

0. KING TUT (AND DOWNTON ABBEY) - Story Preface

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King Tut's burial chamber, at KV62 in the Valley of the Kings (Egypt), includes beautifully painted walls. Image by Hajor, online via Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC BY-SA 3.0](#)

King Tut's tomb (known as KV62) was discovered in the Valley of the Kings in 1922. His coffin, made of solid gold, weighs 450 pounds.

Tut's treasures, on display at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo - a city where massive non-violent, anti-government protests (resulting in the resignation of Hosni Mubarak) erupted in 2011 - represent some of the few royal artifacts not stolen by grave robbers soon after pharaohs were buried.

The expedition which led to this awesome discovery was funded by a Brit named George Herbert. His official title (after the death of his father) was the 5th Earl of Carnarvon.

Inheriting his ancestral home - Highclere Castle - the 5th Earl had great prestige but not much cash. When he married Almina Wombwell - the goddaughter of Alfred de Rothschild, a very wealthy banker - the money problems of George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Herbert were over.

By signing an agreement to marry the girl who may actually have been Rothschild's daughter, the 5th Earl had access to an annual sum of £6.5 million (in today's currency). That converts to a bit more than \$10 million every year.

Even with income like that, however, it took a great deal of money to fund Howard Carter's Egyptian excavations. Only when Carter said he'd pay-for one more year of effort himself - which he could not afford to do - did Lord Carnarvon agree to continue as benefactor.

The Carnarvons, parenthetically, are the real-life models for Robert Crawley (the 7th Earl of Grantham) and Cora Crawley (Countess of Grantham) who live at Downton Abbey (the real-life Highclere Castle). And ... just like the fictional Granthams ... the real-life Carnarvons opened their home to injured World War I soldiers.

After the war was over, and the 5th Earl could once-again travel to Egypt, he longed for the day he'd hear some positive news from Howard Carter. Finally ... on the 6th of November, 1922 ... he received this message:

At last have made wonderful discovery in the Valley. A magnificent tomb with seals intact. Recovered same for your arrival. Congratulations.

On the 16th of February, 1923, Howard Carter unsealed King Tut's burial chamber. Among the artifacts, from the "wonderful discovery in the Valley," are these items:

- Funerary chapel housing Tut's sarcophagus.
- Howard Carter cleans the third coffin of King Tut.
- Tut's death mask.
- Side view of the death mask.
- Back view of the death mask.
- The mummy of King Tut, after the wrappings were removed.

- An artifact from Tut's tomb.
- Tut and his wife.
- Tut's throne depicts the king and his wife.
- Alabaster jars contained Tut's internal organs.
- Statues of 365 servants accompanied the pharaoh to his tomb so they could serve him 365 days a year.
- One of King Tut's guards.
- King Tut and Ankhesenamun, His Wife.

Recent testing, of King Tut's remains, have revealed some interesting findings. The "Boy King" likely suffered from a bout of malaria, may have had a rare bone disorder and probably sustained a fall which fractured his leg.

There may be other treasures, still intact with the mummified remains of pharaohs who owned them in life, resting undisturbed in the Valley of the Kings. But given mankind's endless fascination with mummies, it is safe to say we have not heard the last of the great discoveries.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/KING-TUT-AND-DOWNTON-ABBEY-Mummies-Bodies-Talk>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/KING-TUT-AND-DOWNTON-ABBEY-Mummies-Bodies-Talk>

Media Stream



Egypt - Valley of the Kings Panorama

Panoramic photo of the Valley of the Kings - taken from the hill overlooking KV11, looking north - by Nikola Smolenski, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut's Tomb - KV62 - Valley of the Kings

Photo depicting exterior view of the tombs of Rameses VI and Tutankhamun, by Peter J. Bubenik, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Golden Third Coffin of King Tut - The Mummy's Resting Place

Image online, Egyptian Museum.

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King Tut - Outermost Funerary Chapel

Photo of King Tut's outermost funerary chapel, by Gérard Ducher, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut's Death Mask - Side View

Image of Tut's death mask, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut's Death Mask - Back View with Inscription

Image of Tut's death mask, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut - Mummy Without Wrappings

Photo by Howard Carter, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut and Ankhesenamun, His Wife

Public-domain image of Tut and his wife, from the lid of a box found in King Tut's tomb, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Artifact From King Tut's Tomb - Harpooner

Image of King Tut artifact, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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Throne Carving of King Tut with his Wife

Image of detail from King Tut's throne, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut's Throne

Image of King Tut's throne chair, online via Wikimedia Commons.

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Albaster Jars from King Tut Era

Image of Tut artifacts, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Statues of King Tut's Servants

Image of King Tut artifacts, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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King Tut's Guards

Image of King Tut artifact, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Downton Abbey - Highclere Castle

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