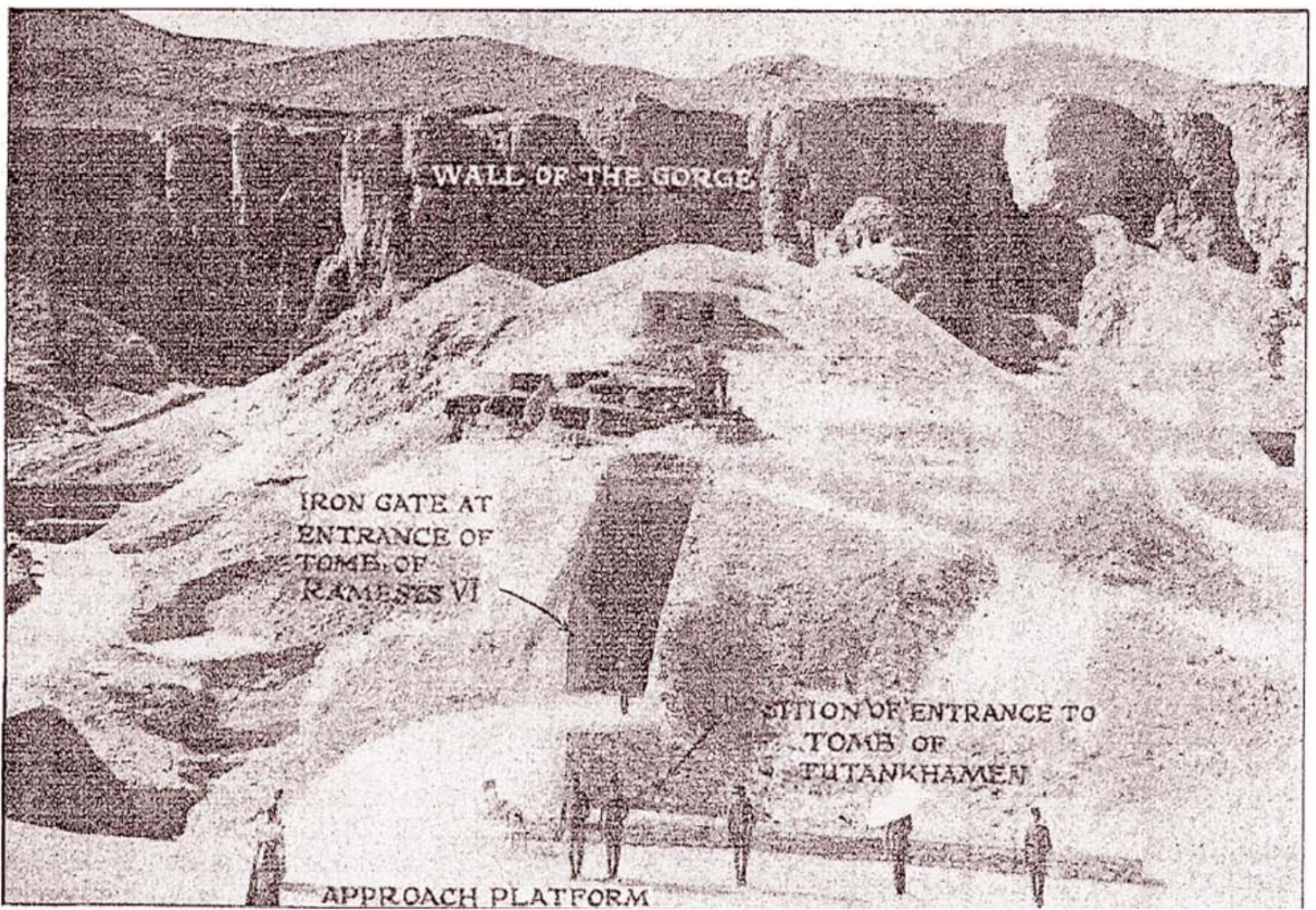


THE LITERARY DIGEST

for January 20, 1923

THE STUPENDOUS FIND IN EGYPT



NEWLY DISCOVERED TOMB OF TUTANKHAMEN, NEAR THEBES.

The arrow points to the entrance, which is seen guarded by Egyptian soldiers.

