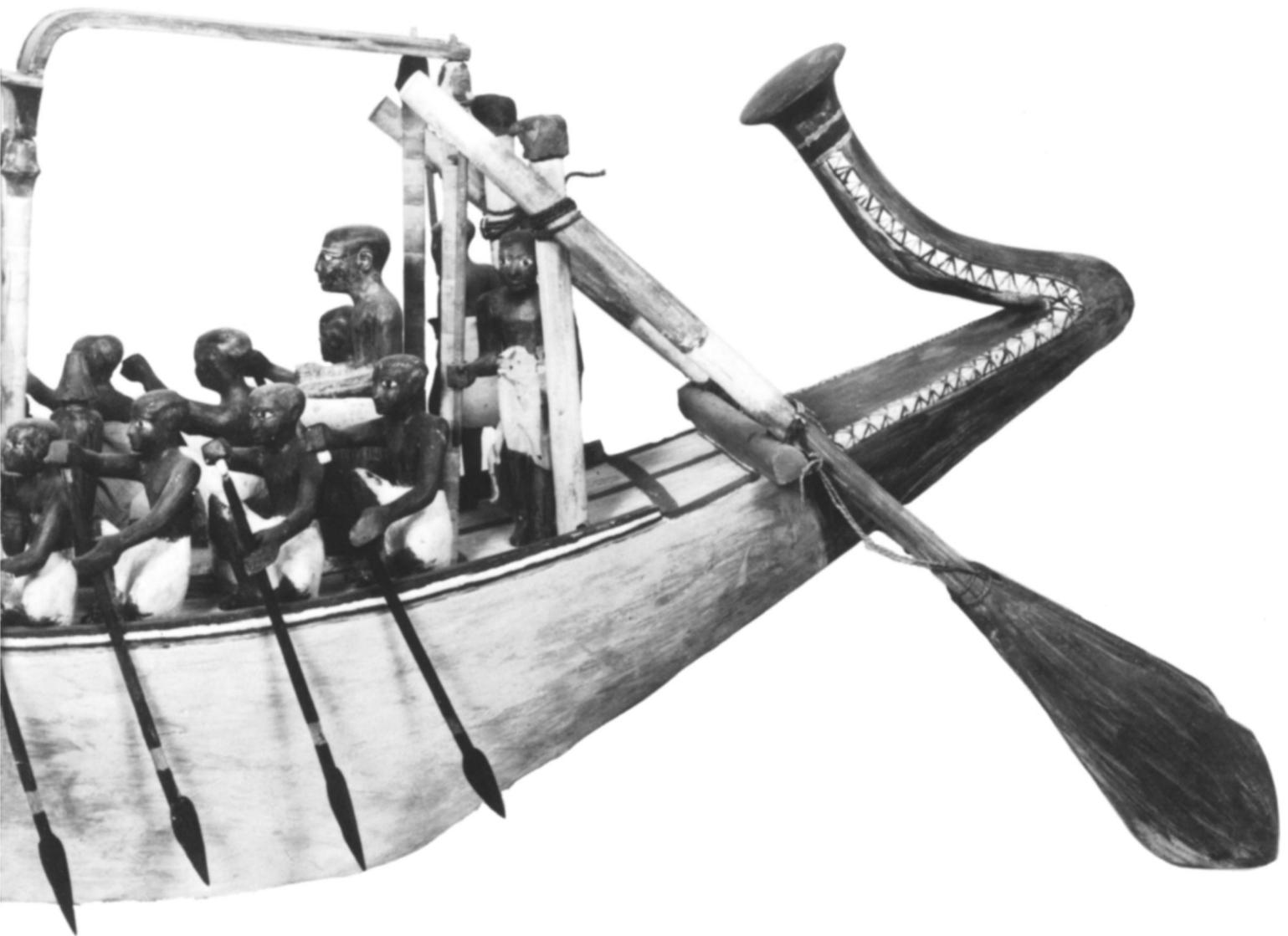
*For sport there is a little, narrow, light-draft skiff for hunting birds and spearing fish in the backwaters. In the bow stand harpooners and the enormous fish (illustrated above) struck by one is being landed over the gunwale. Lashed to the side of the cabin are the poles and stakes for bird nets and a boy and a girl are bringing live ducks which they have caught to the master and his son who sit on deck*



*For shorter trips and pleasure sails there were yachts – long, narrow, green vessels with high curling prows and stems. If the wind was favorable, they stepped the mast and set up a square sail like that of the traveling ship. When the wind was contrary, mast and sail were lowered and sixteen members of the crew got out their black, spear-shaped paddles to propel the boat. On these boats there was no room for a sleeping cabin and the master and his son sat under a little open canopy only*



*There are also two reed canoes drawing a seine full of fish. Two men paddle each canoe, amidships of which stand the fishermen who haul the net and the helper who lands the fish*



# The Mummy of Wah Unwrapped

H. E. Winlock

From *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (December 1940)

The digging in Egypt was about over in March 1920, and we had already made the surprising discovery of the funerary models of Meketra (discussed in the preceding article) when our men, clearing up the ruined portico of his big tomb, unexpectedly struck the buried entrance of a little tomb which had been under it. Rough steps going down had been successfully hidden with shale chips, and the little tomb door was still blocked with a stout brick wall, but once that had been removed we found ourselves in a narrow, rock-cut room which no one had seen for nearly forty centuries. At the back there was a coffin bearing the name of a certain Wah, and in it, under a pile of laundered bed linen, lay a mummy with wrappings still as fresh as the day it had been buried.

The meal of beer and bread and meat beside the coffin was so simple, and so were the few objects in the coffin, that there seemed little likelihood of there being anything of value inside Wah's bandages. Furthermore, we had found his title written in ink on some of the bed sheets and knew that he was simply an "Overseer of a Storehouse," and since this was not the sort of person who might be expected to be buried with jewels, so far as our experience went, it was decided not to unwrap him but to show his mummy in the Museum, just as it was found.

For fifteen years the mummy of Wah had been on exhibition alongside the funerary models of his employer Meketra, when it was used in some experiments with an x-ray apparatus.



The first photograph gave us a sudden surprise. From Wah's neck, down over his chest, and about his wrists crossed in front, there was a whole series of objects clear enough in the x-ray to be easily identified. We could recognize strings of beads around his neck, a broad bead collar over his breast, bracelets and anklets on his arms and legs, and extraordinarily large scarabs near his wrists.

Naturally, we wanted to put this jewelry on exhibition, but at the same time we wanted to preserve the mummy, and so it was finally decided to take careful notes and detailed photographs before it was unwrapped, and then to make a faithful replica with its own mask and bandages after we had removed the jewelry.

The outermost piece of linen on Wah's mummy (Figure 1) was a shawl, wrapped kilt-like about him, with its fringed edge around his waist tucked in in front. It had often been to the laundry; it is pink now but had doubtless once been a henna red; and down the front are two very washed-out lines of hieroglyphs, written in black, which read: "Linen of the temple protecting Nytankhsekhmet, the justified." What temple was meant, or who the person Nytankhsekhmet may have been, we probably shall never know, for she is not mentioned on anything else we ever found.

After we had taken off the kilt we unwound a dozen bandages spiraling

*1. The mummy of Wah before it was unwrapped*

up and down the mummy, each about as wide as one's hand and several nearly forty feet long. Then came sheets wrapped around, or big pieces of linen folded as pads and laid on to fill the mummy out until it was practically a cylinder. Later we came to a layer of bandages streaked with the very thin dregs of a pot of resin, probably smeared on with incantations for Wah's continued existence, for its purpose must have been magic – it could have had no preservative effect. A score more of sheets and pads were then unwrapped, and Wah, from having been a very stout party, was becoming more and more slender, and the face which had been peeking out of thick folds of linen now appeared as part of a stucco mask extending down to his waist (Figure 2).

The pinched little face was gilded, and on it were painted a thin moustache and, around the jowls, scant whiskers. A highly conventionalized wig, striped light blue and dark green, covered the head, and a crudely painted broad collar with red, blue, and green rows of beads was shown suspended on the brown chest. It was a barbarous-looking affair, but after all, Thebes was still a rather countrified, Upper Egyptian town when Wah died, and this mask was clearly bought from one of the more old-fashioned of the local artisans.

When we had taken off the mask and ten more sheets and pads, we came to another layer of resin, thick and black this time, poured all over the front of the body except the head and face (Figure 3). It had been practically dry when the pads had been



laid on it, perhaps because it had been put on at the end of one day's work and had become hard by morning, when the next wrappings had been wound on. When we had removed it, the bandages it had penetrated, and another dozen sheets and pads, we came to the first of Wah's jewelry (Figure 6).

There were four bead necklaces, each with its cords tied behind the nape of his neck (Figure 5). There was a string of 11 big, hollow, silver spheroid beads separated by little cylinders, and another string of 28 smaller ones of gold. A third string was of 48 blue faience ball beads, and a fourth of 28 cylindrical and oval beads of carnelian, amethyst, moss agate, milky quartz, black and white porphyry, and green glazed steatite. The dents in the hollow metal beads and the fraying of the cords of the silver and of the faience necklaces show that at least three of these strings had actually been worn by Wah or by some of his family.

Half a dozen more bandages and pads and then we came to more jewelry. Another string of 45 deep blue faience ball beads had simply been bundled together and laid on the mummy's chest, and over his crossed arms there had been placed four large scarabs. One was of plain blue faience, without any inscription or other device, and strung simply on a short hank of linen threads. The other three are among the surprises of our Egyptian work.

*2. After many layers of wrappings were taken off, Wah's stucco mask was uncovered*

3 (left). Thick, black resin had been poured over this layer of Wah's wrappings

4 (right). The larger silver scarab: the head had been deliberately damaged

5 (below). Wah's necklaces



Two are of massive silver and the third of lapis lazuli. The larger silver scarab (Figure 4) is 1½ inches long and the smaller, 1⅜ inches; each was made up of separate pieces, molded and chased and then soldered together. The lapis lazuli scarab is 1⅞ inches long and perfectly plain, but on the bases of the two silver ones there are graceful, meandering scrolls interspersed with hieroglyphs which made easily recognizable seal devices. Both silver scarabs were oxidized, and when we began to clean the larger one we found hieroglyphs skillfully inlaid on its back in pale gold, those on the one wing reading, "The Nobleman Meketra," and on the other, "The Overseer of a Storehouse Wah" – the names of the owner of the scarab and the noble for whom he worked. The scratches and dents on the polished surfaces of this silver seal scarab and its smaller mate, and the wear in their gold string-holes showed that they had seen real use. But it was surprising to find that just before they had been put on the

mummy the faces of both the silver scarabs and of the lapis lazuli one had been purposely and methodically hammered and pecked as though to blind them. Then, after the blinding, each scarab was strung on a stout linen cord with one barrel-shaped and one cylindrical bead, which obviously made them into amulets to protect Wah against some of the many perils of the life to come. But against what? This is another of our unanswered riddles. Such amulets have never been found before, and they are shown in the painted friezes inside only two of the many coffins of Wah's time, unfortunately in neither case named or explained.

Next we unwrapped half a dozen large bandages and twice as many pads and sheets, each one more stained with resin than the last. Clearly the linen we were now taking off had been put over a third resin layer while it was still soft, and when we got down to it we found stuck fast in it a broad collar (Figures 7, 8) of green-



6. The mummy showing the first of Wah's jewelry: necklaces made of silver, gold, faience, and semiprecious stones (also illustrated as the four lower necklaces in Figure 5)

ish blue beads on Wah's chest and matching bracelets on his wrists and ankles. All were stiff with the resin which saturated them, and tight bandaging had crumpled up the collar, but soaking in alcohol made them all pliable once more, and their stringing needed very little reinforcement before they were ready for exhibition.

What we had found so far had seen actual use in Wah's lifetime. Here we had objects made expressly for the tomb and in the style of centuries long gone by even in Wah's day, and perhaps this explains why they had been put on the body in a perfunctory and careless way. The cords of the broad collar had only been twisted together behind the nape of the neck, and not tied, and there had been a good deal of confusion over the bracelets. There were eight of these last. Two were tied on each ankle, and then, by some mistake which no one noticed, a third was put on the right ankle. Thus, when the undertakers began putting bracelets on the wrists, they had only three left, and the last of these they simply dropped on the body in the soft resin and went on with their bandaging.

We still had quantities of bandages and sheets to take off, but there was only one more object to remove. We had thought from the x-ray that an oval seal was on a finger of the left hand, but what we actually found there was an oval *seweret* bead of red carnelian such as was usually put on the throat of a mummy. Why this one was laid in Wah's palm is still another puzzle.

While we were unwrapping the mummy we had it up on two carpenter's sawhorses; the Egyptians who wrapped it probably had it up on blocks of wood while they squatted beside it on a wide wooden platform. Alongside they had great heaps of old linen bed sheets, which they tore as they needed into pieces about nine feet long or into strips of bandage of



whatever width they required at the moment. Nearby was the resin pot, and sometimes the resin got splashed on the heap of linen and sometimes it was wiped from sticky fingers on the pile of sheets, but the embalmers were very careful not to get any on the bandages that were going to show or any pitchy fingerprints on the part of the mask that was not going to be covered up. A dead mouse and linen resin swabs were dropped on the mummy's knees and hidden under the next bandages. What we had taken for another mouse was much less distinct in the x-ray: it turned out to be a little house lizard, of a kind still common in Egypt, and a cricket was in the same pitch layer beside the broad bead collar.

