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Opening extract from

Egyptology

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A Trip to Nubia *Friday 31st December 1926*

I am anxious to get to Philae, for I now feel sure that is our destination, but I am equally keen to learn as much as I can about Ancient Egypt before starting any excavations. So we are first going south to visit Abu Simbel in the nearby kingdom of Nubia.



This far south, Nile crocodiles – who had their own god, Sobek – may still be a menace to foolhardy explorers, as I.A. demonstrated.



A slightly exaggerated report of our numbers had gone before us to Abu Simbel, where we were met by some 20 boys with nearly 80 donkeys between them.



N.H. has painted Rameses II, styled "the Great" (by himself), riding in his mighty war chariot. It is interesting to compare this recreation to the sketch opposite, taken from the wall of Rameses II's granite temple.

While horses were introduced to Egypt some time before the New Kingdom, domesticated camels were not used for another 2,000 years.



THE TEMPLE OF RAMESES II, ABU SIMBEL
Rameses II built this temple to show his dominion over the southern kingdom of Nubia. The explorer Belzoni first cleared away enough sand from around its doorway to be able to effect an entry in 1818.

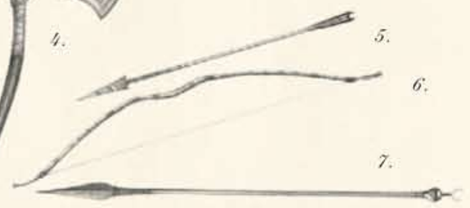


Right, a painting from the wall of the temple.

Weapons of War

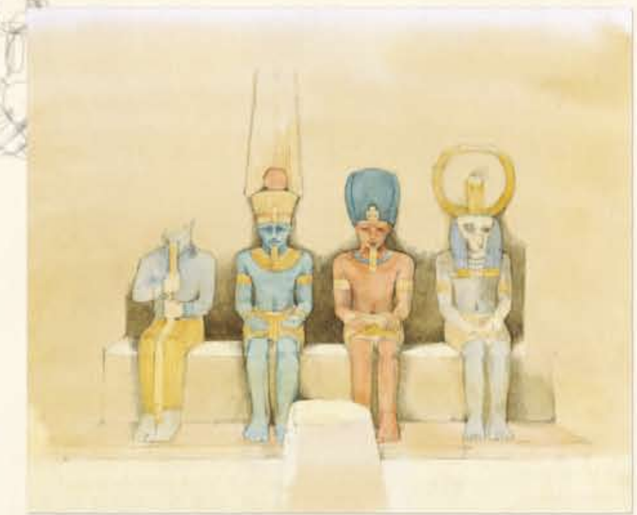


1. Khopesh Sword 2. Dagger 3. Throw Stick
4. Axe 5. Arrow 6. Bow 7. Spear



On the left are the main weapons used by Egyptian soldiers of the Middle and New Kingdoms. During the earliest period, before metals came into common use, flint axes, knives and stone clubs and maces were used.

ANCIENT ENGINEERING >>>
I have tried to show what it was like to enter one of these Ancient Egyptian temples by constructing this card representation of the Temple of Rameses II. It is not to scale, of course. As well as commissioning this temple to himself, Rameses also created a smaller one nearby, dedicated to his chief wife Nefertari.



The Valley of the Kings

Thursday 16th December 1926

Arriving in the valley, I had very much hoped to meet Howard Carter, but he was indisposed. I suppose this may just have something to do with the fact that the tomb he uncovered – of Tutankhamen – has had some 20,000 visitors since he first opened it up in 1922.



Although we did not manage to see Carter, we were invited to a highly enjoyable 'tea in the tomb' of Rameses II which has been converted into an Egyptological dining room!