THE DESERT GUARDS ITS DEAD almost as inexorably as the sea, but man has often overcome both guardians. What is thought may prove the greatest archeological discovery of all time has recently been made in Egypt, in the Valley of the Kings, near Luxor. Two chambers of a tomb have been found filled with the funeral paraphernalia of the Egyptian King Tutankhamen, and hopes are entertained that the third chamber, yet unopened, may contain the royal mummy itself. So far reports give only a generalized statement of the richness of the find, and no photographs of the objects have been received. Pictures published in various papers have been reproductions of earlier finds, representing, however, objects probably contemporary with those newly come to light. The discoveries were made by the excavators working under the concession made to Lord Carnarvon, and American interests as well as English are involved in the results. So rich and valuable are the things brought to light after an almost fruitless search of sixteen years that the Egyptian Government has drafted a bill which provides that Egypt herself shall have the first option on any archeological find of this and future diggings. It is protested, however, that such a law would put an end to research, as those who provide the money do so in the expectation of sharing in the rewards. Credit is given to Mr. Howard Carter, an American who has worked under Lord Carnarvon, for his "dogged perseverance, his thoroughness and, above all, his flair." The first report published in the *London Times* enumerates some things which met the eyes of the diggers after effecting a difficult entrance:



Howard Carter examined the sarcophagus

OldMagazineArticles.com

THE STUPENDOUS FIND

"First they saw three magnificent state couches, all gilt, with exquisite carving and animal heads of typhon, Hathor, and lion. On these rested beds, beautifully carved, gilt, inlaid with ivory and semi-precious stones, and also innumerable boxes of exquisite workmanship. One of these boxes was inlaid with ebony and ivory, with gilt inscriptions; another contained emblems of the underworld; on a third, which contained royal robes, handsomely embroidered, precious stones, and golden sandals, were beautifully painted hunting scenes.

"There was a stool of ebony inlaid with ivory, with the most delicately carved duck's feet; also a child's stool of fine workmanship. Beneath one of the couches was the State Throne of King Tutankhamen, probably one of the most beautiful objects of art ever discovered. There was also a heavily gilt chair, with portraits of the King and Queen, the whole encrusted with turquoise, cornelian, lapis, and other semi-precious stones.



The death mask of
:the Boy King"

"Two life-sized bitumenized statues of the King, with gold work, holding a golden stick and mace, faced each other, the handsome features, the feet, and the hands delicately carved, with eyes of glass and head-dress richly studded with gems.

"There were also four chariots, the sides of which were encrusted with semi-precious stones and rich gold decoration. These were dismantled, with a charioteer's apron of leopard's skin hanging over the seat.

"Other noteworthy objects were royal sticks, one of ebony with the head of an Asiatic as a handle in gold, another of the handsomest filigree work; also a stool for a throne with Asiatics carved on it, denoting that the King

had placed his foot on the neck of the Asiatic prisoners taken in war. There were some quaint bronze-gilt musical instruments and a robing dummy for royal wigs and robes.

"There were also some exquisite alabaster vases with very intricate and unknown design, all of one piece, and some handsome blue Egyptian faience, and enormous quantities of provisions for the dead, comprising trussed duck, haunches of venison, etc., all packed in boxes, according to the custom of the time. There were some remarkable wreaths, still looking ever-green, and one of the boxes contained rolls of *papyri*, which are expected to render a mass of information.