Linen was costly and was an important form of wealth: in all we unwound 375 square meters of linen from the mummy, and, if we add the sheets we found in the coffin and two pieces which had covered it in the funeral procession, the total from the tomb of Wah comes to 845 square meters – about 1,010 square yards. Much of it had been torn up to make convenient-sized wrappings, but there were still some complete sheets which varied from a fringed shawl 100 inches long to a bed covering 84 feet long. They probably had shrunk in repeated washings, for this was old household linen, shawls and bed coverings saved for the day of need, or procured from friends and relatives or perhaps even bought of strangers for the occasion.

In the corners of at least sixty of these sheets there had been written in ink a hieroglyphic sign or two which told its quality, and often in the opposite corner, the owner's name. For some reason there seems to have been an objection to letting linen go to the tomb so marked, and therefore most of the little labels had been torn out. This was done during the actual wrapping of the mummy, but so care-

7. Another layer of resin-soaked wrappings on Wah's mummy, with a broad collar of greenish blue beads (shown in Figure 8) and matching bracelets on his wrists and ankles

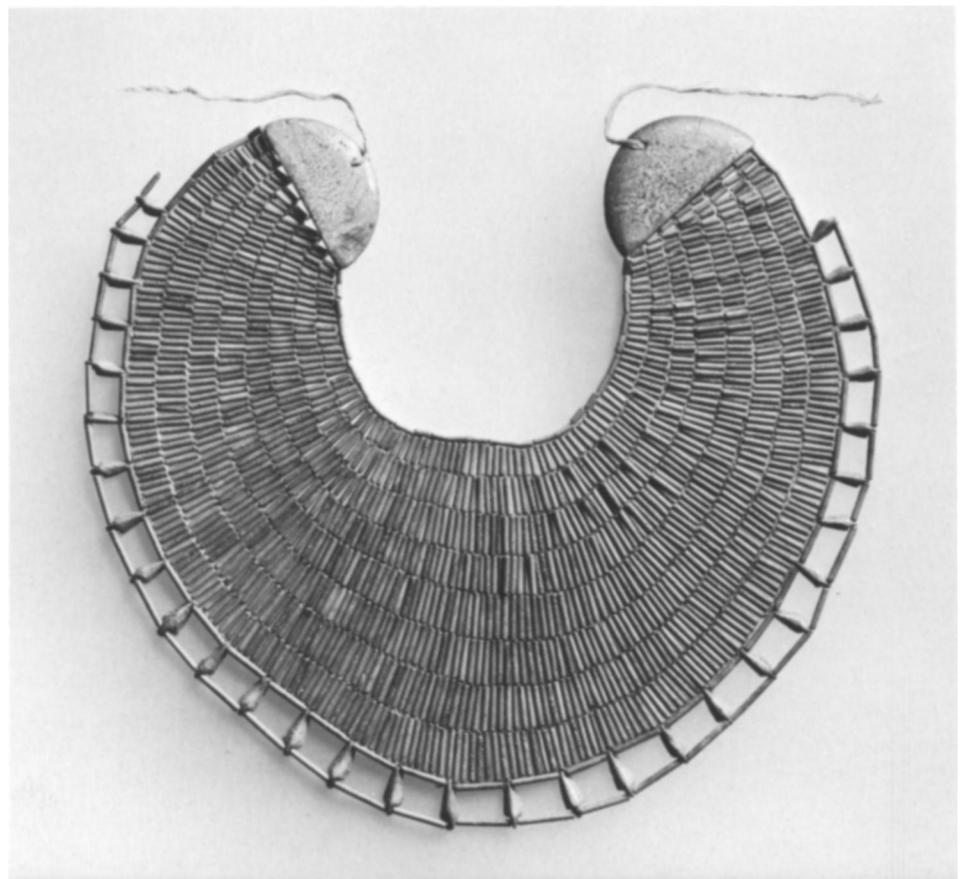
8. The faience broad collar



lessly that three of the torn-out corners got rolled on the mummy with the bandages, and one-third of the marks were entirely overlooked and not torn out at all. Half a dozen gave the names of various people for whom they had originally been woven, and eleven sheets bore the name of Wah himself. One was marked with his name only. Two were marked with his name and the date "Year 2." Then come three sheets of "Year 5," three of "Year 6," and two others without any year, all marked "The Overseer of a Storehouse Wah." It looks as though it had been between the second and fifth years of Seankhkara that Wah got the job of manager of Meketra's storehouses, and as there are no higher dates than the sixth year, he probably died in

the second half of the king's twelve-year reign, or about 2002 B.C.

It only remained to find out what we could from the body of Wah himself, and in this we had the co-operation of Dr. Harry L. Shapiro of the American Museum of Natural History. Wah turned out to be a youngish man about thirty years old, who had undergone a primitive mummification. His brain was probably left in place, and the embalmers seem to have left his viscera intact above the diaphragm. Below that level they appear to have removed them, apparently through an incision in his lower abdomen. The more or less prolonged soaking had made Wah's flesh so soft that too tight a bandaging made a very narrow bundle of his body.



# The Tomb of Queen Meryetamun

## I The Discovery

H. E. Winlock

From *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (December 1930)

The dig that took up the second half of the Metropolitan Museum Egyptian Expedition's 1929/30 season involved finding the answers to so many of the everyday problems of excavation that it may be worthwhile telling the tale as we lived it on the spot. It had the usual delays and disappointments, the invariable surprise when the find was actually made, the laborious groping after the explanation of what had been found, and finally the arrival at a conclusion that seemed to fit the facts discovered. If the reader finds the tale involved in the telling, he will get a very fair idea of the way things generally happen in the field.

On the hillside just north of the Hatshepsut temple in Thebes we had noticed two chip heaps, weathered during centuries, and almost hidden by drifted sand and by fallen rock. We could see that the chip was shale from the lowest strata of the cliff and

that it lay much higher up the slope than any natural agency could have carried it. Of course it was possible that we were dealing with heaps of shale dug out in leveling the temple courts below, but it was hard to see why the quarry chip from there should have been carried so far uphill – and across a ravine, at that. On the other hand it was equally possible that what we had were heaps of chip from the tunneling of some undiscovered tomb or tombs in the shale strata, and it was on this that we pinned our hopes.

The gang of workmen were started at the foot of the hill, one half of them clearing the slope up to the cliff on the north, and the other half working along the bottom, facing west, just outside the north wall of the temple. These last men soon found themselves crowded into a little natural ravine, cut across at the bottom by the temple wall. Above, it was choked with

1. The hillside above the Hatshepsut temple before the excavations

2. Clearing the ravine outside the temple wall



*3. The ravine outside the temple wall cleared, with the mouth of the tomb exposed*

*4. The top of the brickwork blocking the entrance to the tomb, and the rubbish filling the pit*

water-washed sand and gravel; with rubbish thrown out from the temple in the Eighteenth Dynasty; with more water-washed sand pitted with shallow graves of the Roman period; and finally with debris from the modern clearing of the temple. In fact, the ravine had almost disappeared and its rocky sides only emerged slowly under the picks of our men, about twenty feet below what had been the surface of the hillside when we began to dig. Day after day and even week after week passed in dully shifting dirt, with nothing to show for the expenditure of time and money, until the usual doubts began to haunt us as to whether or not the job here was justified.



On February 23 – six weeks after we had started the work on the hill – the Reis Gilan (a foreman) reported that the men had found a rough hole in the rock under their feet, in the side of the ravine toward the temple. It was obviously impossible to explore the hole then with the loose sand and rock on the face of the excavations still overhanging it and threatening to cave in on it. In due course we decided that we could clean out just the mouth and see what the hole might be. We chose a weekly market day, when the work is always shut down, and set a few men to digging. They cleared out an irregular, jagged opening in the rock, and when they were about waist deep, brought to light some rather carelessly laid brickwork on the side of the pit toward the temple.



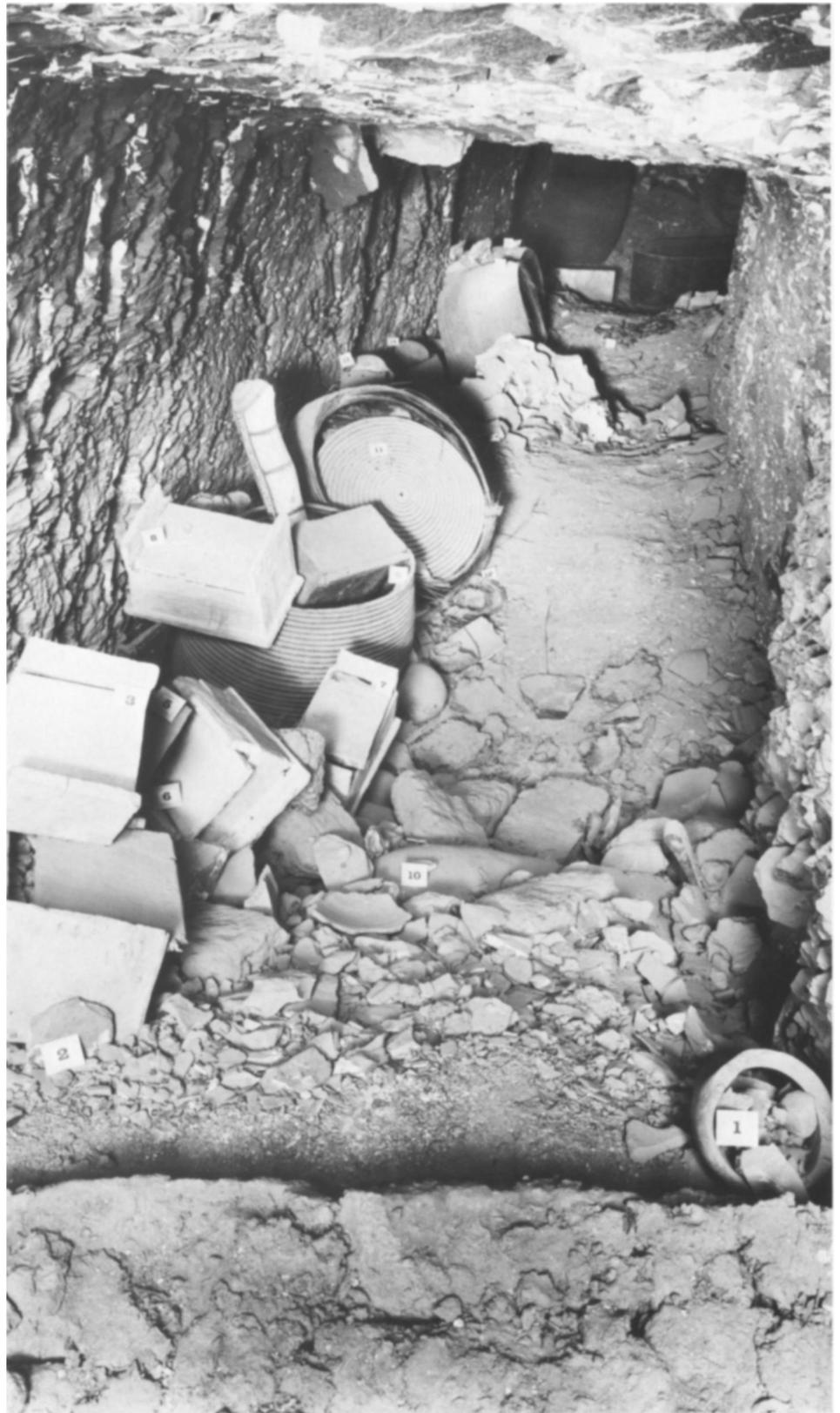
Even that, however, failed to get us excited. True, brickwork down a pit meant the entrance to a tomb, but that carelessly dug opening and shoddily laid brickwork suggested nothing but a rather miserable late tomb such as we had often found before. Lots of comparatively poor people had been buried around the temple in the later periods, but our hopes were set on much higher game.

*5. The corridor of the tomb as seen from the entrance pit*

Still, as a matter of routine, we put guards on the spot, filled the hole up again, and waited for three more days until we had a good clear space around it.

On February 28, when we had plenty of room, we went about our job again in a leisurely way. Just as we had thought, the bricks of which we had had a glimpse were merely stuffed into the mouth of an opening facing toward the temple, and were only held in place with a little clay smeared along the top of them. The pit itself was filled with any old thing that had been lying handy around its mouth in ancient times – dirt, rags, bits of a large white coffin, and the lids of straw baskets (Figure 4). In fact it seemed to be a rather disreputable rubbish hole, but, still keeping to our routine, everything was photographed before it was moved. Then we took out a couple of bricks and flashed an electric torch inside.