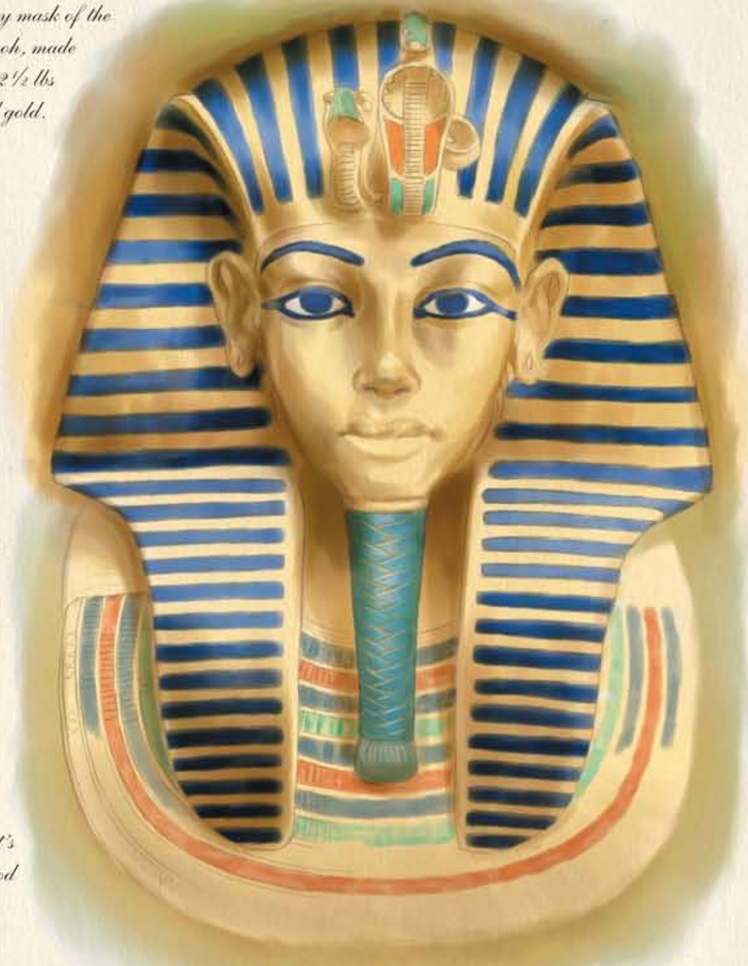
Right, the magnificent mummy mask of the Pharaoh, made from 22½ lbs of solid gold.

When Carter opened the tomb, he first made a small hole in the tomb door, and looked in. After waiting for some time, Lord Carnarvon grew impatient. "Can you see anything?" he asked. "Yes," replied Carter. "Wonderful things!"



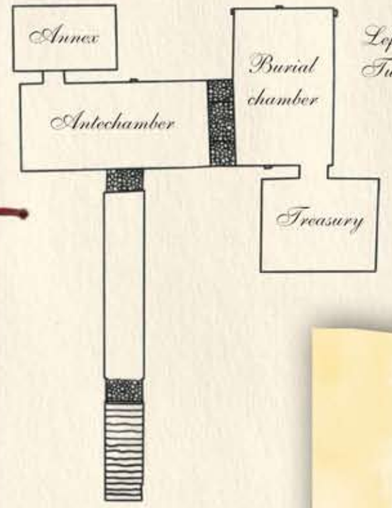
One of the boy king's gilded chariots was one of the many items found in his tomb.

Under Tutankhamen, worship of Egypt's traditional gods was restored after the period of Akhenaten's "Amarna heresy".



THE TREASURES OF KING TUTANKHAMEN

Although his tomb contains some of the most wonderful and precious antiquities ever found, we were told that King Tutankhamen himself was a not very powerful monarch whose short reign ended when he was only about nineteen years old. How magnificent, then, must have been the lost funerary treasures of some of Egypt's mightiest Pharaohs, such as Khufu (Cheops), Khaefra (Chephren) or Rameses II!



Left, a plan of King Tutankhamen's tomb.

Right, a painting from the wall of the king's burial chamber.



THE FAMOUS TOMB

Carter has so far cleared the antechamber and burial chamber, the result of four years' painstaking work. Currently he is unwrapping Tutankhamen's mummy.



FALSE FINGERS & TOES

The mummy is wearing more than 100 items of jewellery including these finger and toe protectors.



1 OUTER COFFIN >>>

Made of gold foil on carved wood, this is the first in a series of coffins that fit like Russian dolls over the mummy resting inside.



H.W. and I.A. enjoy [illegible] coffins of the boy king.

CANOPIC JARS

When a person was mummified, their internal organs were placed in canopic jars guarded by different gods. So far, Carter has not found the chest containing the canopic jars. They will probably look like these:



JACKAL JAR

The jackal-headed god Duamutef guarded the stomach of the deceased in his jar.



HUMAN JAR

The liver was placed in the god Imsety's jar. He had a human head.



BABOON JAR

The lungs were stored in the jar of the baboon-headed god Hapi.



FALCON JAR

The falcon-headed god Qebehsenuef was protector of the intestines.