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TUTANKHAMUN The most famous Egyptian pharaoh today is, without doubt, Tutankhamun. The boy king died in his late teens and remained at rest in Egypt's Valley of the Kings for over 3,300 years. All that changed in November 1922, when Tutankhamun's tomb was discovered by the British Egyptologist Howard Carter who was excavating on behalf of his patron Lord Carnarvon. His tomb almost escaped discovery and could have been undiscovered to this day. Carter had been searching for the tomb for a number of years and Carnarvon had decided that enough time and money had been expended with little return. However, Carter managed to persuade his patron to fund one more season and within days of resuming the tomb was found. Today, the tomb still contains the pharaoh's remains, hidden from view inside the outermost of three coffins. He is the only pharaoh still residing in the Valley of the Kings - as far as we know! The tomb itself is very small and appears to have been destined for someone of lesser importance. Tutankhamun's unexpected early demise saw the tomb rushed modification to accommodate the pharaoh. (Colour tomb layout illustration copyright by M. Rigby.) The only part of the complex that contains wall paintings is the Burial Chamber. One of the scenes, shown below, depicts the Opening of the Mouth Ceremony where the senses are restored to the deceased Tutankhamun. In this case the

person performing this duty is Ay, who became the next pharaoh. (Photograph of wall painting - non-copyright postcard.) It contained four gilded shrines nested one inside the other. The innermost of these covered a stone sarcophagus. Inside that were three coffins - the innermost being made of 110 kilograms of solid gold. Inside that lay the pharaoh himself wearing the famous gold mask. Innermost Coffin

Adjacent to the Burial Chamber was the so-called Treasury which was home to much of the supporting equipment for Tutankhamuns afterlife. It contained a dazzling array of boats, gilded figures and the canopic chest within which were various internal organs belonging to the ancient king. Gathered around the chest in their protective stance were four beautiful gilded figures of goddesses. Just inside the entrance to the room was the protective black figure of Anubis in the form of a recumbant jackal. The Antechamber contained dismantled chariots, containers of food, various funeral couches, thrones, and two black guardian figures at the entrance of the Burial Chamber. It was this area that was first seen when Carter made a hole in the blocked-off far end of the entry passage. A small Annex was a jumble of other equipment. Carter concluded that the tomb had been broken into on two occasions soon after the pharaoh was buried. After each break-in the tomb was resealed by officials of the necropolis. Fortunately, the tomb robbers did not get away with too much and much of the material sealed in with Tutankhamun may now be viewed in Cairo's Egyptian Museum with a few items in the Luxor Museum.

Tutankhamuns Life
Tutankhamuns Name
Tutankhamuns

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