It was only then that we had our first hint that our tomb was not so simple and uninteresting an affair as we had supposed. A jumble of white shawabti boxes and a headless Osiris figure could be seen just inside the opening. Beyond were several big round baskets, to which the lids in the pit seemed to belong, piled against the wall of a corridor that stretched into the gloom farther than the ray from the electric torch would reach (Figure 5). We had been prepared for a little tomb and here was one that stretched forty feet or more underground without coming to an end. The little shawabti boxes and the crude Osiris figure might appear to be the sort of late dynastic funeral furniture which we had expected, but those big baskets were the kind of thing which one usually associated with Eighteenth Dynasty tombs. And then another look and it was obvious that the tomb was already an old one when the shawabti boxes were put into it – they lay on top of dirt and rubbish covering the entire floor.



That night the tomb was sealed up again and heavily guarded and the next day was spent in building a sort of old-fashioned cellar door over the pit so that we could lock the place up securely as long as our work lasted. Then we started to remove the brickwork from the entrance, photographing and planning it as we did so. One fact was soon established. Originally the corridor had been closed with a carefully built brick wall. All but the bottom courses of this wall had been broken down and the tomb entered a second time, after which it had been reclosed with bricks and stones. Later all but three courses of this second blocking had been removed and the tomb entered a third time. During this last entry, dirt had fallen over the remains of the previous blockings and on this dirt the last, carelessly built sealing of the tomb had been placed. Thus, even before we had actually set foot in the tomb, we knew that we should have to account for three separate entries with whatever we might find inside.

The last people in the tomb had made a path for themselves along the corridor by pushing everything over to one side. On March 3, as soon as all the blocking of the entrance was removed, I crawled in and gingerly followed in their footsteps, stepping warily so as not to disturb anything which they might have dropped. The passage was clear almost to the end, but there my way was blocked by a yellow, varnished coffin (Figure 6). Its lid was missing, and inside it there lay a mummy with bandages absolutely intact and with garlands over its face and a wig at its head. Beyond it the lid of a large outer coffin was propped up on its side in a doorway leading to the right, and just beyond the doorway lay the empty outer coffin, the missing lid of the inner coffin, and the cover which belonged over the mummy itself (Figure 7).

Here was a most surprising state of affairs. We were used to the confusion in which things were left by robbers, but this did not look like their work. These coffins seemed to be lying just as they had been dropped by a burial party when something had interrupted them – and another flash of the torch into the gloom ahead showed what that something was. I was on the brink of a deep well that made an absolutely impassable gulf across the corridor. The real crypt of the tomb must lie beyond, and in the far left-hand corner across the well I could see, on the level on which I stood, a passage leading off to the left, far out of reach and turning off at too sharp an angle for me even to peer into it from my side of the abyss.

For the time being we were completely balked. We could not cross the well without bridging it, and it was impossible to bring the necessary beams and planks down the corridor while the coffins and baskets and boxes were still in the way. Before they could be moved, Burton had his photographs to take, Hauser had his plans to draw, and I had my notes to write. However, we had seen enough already to work out at least the last chapter in the history of the tomb.

The Osiris figure which we had seen from the entrance of the corridor bore the name of “the House Mistress, the Chantress of Amun Ra, the King’s Daughter of his body, his Beloved, Entiuny (Nany)” and the same name appeared on the shawabti figures in the boxes nearby. Although the coffins had originally been made for a woman named Tanetbekhenu, her name had been erased and that of Nany substituted for it. From the style of the coffins it is quite certain that they are contemporary with those of Henettawy, the daughter of King Pinodjem, which we found not far from this tomb a few years ago. Hence we could safely conclude that we

6 (below). The inner coffin and mummy at the end of the first corridor

7 (opposite). The empty outer coffin on the brink of the well





8. *The last doorway and the coffin  
of Meryetamun*

had discovered another daughter of Pinodjem, named Nany, who died and was buried, probably, in the years just preceding 1000 B.C. We had a fair approximation, therefore, of the date of the third and last closing of our tomb.

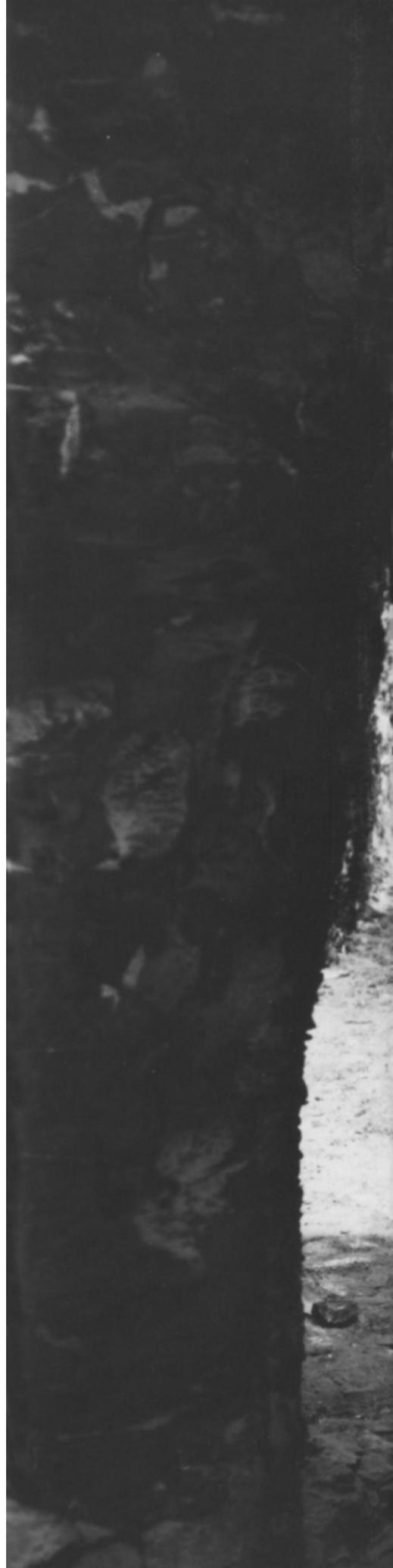
When Nany died, somebody had known of the existence of this tomb, and her coffins and mummy, her shawabti boxes and Osiris figure were brought up to it. The pit was dug out, the blocking broken through, and the heavy outer coffin and the three lids were started down the passage just ahead of the body itself, in the inner coffin. As soon as the first of the bearers had turned the corner at the end of the corridor, they found themselves on the brink of the well and dropped their burdens where they stood. The bearers crowding from behind with the body had to drop it, in turn. Probably a discussion followed, which ended with some of the party leaving the others while they went off to look for a beam to bridge the well. At any rate some were left out of sight among the coffins long enough to chop the gilded faces off of all three lids, scattering the chips all over the floor. We could picture them hiding their plunder under their clothes when they heard that no beams could be found. We could see how the Osiris figure had been passed down to them so clumsily that its head had been broken off against the low ceiling and had rolled behind one of the baskets, and how the shawabti boxes had been carelessly dropped just inside the entrance. And we have already noticed how a few bricks had been hastily stuffed into the entrance and the dirt and rubbish lying around raked into the pit, leaving the Princess Nany lying just where she had been dropped on the brink of the abyss.

It was the morning of March 11 before the well could be crossed. The

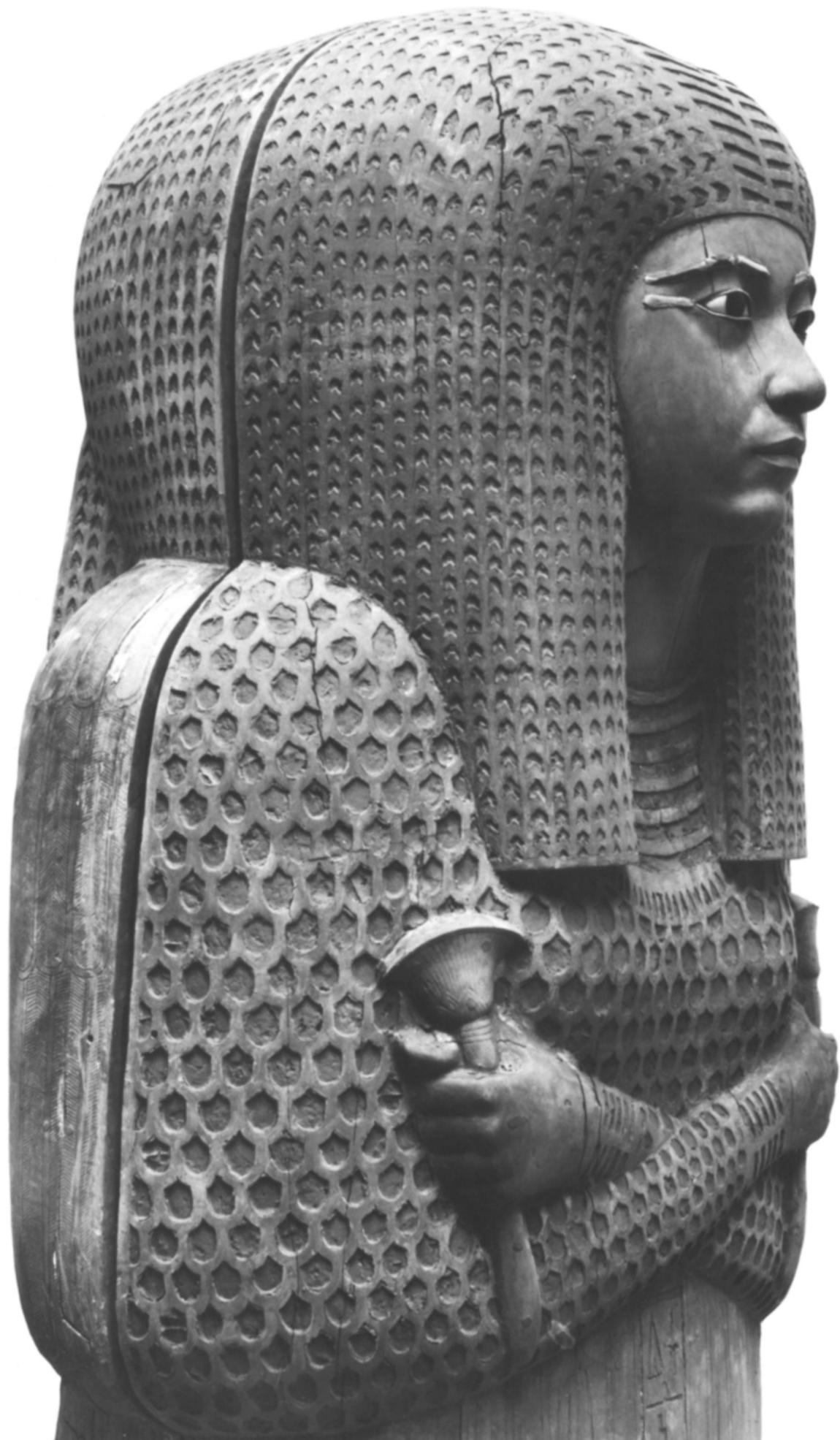
night before, Hauser had finished his detailed plan showing the location of every object up to the well; Burton had taken his last photograph that morning before breakfast; and then the Reis Hamid had taken out the last of the coffins of Nany. I had already tried a surveyor's pole four meters long (about 13 feet) and had found that it would not only reach across the well, but that it would turn the corner in the passage. In fact, the wall on the left side of the corridor had been cut away in ancient times to allow a timber of just that length to make the turn. When all was clear we brought down a light beam and worked it across the well on to the doorsill on the opposite side. On the first we slid a second beam, and on the two, a board. Together they would hold my weight and I crawled across on my hands and knees.

Even if a rather apathetic state of mind when we first opened the tomb has been confessed, that was all gone long before this. We had been held up by that well, wondering what might be beyond, for a week, and under the circumstances no one could have crawled across that plank without tingling with curiosity.

From the doorway on the other side there was one step down and then inky blackness. I turned on my torch and flashed it around. I was in a chamber just high enough to stand up in, seemingly interminably long in the gloom – and blankly empty. For a moment the bottom seemed to have fallen out of everything, and then my light shone on a narrow doorway at the far end. I took the eight or ten strides across the empty chamber and came to a standstill just within the doorway beside three little empty saucers and a dried and shriveled bundle of leaves lying at the foot of an enormous recumbent figure (Figure 8). My light flickered along it and came to rest on a great placid







face staring fixedly upward in the deathly silence of the dark crypt ( Figure 9). Then it flickered back and followed down a column of hieroglyphs announcing that “the King gives a boon to Osiris, the Great God, Lord of Abydos, that he may cause to come forth at the call, bread and beer, beef and fowl, bandages, incense and unguents and all things good and pure on which a god lives, and the sweet north wind, for the spirit of the King’s Daughter and Sister, the God’s Wife, the King’s Great Wife, joined to the Crown of Upper Egypt, the Mistress of the Two Lands, Meryetamun, true of voice with Osiris.” The silence, the dark, and the realization of the ages that coffin had lain there – for it was a coffin – all combined in creating an eerie effect; and whatever one may expect, that does not happen so very often in digging.