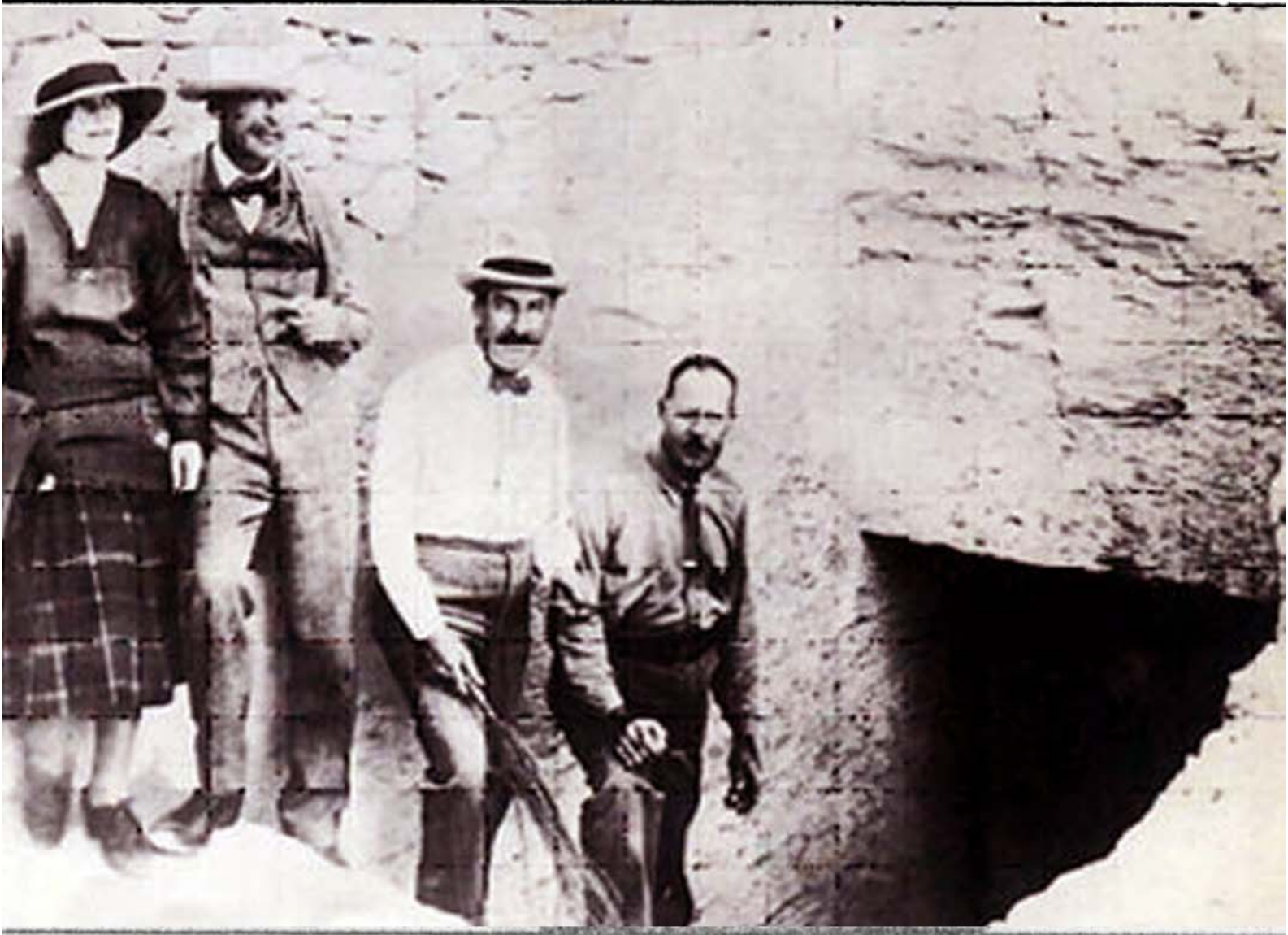
"A further chamber revealed an indescribable state of confusion. Here furniture, gold beds, exquisite boxes, and alabaster vases similar to those found in the first chamber were piled high one on top of the other, so closely packed that it has been impossible to get inside yet.

"Numbers of these treasures are in a fairly good state of preservation, but others are in a somewhat precarious condition. The greatest care is being taken in handling them, however, and there is every hope that under Mr. Carter's capable direction most of them will be preserved."

A little later *The Times* publishes Lord Carnarvon's own account, giving some hint of the emotions accompanying the discovery of objects sealed from sight for 3,000 years.

"On the next day we began clearing the passage, which proved to be about eight meters in length. Objects, mostly broken, kept turning up, among others, was a broken box with various

THE STUPENDOUS FIND



THOSE WHO HAD THE FIRST INSIDE LOOK.

In their order from the reader's left are Lady Evelyn Herbert, daughter of Lord who is second, then Mr. Howard Carter, and Mr. B. Callender, principal Assistant.

cartouches upon the top rib, which may help us, later on, to reconsider the duration of the two anterior reigns.

"At last this passage was cleared. We again reached a sealed door or wall bearing the same seals as in the case of the former one. We wondered if we should find another staircase, probably blocked behind this wall, or whether we should get into a chamber. I asked Mr. Carter to take out a few stones and have a look in. After a few minutes this was done. He pushed his head partly into the aperture. With the help of a candle, he could dimly discern what was inside. A long silence followed, until I said, I fear in somewhat trembling tones, 'Well, what is it?' 'There are some marvelous objects here,' was the welcome reply.