Nor was there time to let it last very long then, for evidently we had quite a job on our hands. In the first place it would be just as well to let the Reis Hamid have a look as head of the native workmen, so that the rumors which were bound to start would have some relation to fact. Then it was evident that before anything in a royal tomb of this sort was touched it should be seen by a representative of the Service des Antiquités. A note was therefore sent to Tewfik Effendi Boulos, the Chief Inspector in Luxor, and the tomb was locked up until his arrival. Tewfik Effendi came on the thirteenth and saw the coffin as it lay. The next day was spent in flooring over the whole well and in photographing. On the fifteenth, with Tewfik Effendi present again, we raised the gigantic coffin lid and exposed a disproportionately small coffin inside ( Figure 12). That in

turn was photographed as it lay and then opened and we were looking at a slender little mummy simply wrapped, and festooned with garlands still fresh enough to show the colors of their flowers ( Figure 13). By nightfall both of the coffins and the mummy were safely stored in the workshop at our house.

## II The Plundering and the Repair

The big coffin of Meryetamun is a remarkable object ( Figures 9, 10, 16). Not only is it of gigantic size – 10 feet 3½ inches – but it is a piece of superbly skillful joinery, made of carefully selected cedar planks tenoned together and carved inside and out to a uniform thinness. The carving of the face has been studied with the most subtle knowledge, and accomplished with a surface as soft and smooth as the features which it portrays. The eyes and eyebrows are inlaid with glass; the wig and the torso are carved with deeply incised chevrons and scales painted blue; and the body is sheathed in feathers lightly engraved in the wood. But the glass of the eyebrows and lids is cheap and is carelessly stuck in the place of some more valuable material. The incisions in the decoration of the wig and torso and in the inscription are partly filled with a cement which still retains the casts of inlays. And finally, over the body there are rows of little nail holes which show that, except perhaps for the face, the whole coffin was once sheathed in sheets of gold, both inside and out. Obviously this coffin was once of a richness comparable to that of the outer coffin of Tutankhamun.

10. The outer coffin of Meryetamun



11. The inner coffin of Meryetamun within the outer

The inner coffin, while much smaller (6 feet 1 inch), had been almost as lavishly decorated (Figure 12). On the head we found a tenon hole which had once held the golden vulture head of a queen's crown, and all over the body there were the rows of nail holes showing that within and without the entire coffin had been incased in sheets of gold, which must have been chased with the feather pattern still to be seen lightly scored in the wood. None of this richness was left, however. In place of the vulture head on the brow a uraeus had been painted; the wig was colored blue and the face yellow; a blue and yellow collar had been daubed over the breast; right across the feather pattern down the front was painted a copy of the inscription on the big coffin, and the body was given a red wash.

Even down in the crypt we had noticed some of these evidences that the coffins had been stripped of their riches and then refurbished. Taking this fact with obvious signs of forcible opening on both coffins, we had a pretty clear story. At some time in antiquity the tomb of Meryetamun had been robbed and on the discovery of the outrage all that was possible had been done to cover up the damage. The coffins had been



12. The inner coffin of Meryetamun



13. The mummy of Meryetamun lying in place inside the inner coffin



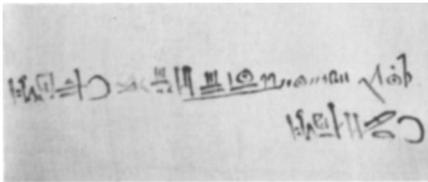
cleaned and painted, the mummy had been shut up in them once more, and the little offering dishes and the wreath of leaves ( Figure 14 ) had been placed at the feet.

The date when all this had happened had been recorded in a docket, written across the breast of the mummy itself in a bold hieratic hand, reading: "Year 19, Month 3 of the Winter Season, Day 28. On this day examination of the King's Wife Meryetamun" ( Figure 15 ). For a long time we were at a loss to know what nineteenth year was meant, but we eventually settled that point when we came to unwrap the mummy. The mummy had been stripped almost to the bone, but it had been most carefully bandaged up again in clean, new linen and among the sheets we found several marked: "Linen made by the High Priest of Amun, Masaharet, true of voice, for his father Amun, in the Year 18." Since Masaharet was high priest in the reign of King Pinodjem, it was clearly near this king's reign – about 1054-1032 B.C. – that the mummy of Meryetamun had been restored.

We were learning a good deal about the history of the tomb. That second blocking of the doorway must have been done by the necropolis officials who restored Meryetamun's mummy. After they had closed up the doorway, they would naturally have been careful to hide the tomb once more, but in spite of their precautions its existence would have been known to lots of people working in the necropolis at the time. That is to say, the location of the tomb would have been known and would have been remembered for several years, but few could have seen it inside or would have suspected the existence of the well which cut off the back chambers. We can assume that when Nany died none of the officials who had ever been in the tomb were still active in the necropolis, and that those who chose it for her burial place were in possession only of this second-hand knowledge.



14. *Persea twigs and dishes that had been placed at the foot of Meryetamun's coffin*



15. *Docket giving the date of the restoration of the mummy of Meryetamun*

However, we had not yet settled to our own entire satisfaction the problem of the first blocking and the original ownership of the tomb. At the time when the robberies were becoming only too common, the royal mummies were often moved by the priests to hidden and unsuspected corners of the necropolis. Hence the mere finding of Meryetamun's mummy in this tomb did not necessarily mean that it had been hers in the first place. In fact, for some time we doubted whether it could have been, because no queen's tomb had ever been discovered anywhere nearby. So far we were still leaning toward our first idea that this tomb had originally belonged to one of Hatshepsut's courtiers.

It was only when we had cleaned the last of the rubbish out of the tomb that we changed our minds. A pile of rags had been thrown into the unfinished corridor to the left of the well. When we came to examine them they turned out to be the bandages cut and ripped off a mummy, and among them we found one marked: "The God's Wife, the King's Wife, Meryetamun, beloved of Amun. May she live!" These, then, were obviously the original bandages torn off of Meryetamun's mummy by the thieves. A pile of rubbish of all sorts had been swept out of the back chambers into the well and still lay where it had fallen on the far side of the well bottom. Among other fragments of funeral furniture this pile contained bits of an enormous wooden coffin plastered over with white gesso. Other pieces of the same coffin had been found already in the corridor and in the entrance pit, and, when they were put together, we discovered that it had been actually big enough to hold the great coffin of Meryetamun. In addition, we found the vulture head of the queen's crown from the coffin's brow. Obviously here was a third, outermost coffin of Meryetamun so completely wrecked by the thieves that it had

been simply swept out of sight at the time of the restoration of the mummy. From these finds it followed that Meryetamun had been robbed here in this tomb, for it was very unlikely that the necropolis officials would have brought scraps of her torn-up bandages and of her demolished coffin from a distance. Furthermore, the most minute examination of the rubbish from the tomb failed to show any trace of an earlier occupant. And thus it was that at the end of all of our theorizing we arrived at the conclusion that we had discovered the tomb of Queen Meryetamun and that it was at her funeral that the door had first been walled up.

It was understood that the mummy of Meryetamun, being that of a queen of Egypt, should be taken to Cairo, and in the Cairo Museum it has recently been decided that no longer are the royal bodies to be exposed to the gaze of the curious. We were in perfect sympathy with the ruling and not at all averse to Meryetamun's being protected from the public eye; but completely wrapped up as we had found her, with the garlands on her breast and the docket of the old inspectors written across her shroud, she had been interesting without being in the least gruesome. We had saved every single linen bandage as we had taken it off, making careful notes of how she had been wrapped, and we decided to bandage the queen up once more exactly as we had found her. And in doing it we had a very illuminating practical illustration of just how the ancient Egyptian had gone about his task. For one thing, we discovered that, in spite of the fact that some of the linen was now very frail and had to be handled with every care, the mummy could be rewrapped in one morning, and we feel quite sure that the restorers of the tomb of Meryetamun could have done all that they did there between sunup and sundown on the date of their visit to the tomb.



# The Tomb of Queen Meryetamun

## III The Second Mummy

When the restorers of Meryetamun's mummy had finished their work, they buried her tomb once more from the prying eyes of the necropolis thieves, and left it hidden for perhaps a score of years until it was opened again for the funeral of the King's Daughter Nany.

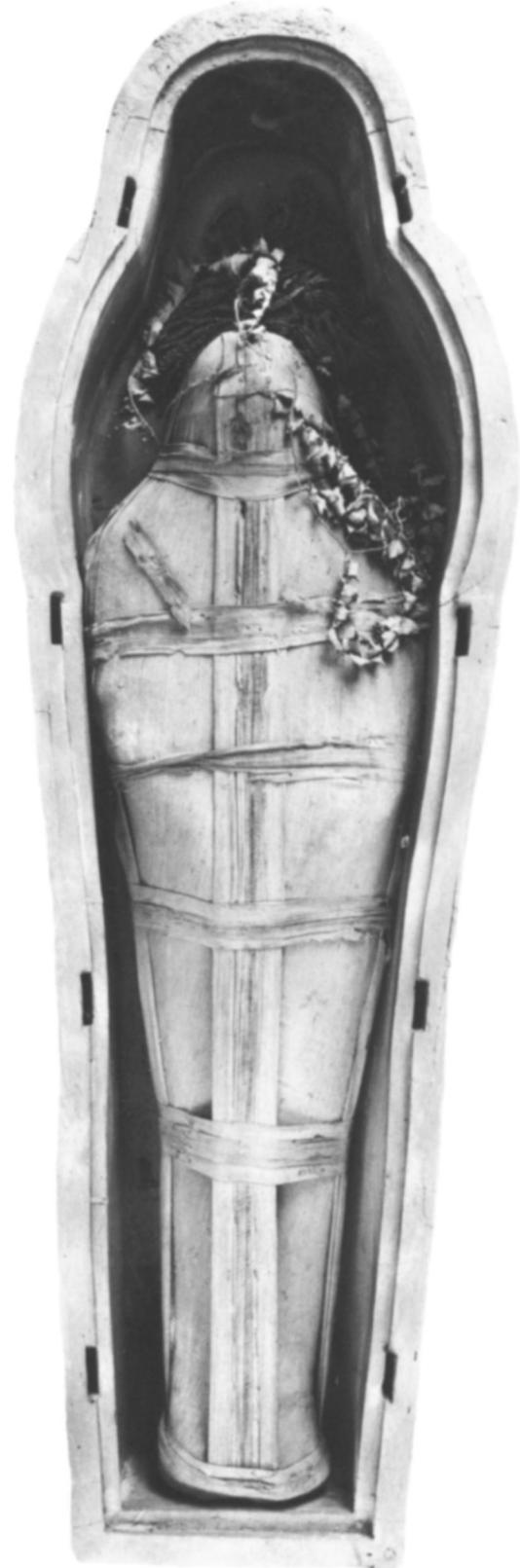
We had found Nany's mummy lying in her coffin (Figure 17), at her head a spare wig, remarkably preserved but almost solidified with the still sticky pomade in which it had been soaked, and over her breast a wreath of persea leaves and lotus petals. To unwrap the mummy carefully was clearly going to take more time than we could spare in the few busy weeks following the discovery of the tomb, and, therefore, we left it in its coffin until we had an opportunity to unbandage it. This winter we had the chance, and after a few layers of linen had been removed, we found a papyrus folded several times over and over on itself and then laid across her thighs. More linen was removed, and then on her breast we found a blue faience amulet, on which was displayed a scarab with outspread wings. A little more, and we had uncovered the body. Nany, we discovered, was a very short woman – only 4 feet 10 inches tall, in fact – but she had been extraordinarily fat. At first glance she appeared to be weirdly and grotesquely young, but a very little further examination showed that she owed this look to the dyes her hairdressers had put on her scanty gray locks in life, and to the gruesome art of the undertakers who had filled out and painted her shrunken face after death. The truth is, she was about seventy years old when she died, and again we found that the anatomist and the archaeologist could work together to puzzle out details of history.

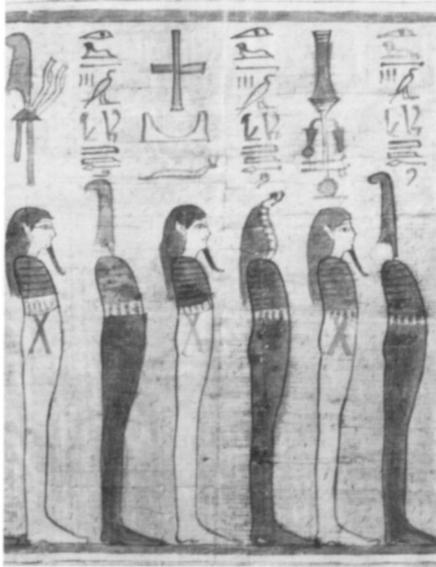
The inscriptions on Nany's funeral paraphernalia had informed us that she was a "King's Daughter," but they had not named the king, her father. It happened, however, that several

years before, but actually only a very few yards away, we had found the tomb of an aged Princess Henettawy, the daughter of King Pinodjem. Nany's coffins were so very much like Henettawy's that we had concluded that Nany, since she was a King's Daughter, must have been a daughter of the same Pinodjem who was Henettawy's father. Now Henettawy had been a very fat, short little old woman, and Pinodjem's son, Masaharet, the High Priest, had been a remarkably fat little man, and here was Princess Nany bearing a strong family likeness to the two whom we wanted to call her brother and her sister. We realized that this could hardly be called proof of our historical theories, but at least it tended to make them reasonable.

The burial furniture of a Twenty-first Dynasty personage, even of Nany's rank, was never so elaborate as had been that of earlier times. There had been so many scandals in ancient Thebes, involving even the mayor and the district officials, that the Thebans had begun to realize how impossible it was for the dead to keep their treasures under a dishonest administration of the living. Furthermore, the subjects of King Pinodjem were no longer sure of the usefulness of the furniture their ancestors had taken on the journey to the next world. They began to foresee a future in which the trappings of this life did not hold so important a place after all. They thought more and more of the need of learning the proper way to conduct themselves when they came into the presence of the multitude of strange gods, genii, and demons who made up the population of the uncanny universe to which they were bound. This course of conduct was set forth in certain very old writings on scrolls of papyrus, which they might take along with them, to be memorized or consulted as occasion arose on the journey to the Underworld.

17. *The mummy of Nany in her coffin*





18. A section of the “Book of That Which Is in the Underworld”

19. The Osiris figure that contained the “Book of the Going Forth by Day” and the papyrus rolled, showing the title



In the Twenty-first Dynasty the orthodox thing was to place on the mummy itself the “Book of That Which Is in the Underworld,” a sort of mystical guide containing a map and a description of that strange region under the earth, through which the sun must pass each night from the place of its setting back to where it was to rise again. The dead, according to one belief, accompanied the sun, sailing with him in a bark towed by twelve parties of gods, each party taking it through one of the twelve night hours. The papyrus which we found on Nany’s mummy bears the name of this book, but at best it is only an abridgement of the whole work, showing some score of uncouth demons, difficult to identify, with as many pictures of Nany’s mummy alternating among them (Figure 18).

The second *vade mecum* for the journeyings of the dead was the “Book of the Going Forth by Day”— which in modern times we call the “Book of the Dead.” While “That Which Is in the Underworld” was placed on the body, a small hollow replica of the mummy in the guise of the god Osiris was provided in the Twenty-first Dynasty to hold the “Going Forth by Day.”

The Osiris figure made for Nany was a little wooden statue 25¾ inches high, modeled with childish crudeness (Figure 19). Through a crack in the front we had been able to get a glimpse of the roll of papyrus inside, and when we turned the figure upside down there was a circular patch of wood in the base, held in place with plaster. Carefully prying this patch loose we exposed the end of the papyrus and easily slipped it out, almost as fresh and solid as the day on which it had been put there, nearly three thousand years ago (Figure 19). In Egypt it was not advisable to unroll more than was needful to estimate the nature of the book inside. Once in New York, however, the task of opening the entire roll was under-

taken. By leaving it overnight in a box with dampened cotton and letting the outer layers of the roll absorb moisture, in the morning we could unroll the first two or three feet, inch by inch. When the drier, inner layers were arrived at and the papyrus began to feel brittle and crackly, the unrolling was stopped and the damp box was placed over what remained of the roll until the next day. Thus, day by day and foot by foot, the great roll opened out to the end – 18 feet 6 inches long.

Nany’s Book of the Dead is a very important accession to the Metropolitan Museum’s Egyptian collection. The examples of funerary papyri of the period of the Empire which we already possessed were either very short or were sadly damaged, and here is an example reasonably full, in perfect condition, and of very good and characteristic execution. The brilliancy of the colors in the illustrations is astounding. The drawing is skilled and rapid, graceful, and absolutely typical of the period of the High Priestly regime in Thebes. Perhaps one of the most interesting things about the papyrus is the fact that it is obviously the work of two men. The more skillful of the two drew the illustrations and boldly sketched, in solid black characters, their titles. The texts of the chapters were then filled in by an apprentice, whose hand was far less sure and whose knowledge of the sacred writings was not entirely faultless. This was an eminently human division of labor, for although the texts were the whole sum and purpose of the papyrus, they were likely to be taken more or less for granted by the purchaser, who was expected to judge her acquisition by the charm of the delightfully fresh and pleasing drawings. And it is a fortunate division for us whose interest in Egyptian dogmas is more difficult to arouse than our ever lively interest in Egyptian art.

The “Book of the Going Forth by Day” was a very large collection of



20. Nany at the gate of the Hall of Judgment

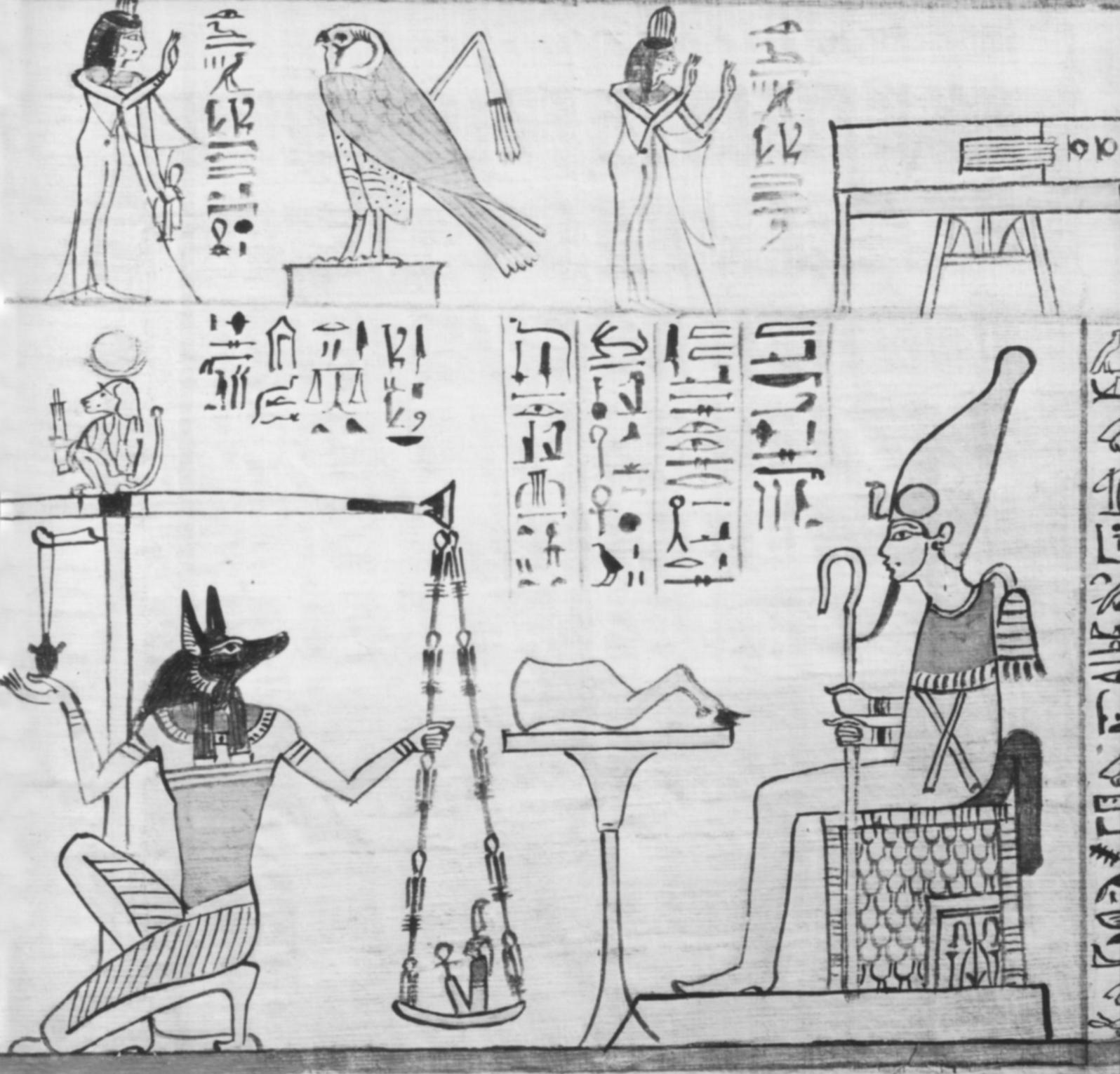
21. Nany in the Hall of Osiris, having her heart, her eyes, and her mouth judged by the great god. Above, she is shown in front of her tomb, addressing the falcon god (Horus), and adoring the divine palette



spells designed to help the dead justify themselves before the gods of the Osirian cycle, to provide the more material needs of the tomb, and to imbue the dead with the power of entering and leaving the tomb freely. Curiously enough, no definite canon seems to have been drawn up by the rather loose-thinking Egyptians, who never absolutely fixed the number or the order of the chapters, and who left to the professional copyists almost complete freedom in their selections. To be sure, certain chapters were usually recognized as more important

than others, but the number of them in any given example seems to have depended entirely on how much one wanted to pay for a copy of the book. Thus, Nany's scroll contained ten chapters with the appropriate illustrations to seven, but for fourteen others she got only the illustrations without the text.

The papyrus starts at the extreme right, now that it is unrolled, with the judgment of the dead. Nany, with flowers on her head, a golden sistrum in her hand, and a tall incense brazier in front of her, stands at the door of



the “Hall of the Two Truths” within which the forty-two judges of the dead hold session (Figure 20). She calls upon each judge by name and to each one individually repudiates some sin – either a fault of impurity or of dishonesty – and the names of the judges and of the sins she must deny are all set forth in tabular form for her direction.

We are to presume that Nany comes forth from the cross-questioning of the lesser gods clear of all blemish so far as they can see, for somewhat

beyond we find her in the Hall of Osiris having her heart, her eyes, and her mouth judged by the great god (Figure 21). Isis, the “Mother of the God,” stands sponsor for her, while she herself faces Osiris and holds out to him the hieroglyphics of eyes and mouth. Before her the jackal-headed “Anubis, who is in charge of the Scales of the Hall,” weighs the heart of Nany in the balance against a figure of the Goddess of Truth. Osiris, from his throne, says to him: “Take her eyes and her mouth into thy charge, if her heart is righteous,” at

which Anubis, turning his head, replies: “Her heart is righteous.”

This part of the Book of the Dead has always been of interest to the modern mind. To say the least, some of the forty-two commandments which must not be transgressed are peculiar, and many of them are trivial, but the whole conception of a formal judgment of one’s life and the striking parable of the weighing of the heart against a symbol of truth and honesty belong to a stage of man’s moral development that was far from primitive.

22. Nany before Osiris, while the goddess of the necropolis reaches out to grasp her. Above, she guards a pile of yellow grain for Osiris, and paddles a green canoe on the lakes of the Underworld



The majority of the objects found in this excavation that were associated with Meryetamun are in the Cairo Museum. The Metropolitan Museum was given most of the material related to Nany, including her coffins and the long papyrus of the Book of the Dead, as well as several examples of Meryetamun's baskets, linen, linen marks, bottles, foods, and a food case

23. Finally, to close the whole book,  
Nany stands adoring the god Osiris

At the end of the papyrus there are two larger pictures showing Nany in the court of the Kingdom of the Dead. In the first the god Osiris sits enthroned, with his two sisters, Isis and Nephthys, standing dutifully behind him, while Nany stands before him with arms upraised in adoration. Behind her stands the weird goddess of the necropolis, reaching out to grasp her, and above is written the caption, "The West receives her" (Figure 22). Finally, to close the book the lady stands adoring the god Osiris, with her rank and titles set forth as "the praise of those who are Lords of Thebes, the Mistress of a House, the Chantress of Amun Ra, King of the Gods, the Princess Nany" (Figure 23).

One curious fact comes to light in this papyrus. Earlier, we had noticed that Nany's coffins had originally been made for "The Mistress of the House, the Chantress of Amun, King of the Gods, the Royal Princess Tanetbekhenu." When we came to take the papyrus out of the Osiris figure we found it labeled "The Going Forth by Day" and inscribed in another hand with the owner's name, "Tanetnabekhenu" – apparently a variant of Tanetbekhenu – in spite of the fact that the figure itself was labeled as being Nany's. Inside the papyrus Nany is everywhere shown as the owner, but in three places she is named as "born of Tanetnabekhenu." Obviously, the latter's name on the outside of the scroll was a slip of some scribe. After he had rolled the papyrus up he had confused the names of the mother and daughter and – *we* can scarcely blame him – had jotted down the name of the former instead of the latter. Then by coincidence the daughter was eventually buried in the mother's coffin after the names had been changed here and there on them. Everything was very casual in a Twenty-first Dynasty funeral – at least at the funeral of the very elderly Princess Nany.