"Having given up my place to my daughter, I myself went to the hole, and I could with difficulty restrain my excitement. At the first sight, with the inadequate light, all that one could see was what appeared to be gold bars. On getting a little more accustomed to the light, it became apparent that there were colossal gilt couches with extraordinary heads, boxes here and boxes there. We enlarged the hole and Mr. Carter managed to scramble in—the chamber is sunk two feet below the bottom passage—and then, as he moved around with a candle, we knew we had found something absolutely unique and unprecedented.

"Even with the poor light of the candle one could see a marvelous collection of furniture and other objects in the chamber. There were two life-sized statues of the king, beds, chariots, boxes of all sizes and shapes—some with every sort of inlay while others were painted—walking-sticks, marvelous alabaster vases, and so on. After slightly enlarging the hole we went in, and this time we realized in a fuller degree the extent of the discovery, for we had managed to tap the electric light from the tomb above, which gave us far better illumination for our examination.

"One of the finest objects is the chair or throne of the King. It is in wood. The back panel is of surpassing beauty, and portrays the King and his Queen protected by Aton rays. All the figures, etc., in this scene are built up by means of semi-



The Shawabti of
Tutankhamun

THE STUPENDOUS FIND

precious carved stones, inlaid into wood. The delicacy and grace of this work of art are indescribable, and it is, indeed, fortunate that we have struck a period when Egyptian art reached one of its culminating points. I kept on wondering why we had found no coffins; nothing of the shape of one was visible. A few minutes later, beneath one of the beds of state, we came on a small opening, giving into another chamber. There the confusion was beyond conception. It was utterly impossible to enter, as the room was packed with chairs, beds, boxes, statuettes, alabasters, and every other conceivable object, to the height of five feet. As far as could be seen, however, no coffin had been placed there.

"But on examining the first chamber again we discovered, between two life-sized statues of the King, a walled-up portion of the northern end of the first chamber. This was also covered with seals, but on the level of the floor, in the center of this wall, there were traces of a very small break having been made, large enough to admit a small man. This had been subsequently resealed, probably by Rameside inspectors.

"Lastly, the absence of mummies was explained. There is little doubt that behind this wall there exists a chamber or chambers, and in one of these probably reposes, in his coffin and sarcophagus, the body of King Tutankhamen.

"Should this royal burial-place prove to be untouched, then the sight to be revealed will prove to be absolutely unique in the experience of any living archeologist, and, as far as I know, in the history of archeology.

"It is impossible to foresee what may be behind that wall, and it has been a severe tax on one's curiosity not to demolish part of it and obtain some idea of the possible marvels, or disappointments, which await one there. Owing to the congestion of the objects in the first chamber, it would, however, have been harmful, and almost impossible, to do anything before clearing the first room of its contents, and we must possess our souls in patience until this is done. However, by beginning in February, I hope that the work will be sufficiently advanced to enable us to discover what may be behind that tantalizing wall."

A dispatch from Luxor to the *New York Times* postdating the publications above states that the new information being gained "seems to confound many former beliefs but does not go far enough to enable the construction of other theories in place of those demolished." The dispatch proceeds:

"What makes the discovery most important is that the Egyptian period of the fourteenth century before Christ had hitherto been lost in antiquity, and yet it seems that the period was the greatest in ancient Egypt's history. Amenhotep III, who was the father of Khunaten, brought ancient Egypt to the zenith of its political power, and as it has been apparent from other periods that the decline of Egyptian political power was always accompanied by a decline in refinement and the arts, it is assumed that the culmination of ancient Egypt's national glory had its counterpart in the highest development of civilization reached during the Egyptian Imperial age.

"Unfortunately the world previously had no definite evidence of the state of development reached, but from the discoveries in Tutankhamen's tomb it is thought he reigned at a period when Pharaonic political power and the ancient Egyptian estheticism of magnificence and splendor glowed at its brightest.

"It is known that the decline set in almost immediately after the death of Tutankhamen.

"N. Deggaves, attached to the New York Metropolitan Museum's staff at Thebes, discussing the artistic aspect of these discoveries, frankly admitted to me that the decorations on some objects in this tomb are unprecedentedly beautiful, tho he explained that softness and grace had been secured at the expense of the simplicity and dignity of the earlier Egyptian art. His most important statement, however, was that most of the objects in this tomb probably did not represent eighteenth dynasty art at its highest, because they were made for funeral equipment, and, therefore, presumably were not as carefully done as objects for domestic or official use in the palace or the mansions of notables. It again indicates how great must have been the esthetic splendor of that period."