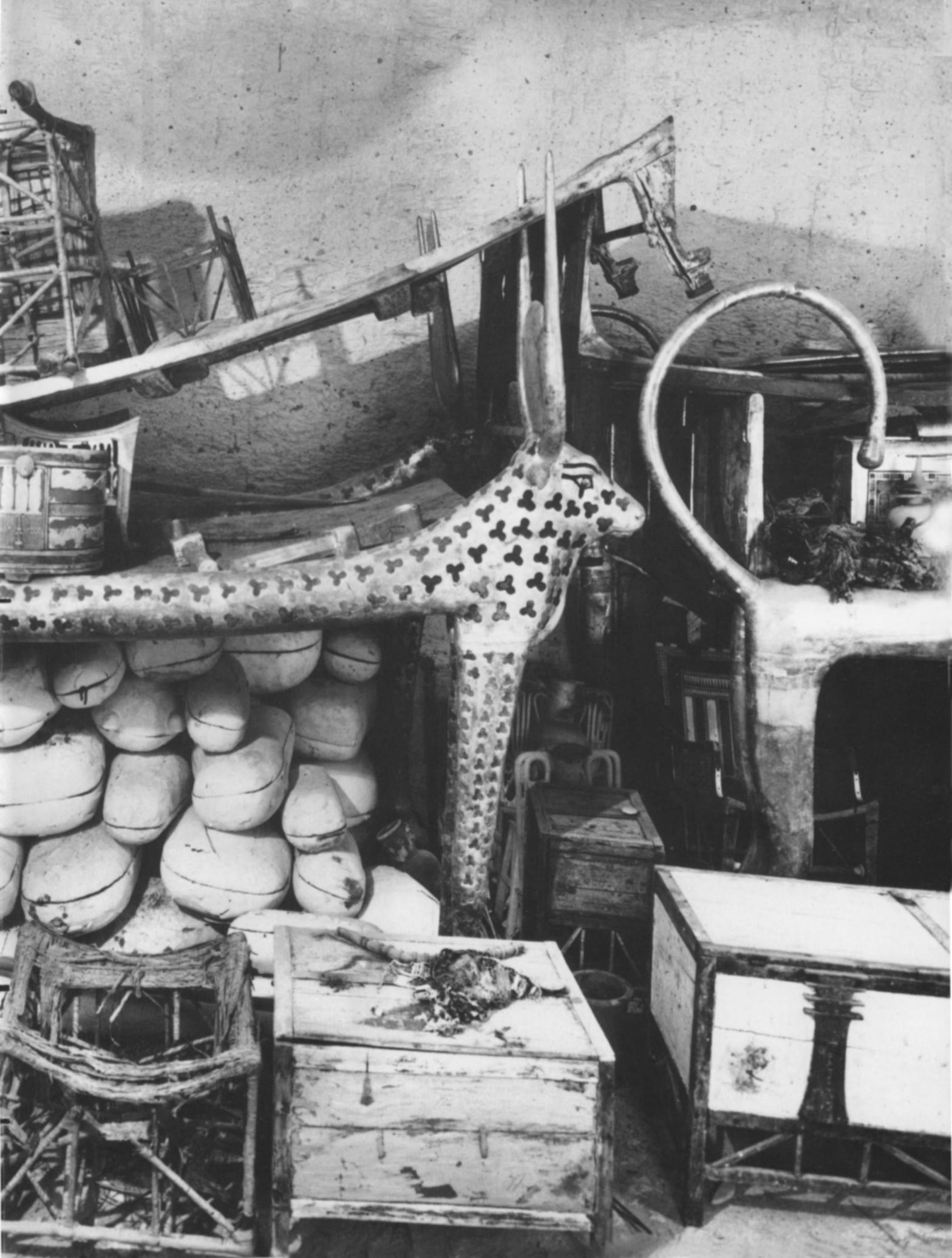
## Work at the Tomb of Tutankhamun

In November 1922 the tomb of the pharaoh Tutankhamun was discovered, the most spectacular ancient Egyptian royal burial found relatively intact. The find had been made in the Theban necropolis – not far from the spot where the Egyptian Expedition of the Metropolitan Museum was working – by workmen led by the archaeologist Howard Carter, who excavated for the fifth Earl of Carnarvon.

Carter realized the need for expert aid in examining so important a find, and asked his colleague A. M. Lythgoe, the Metropolitan's Curator of the Egyptian Department, for the assistance of the skilled photographer Harry Burton in recording the discovery. Lythgoe immediately cabled back offering not only Burton's help but other Museum expedition help as well: "Only too delighted to assist in every possible way. Please call upon Burton and any other members of our staff." In this way four members of the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Expedition took part in this historic work: Burton, the archaeologist Arthur C. Mace, and the draughtsmen Lindsley F. Hall and Walter Hauser. The following twelve pages present some of Burton's famous photographs, with captions drawn from Howard Carter's own account of the discovery (the first of the three volumes was written with Arthur Mace).

*"I inserted the candle and peered in. At first I could see nothing, the hot air escaping from the chamber causing the candle flame to flicker, but presently, as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, details of the room within emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues, and gold – everywhere the glint of gold. I was struck dumb with amazement, and when Lord Carnarvon inquired anxiously, 'Can you see anything?' it was all I could do to get out the words, 'Yes, wonderful things.'"*





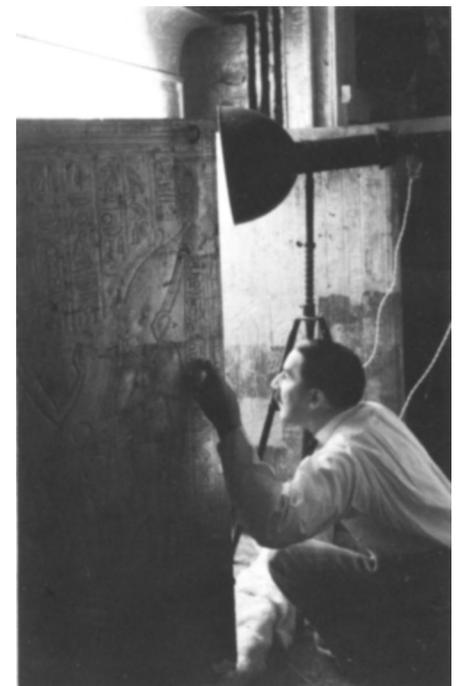
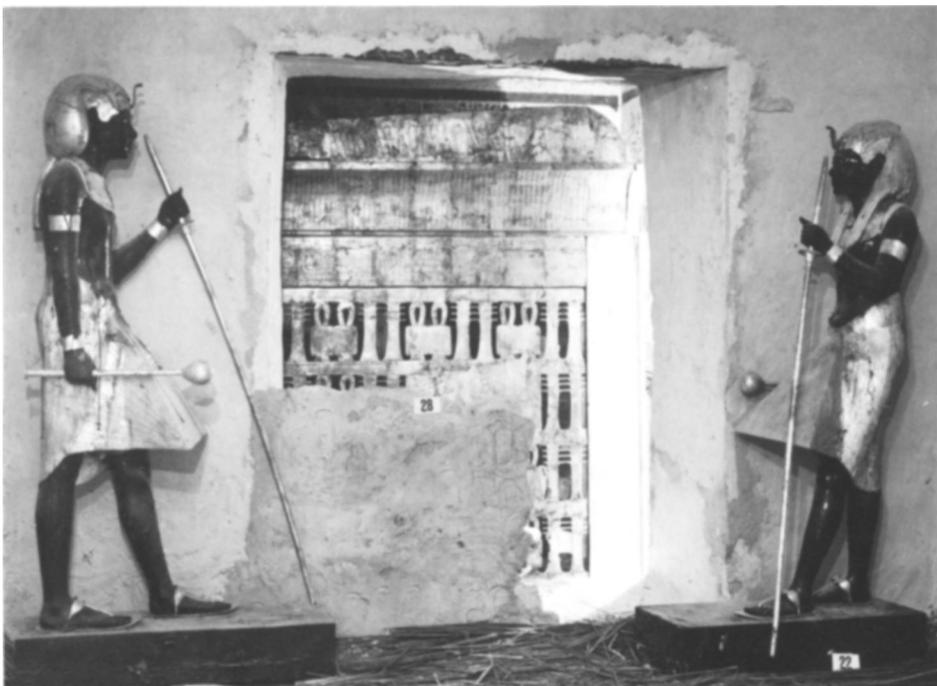




*Left, head from a funerary couch: "First were three great gilt couches, their sides carved in the form of monstrous animals with heads of startling realism. Uncanny beasts to look upon at any time: seen as we saw them, their brilliant gilded surfaces picked out of the darkness by our torch, they were almost terrifying."*

*Far left and below: "Next, two statues caught and held our attention: two life-sized figures of a king in black, facing each other like sentinels, gold kilted, gold sandalled, armed with mace and staff. Strange and imposing figures, these, even as we first saw them, surrounded and half concealed by other objects; as they stand now in the empty chamber, beyond them, through the opened door, the golden shrine half visible, they present an appearance that is almost painfully impressive."*

*Below, right: Carter opening the second of four shrines enclosing Tutankhamun's sarcophagus: "In the coming winter our first task, a difficult and anxious one, will be the dismantling of the shrines in the sepulchral chamber. It is probable that there will be a succession of these shrines, built one within the other, before we come to the stone sarcophagus in which the king is lying. With the mummy – if, as we hope and believe, it remains untouched by plunderers – there should certainly lie the regalia of a king of Egypt. Imagination falters at the thought of what the tomb may yet disclose."*



*This article was written by Arthur C. Mace for the Metropolitan Museum's Bulletin of December 1923, at the beginning of the second season of work at Tutankhamun's tomb*

Lord Carnarvon's and Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun has aroused an interest not merely in this particular find, but in archaeology generally, that to the excavator is almost embarrassing. Ordinarily he spends his time quietly and unobtrusively enough, half the year burrowing mole-like in the ground, and the other half writing dull papers for scientific journals, and now suddenly he finds himself in the full glare of the limelight. The ordinary details of his daily work suddenly have become of intense and absorbing interest to the world at large. Why is it?

The explanation is, I suppose, simple enough really. It lies in the fact that we are all, even the most prosaic of us, children under our skins, and thrill deliciously at the very idea of buried treasure. Sealed doorways, jeweled robes, inlay of precious stones, kings' regalia – the phrases grip, and we can now, under cover of scientific interest, openly and unashamedly indulge an intellectual appetite that has hitherto been nourished surreptitiously on detective stories and murder cases in the press.

In view of this widespread interest and the general familiarity with Tutankhamun's name, it comes as almost a shock to find how little we really know about this monarch.

He became king (in 1361 B.C.) by virtue of his marriage with Ankhes-enpaaten, third daughter of the so-called heretic king, Akhenaten. It was not, one would have thought, a particularly enviable or safe position to aspire to at this juncture, for the country was in a state of transition.

It must have been obvious to Tutankhamun or to his advisors that a surrender must be made of Akhenaten's ideas and principles, and a return to the old order and the old gods, if the country was to prosper. In pursuance of this policy Tell el

Amarna, Akhenaten's capital, was abandoned, the court was transferred back again to Thebes, the new king changed his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun, and the favor of the powerful priests was courted by putting in hand restorations and additions to the god Amun's temples.

We have reason to believe that Tutankhamun was a young man when he died. His tomb is situated in the center of the Valley of the Kings, not very far from the spot in which Theodore M. Davis had found a famous cache of royal funerary objects from Tell el Amarna, brought to Thebes on the abandonment of that capital, and hidden away in this spot, as the clay sealings would seem to indicate, by Tutankhamun himself. Nor was other evidence lacking to connect Tutankhamun with this particular part of the Valley. Nearby Mr. Davis had found, hidden under a stone, a faience cup with the name of our king upon it, and in a small pit tomb some fragments of gold foil which bore the names both of Tutankhamun and of his queen. Another of his finds was even more significant and, as it happens, nearly concerns our own Museum. This was a cache of large pottery sealed jars, buried in an irregular hole a little way eastward from the Akhenaten cache. There was nothing to show to which tomb, if any, the jars belonged, and, as they seemed to contain nothing but bundles of linen, broken fragments of pottery, and other miscellaneous rubbish, they were passed over and stored away. A year or two later, H. E. Winlock noticed these jars in one of Mr. Davis's storerooms, and realized from a hasty examination of the contents that there might be interesting information to be gleaned from them. Through the kind offices of Harry Burton, who was then working with Mr. Davis, they were handed over to him with the permission of the Egyptian authorities and shipped home to New York, and in the Museum he made a thorough investiga-

tion of their contents. They proved to be even more interesting than he had anticipated. There were the remains of a great number of plain and decorated pottery vases; there were headshaws and other pieces of linen, one of which was inscribed with the date of the sixth year of Tutankhamun; and, most significant of all, there were a number of clay sealings, some bearing the name of Tutankhamun, and others the impression of the royal necropolis seal, the jackal and nine captives. It was a curious jumble of material, but there seemed good reason for supposing that it came from a tomb of Tutankhamun somewhere in the neighborhood, and represented the final gathering up of oddments after the funeral ceremonies.

Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Carter had, then, considerable grounds for believing that the tomb of Tutankhamun was situated in this particular part of the Valley, and for many reasons his was the tomb they most hoped to find. They searched for it for several seasons and removed several thousand tons of debris without success, and not the least dramatic part of the whole discovery is the fact that it was made in a last effort, when hope was almost dead. At the end of the season of 1921/1922 it became a matter of serious debate for them whether, after so many barren years of work, it would not be better to abandon the Valley and try their luck elsewhere, and they finally decided to return for one more season, a short season of two months only. Then, on November 4, just five days after the work had been started, the tomb was found.

The story of the actual discovery and of the general details of the work of clearing is well enough known from other sources, and there is no need to dwell upon it here. I should like, however, to devote some space to the share in the work taken by the members of our own Expedition.

Photography was the first and most pressing need at the outset, for it was absolutely essential that a complete photographic record of the objects in the tomb should be made before anything was touched. This part of the work was undertaken by Burton, and the wonderful results he achieved are known to everyone, his photographs having appeared in most of the illustrated papers throughout the world. They were all taken by electric light, wires having been laid to connect the tomb with the main lighting system of the Valley, and for a dark-room, appropriately enough, he had the unfinished tomb which had been used as a cache for the funerary remains of the Tell el Amarna royalties.

Lindsley F. Hall and Walter Hauser were responsible for the plan of the tomb. Each individual object was drawn to scale in the exact position in which it lay, and a reference to the photographs of the interior, which illustrate the confused and haphazard manner in which these objects were piled one upon another, will give some idea of the difficulties that confronted them.

My own share of the work was largely confined to the laboratory, which was established in the tomb of Seti II, conveniently situated in a secluded spot at the extreme end of the Valley. Here, working in collaboration with Mr. Lucas, Director of the Government Chemical Laboratories, whose chemical knowledge was invaluable, I spent the greater part of the winter, receiving the objects as one by one they were brought up out of the tomb, noting and cataloguing them, and carrying out such repairs and restorations as were necessary.

The most exciting of the laboratory tasks was the unpacking of the boxes and caskets, for, owing to the confused nature of their contents, you could never be certain of anything, and at any moment, tucked away in a corner, or concealed in the fold of a

garment, you might come across a magnificent scarab or piece of jewelry, or a wonderful statuette. The jumble was amazing, the most incongruous things being packed together, and for some time we were completely in the dark as to its meaning. The explanation, which we worked out later, is as follows.

Some years after the burial of the king, plunderers had contrived to tunnel their way into the tomb and had made a hurried and ruthless search for treasure that was portable, ransacking the boxes and throwing their contents all over the floor. Then, probably while the plunderers were still at work, the officials responsible for the safekeeping of the royal necropolis got wind of the affair, and came posthaste to investigate. Some of the thieves made good their escape – the faience cup beneath the rock which we referred to above was probably hidden by one of them – but others were evidently either caught on the spot, or apprehended later with the loot still in their possession. Then came the question of making good the damage, and a hurried and perfunctory job the officials seem to have made of it. No attempt was made to re-sort the material or pack the objects back into the boxes that were originally intended for them. Instead, they were gathered up in handfuls and bundles and hastily crammed into the nearest box. As a result we get the most incongruous mixtures, walking sticks and underlinen, jewelry and faience vases, headrests and robes of state.

Slow and exacting the work was, but intensely interesting, and worth every minute of the time that was spent upon it. No trouble could be too great, for we have been given an opportunity such as archaeology has never known before, and in all probability will never see again. Now for the first time we have what every excavator has dreamt of, but never hoped to see, a royal tomb with all its

furniture intact. The increase to our sum of archaeological knowledge should be enormous, and we, as a Museum, should count it as a privilege to have been able to take such a prominent part in the work.

Some idea of the extent of the discovery may be gleaned from the fact that the objects so far removed represent but a quarter of the contents of the tomb, and that, probably the least valuable quarter. We have cleared the Antechamber. There remain the Sepulchral Chamber, the inner Store Chamber, and the Annex, and, to all appearance, each contains far finer objects than any we have handled yet. It is the first of these chambers that will occupy us in the opening months of the coming season. There, beneath the sepulchral shrines, more than three thousand years ago the king was laid to rest, and there we hope to find him lying.

*Below, the first of three coffins within the stone sarcophagus: "The light shone into the sarcophagus. A sight met our eyes that at first puzzled us. It was a little disappointing. The contents were completely covered by fine linen shrouds. We rolled back those covering shrouds, one by one, and as the last was removed a gasp of wonderment escaped our lips, so gorgeous was the sight that met our eyes: a golden effigy of the young boy king, of most magnificent workmanship, filled the whole interior of the sarcophagus."*





*Left: "The lid was slowly raised. This revealed a third coffin, but the main details of the workmanship were hidden by a close-fitting reddish-colored linen shroud. Mr. Burton at once made his photographing records. I then removed the linen coverings. An astounding fact was disclosed. This third coffin, over six feet in length, was of solid gold! The face was again that of the king, but the features, though conventional, by symbolizing Osiris, were even more youthful than those on the other coffins."*



*Right: "A pair of statuettes represent the king upon papyrus-reed floats, and appear to symbolize a mythical pursuit: Tut-ankh-Amen as the youthful warrior Horus killing the hippopotamus in the marshes. These figures are remarkable for the vigour and animation they display. The feeling here exhibited is beyond the formalized conventions learned by rote; they show both energy and grace, in fact, the divine and the human have been brought in touch with one another."*



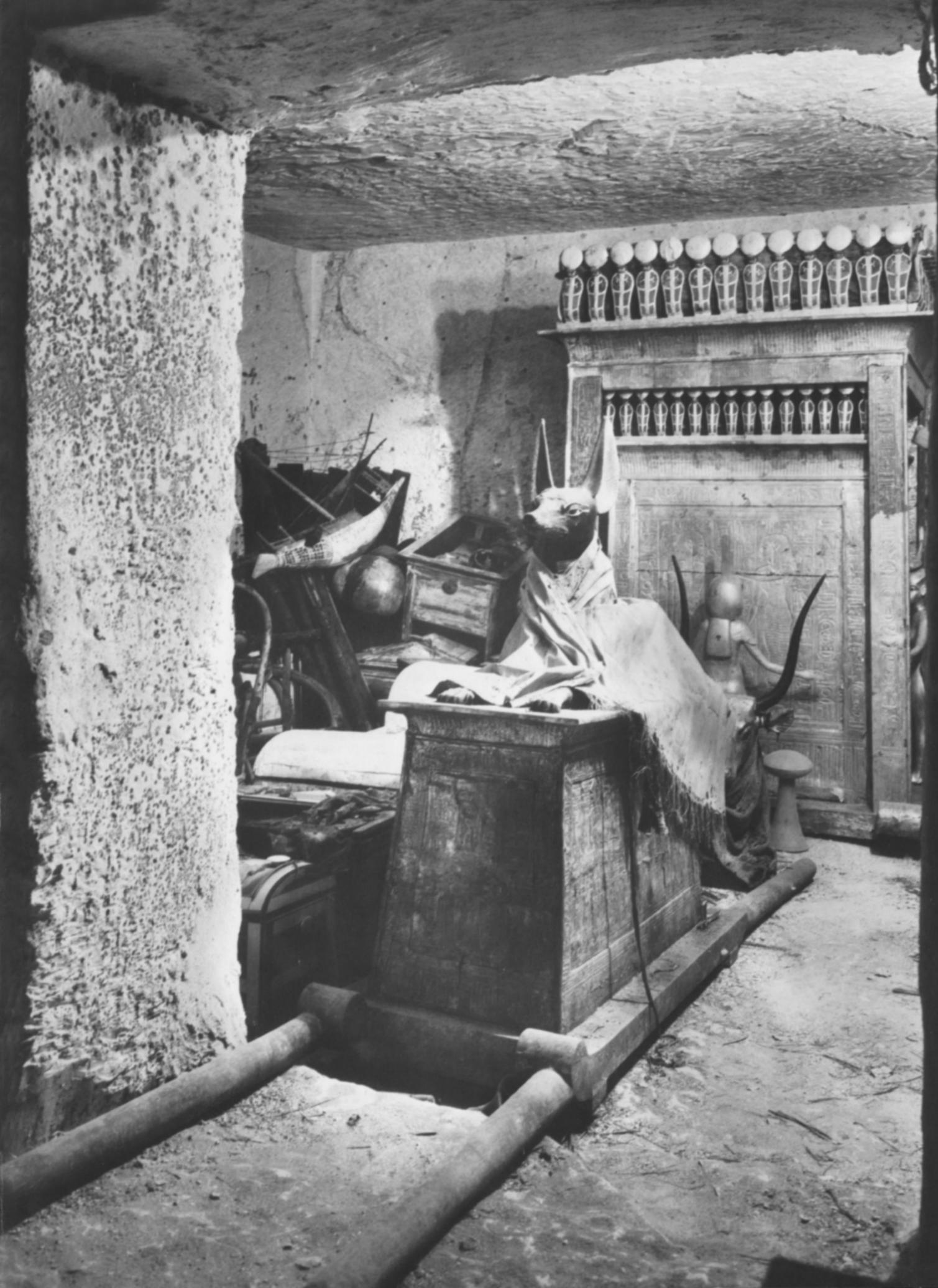
*Left: "This lamp, flanked with fret-work ornament symbolizing 'Unity' and 'Eternity,' ranks among the most interesting objects we had so far discovered. Its chalice-like cup, which held the oil and a floating wick, was neither decorated on its exterior nor interior surfaces, yet when the lamp was lit the king and queen were seen in brilliant colors within the thickness of its translucent stone. We, at first, were puzzled to know how this ingenious effect was accomplished. The explanation would seem to be that there were two cups fitted one within the other, and that on the outer wall of the inner cup a picture had been painted in semi-transparent colors, visible only through the translucent calcite when the lamp was lit."*



*Left, the mask of Tutankhamun: "Before us was an impressive mummy, over which had been poured anointing unguents, blackened by age. In contradistinction to the general dark and sombre effect was a brilliant, one might say magnificent, burnished gold mask. The beaten gold mask is a beautiful and unique specimen of ancient portraiture."*

*Right: "We passed on to the farther end of the burial chamber. Here a surprise awaited us, for a low door gave entrance to yet another chamber, smaller than the outer ones and not so lofty. This doorway, unlike the others, had not been closed and sealed. A single glance sufficed to tell us that here, within this little chamber, lay the greatest treasures of the tomb."*

*"Immediately in front of the entrance lay the figure of the jackal god Anubis, upon his shrine, swathed in linen cloth, and resting upon a portable sled. Anubis, who takes upon himself the form of a kind of black jackal-like dog, who not only presided over the burial rites but also acted as the vigilant watcher over the dead, was appropriately placed facing outwards, to guard against the intruder."*



*“On the farther side of the Treasury stood the most beautiful monument that I have ever seen – so lovely that it made one gasp with wonder and admiration. The central portion of it consisted of a large shrine-shaped chest, completely overlaid with gold, and surmounted by a cornice of sacred cobras. Surrounding this, free-standing, were statues of the four tutelary goddesses of the dead – gracious figures with outstretched protective arms, so natural and life-like in their pose, so pitiful and compassionate the expression upon their faces, that one felt it almost sacrilege to look at them. There is a simple grandeur about this monument that made an irresistible appeal to the imagination, and I am not ashamed to confess that it brought a lump to my throat. It is undoubtedly the Canopic chest and contains the jars which play such an important part in the ritual of mummification.”*







# Tomb Paintings at Thebes

## The Graphic Work of the Museum's Egyptian Expedition

Norman de Garis Davies

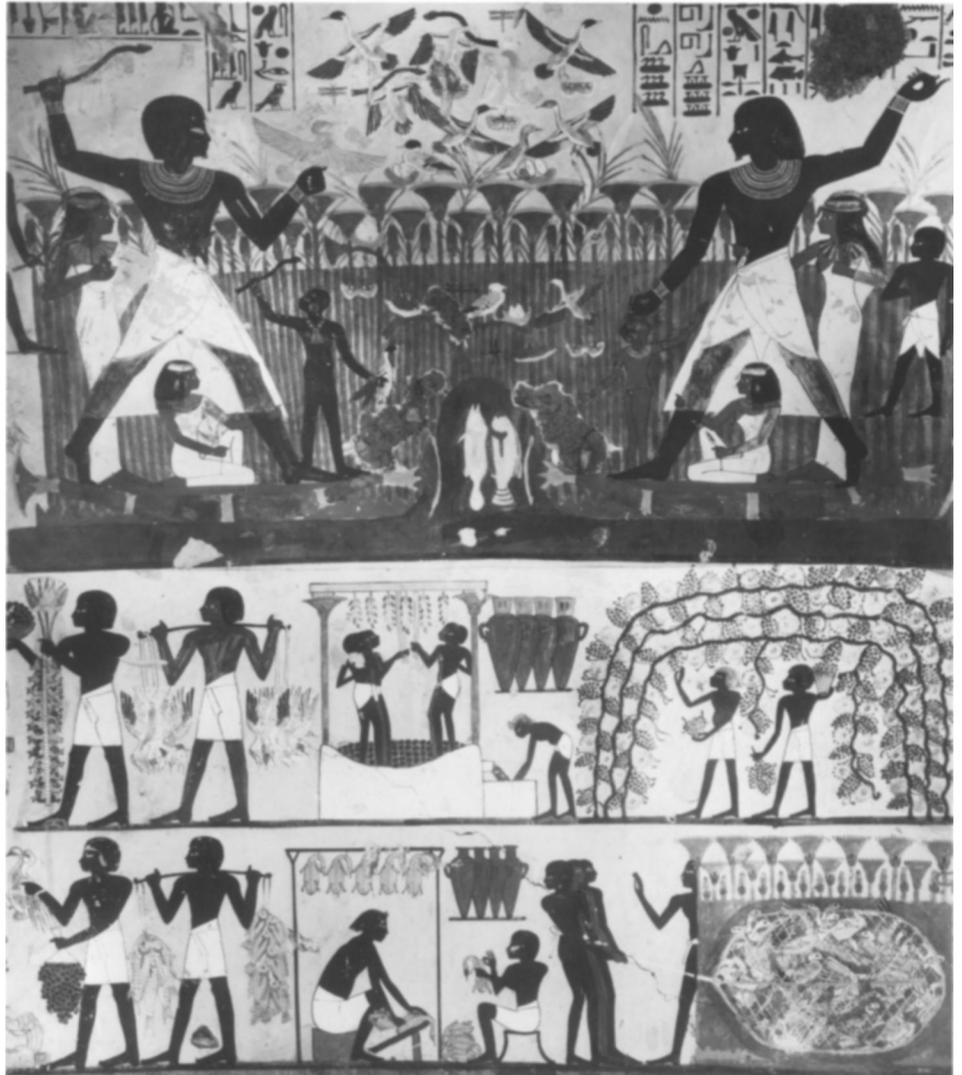
Director of the Expedition's Graphic Branch

From *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (March 1911)

Every people that buries its dead creates by so doing a new settlement, city answering to city, village to village, house to house, so that if no destructive forces were at work, the colony of the dead would be the counterpart of that of the living and mirror back not only its size, but its age and fortunes. In ancient Egypt faith in the afterlife materialized itself in a necropolis so durable that all the attacks of man and time have rarely prevailed against it, but left it still a veritable "city of the dead."

The comparison with a city is all the more vivid in Egypt, since it was the custom there not only to supply the tomb with an equipment of utensils and furniture such as was found in the home, but even to employ in its chambers the wonted forms of house decoration. Thus, we not only derive most of our knowledge of the domestic furniture of the ancient Egyptians from the outfit placed in their tombs, but we must go to the same source almost exclusively for an acquaintance with the paintings and decorative designs that adorned their walls and ceilings. Moreover, as the subjects of these mural paintings in the tombs were determined by the use to which the rooms were put, we have not only scenes connected with burial in the burial chamber, but representations of daily life in the outer room where the dead hoped to resume something resembling his round of existence before death.

In this happy way our knowledge of their domestic life, work, sport, and official routine and the objects connected therewith is augmented by a series of designs, all the more valuable because often carried out in great detail and beautiful color. If the same subjects recur with only too frequent iteration, they admit of large variation also; so that, taken together, the paintings in the tombs of the Egyptians portray the greater part of their activities.



*Everyone who has visited the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of the official Nakht in Thebes has been fascinated by its brilliant coloring and by the number of charming vignettes of daily life offered in the compass of one tiny chamber (left). These decorations are among the many wall paintings copied by the graphic branch of the Museum's Egyptian Expedition. To us, paintings like the one illustrated above are invaluable as delightful pictures of ancient life and custom, and they show with what strength the inhabitant of Egypt found himself tied by his heart-strings to life among the abundant gifts of*

*nature, even in his preparations for eternity. The upper scene shows Nakht fishing and fowling in the marshlands; he is accompanied by his whole family, a condition which in the opinion of most sportsmen would seriously detract from the pleasure and success of the day. The lower scene depicts servants bearing the fish and birds whose capture we have witnessed, and scenes of the vintage and the netting of wildfowl. The men who tread out the juice of the grapes in a trough keep themselves from sinking into the mass too deeply by hanging on to straps suspended from a beam overhead*



*A tomb's outer chamber was often decorated with scenes of banqueting and family gatherings, for the idea of eternal reunion is always present. In this painting from Nakht's tomb, six guests are being entertained by a blind harper and by a little servant girl, whose light task is to arrange their earrings. At such feasts it was the custom to provide the ladies not only with wine and fruit but also with flowers and simple ornaments, as well as cosmetics for the head and for the skin. Their smart attire includes a gay fillet binding the hair around the brows, a pinch of fragrant ointment on the top of the head, round earrings, and a broad collar of colored beads*

As Thebes was the capital city of Egypt during her age of greatest wealth and power, its necropolis is, or has been, the richest of all. Thebes of the living lay on the east bank of the river; Thebes of the dead was founded on the west side where, beyond a short stretch of cultivated land, the Nile cliffs rise from the desert foothills. Of the myriad tombs, small and great, hewn in the cliff or sunk in the slopes, many guarded their treasures well into the last century and not a few (unless on a comparative reckoning) have preserved their mural decorations more or less perfectly to these days. The range of time that these cemeteries represent extends at least from the Sixth Dynasty (about 2345-2181 B.C.) to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty (664-525 B.C.). The necropolis is richest in tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty (1570-1320 B.C.) – the golden age of Egypt.

Geologically, the site consists of a mass of poor limestone overlying a bed of shale, beneath which again is a stratum of close-grained limestone. In a few spots where the latter comes near the surface it has been utilized to produce mural sculpture of the very finest quality. In most places, however, sculpture was impossible and the walls had to be covered with a thick coating of lime plaster, or

of mud faced thinly with stucco. On this the scenes were painted, generally against a white background, sometimes very flatly and coarsely, sometimes with extreme elaboration and very considerable artistic beauty. It is this prevalence of painting at Thebes that gives the necropolis its unrivaled value for art and history, since it not only afforded free play to the draughtsmanship and decorative instinct of the Egyptian artist, but enabled him to add a greater wealth of detail than would have been attainable in stone. These paintings, which supply our most complete picture of Egyptian manners and customs, can rarely, if ever, reach our museums, and so copies of these decorations are invaluable for museum illustration, affording a useful commentary on objects and often supplying an explanation of purpose and mode of use that is otherwise lacking.

To meet these needs, the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Expedition undertook the formation of a series of records, through drawings and photography, of the inscriptions, wall paintings, and relief sculptures of Egyptian tombs. In the course of time, this plan will give the Museum an invaluable record and means of illustration of some of the achievements of the ancient artist.

# The New Egyptian Galleries

The galleries opening next spring will be devoted to the first segment of our Egyptian collection (prehistory through the Eleventh Dynasty), and will include material not only from the Museum's excavations at Thebes, but from its Lisht and Hierakonpolis excavations as well. Major purchases from the Egyptian Government – columns, walls of tomb chapels, and wooden sculpture – will also be shown, as well as gifts from the Egypt Exploration Fund's excavations and purchases of great quality.

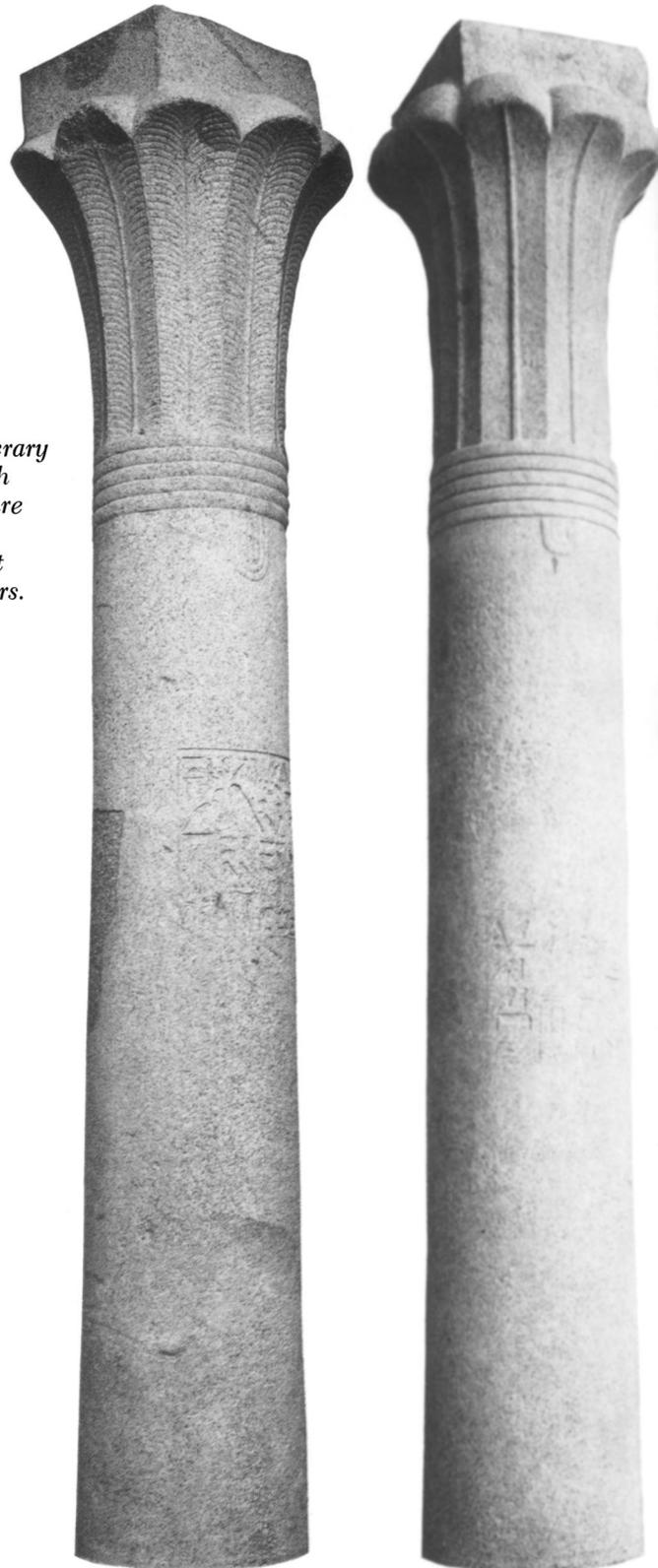
This installation is part of an important revision of the Egyptian galleries begun many years ago. It will be based on a chronological structure; it will make all objects accessible; it will attempt to focus on the works themselves, discarding restoration where possible; and it will include a gallery for the department's changing exhibitions, an introductory orientation center, and various areas supplying educational and interpretive information.

This opening is the first of a series: over the next few years all of our galleries will be redone, and all of our Egyptian material will be put on view. When the Temple of Dendur (1st century B.C.) opens in 1978-1979 to complete the installation, the Metropolitan will have an Egyptian museum spanning 500,000 years. It will be truly a remarkable environment.

*Impressive columns from the funerary temples of Unas and Sahara (Fifth Dynasty, about 2494-2345 B.C.) are major architectural elements in the new installation, and have not been on view for a number of years.*



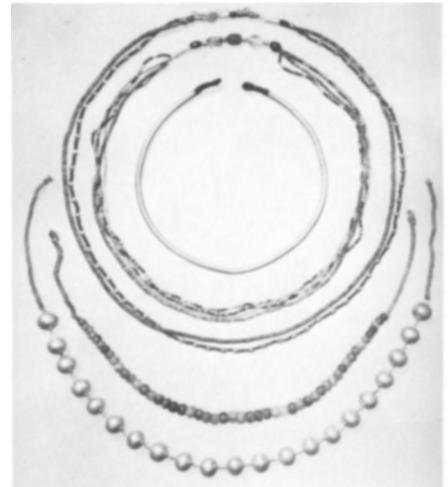
*This small baboon from the beginning of Egypt's history is made of faience, a glazed material that the Egyptians may have learned about from the Libyans. The provenance of this appealing creature and the faience animals found with it is uncertain, but stylistically it is reminiscent of an alabaster baboon inscribed with the name of Narmer, the first king to unite the Two Lands – Upper and Lower Egypt.*





*This fine fragment of a painted relief comes from a private mastaba at Giza or Saqqara, and depicts a man and woman winnowing wheat. It is one of several recent accessions that are being exhibited for the first time.*

*Nebhepetra Mentuhotep united the Two Lands after a century of dissolution, to form what we call the Middle Kingdom (beginning 2040 B.C.). This massive statue came from his funerary temple at Deir el Bahari, a building with terraces that inspired Queen Hatshepsut and her architect more than 500 years later. Also on view will be reliefs from Mentuhotep's temple, a ground plan, foundation deposits, and objects from nearby tombs.*



*Although these necklaces are currently displayed in the Egyptian Gold Room, in the new installation they will join objects now in storage with which they were found. They will be placed with the coffin and sheets of a little girl named Mayt, a member of the court of King Mentuhotep, and shown with the possessions of Mentuhotep and his associates.*

*Neferu, Mentuhotep's chief queen, had a tomb just outside the wall of the king's precinct, and the Museum excavated it in the 1920s. Its fragments of bold, high relief are among the finest work of the Eleventh Dynasty. They, along with relief fragments from other tombs, are being prepared for exhibition so that the department's entire holdings can be seen.*



*Beyond a short stretch of cultivated land, the Nile cliffs rise from the desert foothills. There lies the ancient Egyptian necropolis of Thebes, where myriad tombs, small and great, were hewn in the cliff or sunk in the slopes*

