

THE CAIRO GAZETTE

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Oxford Team Strikes It Lucky

The archaeological team led by Sir William Saville, which has been digging in Luxor's Valley of the Kings since September last, has hit the jackpot with the exposure of a fine XVIIIth-Dynasty tomb doorway in apparently undisturbed ground. Who knows what may lie beyond? 'This could be the answer to all our dreams – a fully intact pharaonic tomb!' exclaimed Sir William, his eyes gleaming with that passion we all know and respect.

The site will hold particular poignancy for the team's esteemed leader, as it is just a mile from where he first made his professional name as a rising young archaeological star, in 1870, with the discovery of the Eye of Horus, the striking malachite plaque recently stolen from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Sir William's partner on that dig was the talented Harry Flinders, tragically stuck down by scorpion bite that same day – how great a loss to archaeology he may have been, we shall never know. 'I dedicate this new find to Harry's memory,' said Sir William, wiping away a tear.

Assisting Sir William on the excavation are noted lady archaeologist Miss Ariadne Price-Evans, and students Mr Hugh Carlaw and Miss Helen Mackinnon.

War More Likely In Colonies Than Europe, Says PM

The Prime Minister spoke to calm the nerves of Parliament, after the recent flood of ill-informed gossip about the proximity of European War. 'Her Majesty's Government is fully aware that our bellicose neighbours are arming themselves more capably and in greater numbers than we have seen for generations. A newly-united Germany keen to prove itself on the world stage, and a France desperate for a last chance at greatness, represent real dangers, and in response we too have commenced a military build-up.

'But the people of Britain need have no fear. If there is war, it will be a war of Empire, and will be fought in the far-flung provinces and colonies, not here in our homes. And, it need hardly be added, Britain will be victorious!'

(Shouts of 'Huzzah!' from all sides of the House.)

Superstitious Natives Restless

The *Gazette* notes with concern that relations between the native Egyptian community and their British superiors has taken an alarming trend for the worse in recent months. It seems the local folk are no longer willing to meekly kowtow to the policies we institute on their behalf.

Rather than attempt to secure an interview with a native Egyptian, from which little of value could likely be learned, we spoke to renowned expert on native affairs Major Ray Siste.

'Your Egyptian Johnny's a peaceable enough fellow six days out of seven. But prod him in a sensitive spot, and he'll be hopping up and down with rage as quick as Jack-be-nimble! And one thing he can't abide is the idea that his precious artefacts are being smuggled out of the country! Seems he don't mind so much if they're going to museums or universities – it's the private collectors he can't abide. Something to do with ritual significance of the items concerned, or some such stuff and nonsense – he's a superstitious chap, your basic Egyptian in the bazaar. Forever worrying about ancient evils being raised from the tomb by careless Westerners, and such. Why, it fair makes us old Egypt hands laugh, to hear the natives wail about tampering with knowledge man was not meant to wot of. What I say is, if man weren't meant to wot of it, why was he given the wherewithal to wot with, what?'

It is certainly true that the theft of artefacts from archaeological excavations in the Luxor area has been sharply on the rise lately, under the nefarious influence of a smuggling ring led by a shadowy figure known only as 'Mr Big'. It is not only the natives who are irked by this gentleman's antics!

Another theory is that the Egyptian political-intellectual class is wary of their land being used as a pawn in the rivalries of European nations. Understandably perhaps, they have no desire to see bloody battle waged on the banks of the Nile, over an affair which is no quarrel of theirs. However reasonable this belief may at first sound, though, the clear fact is that Egypt is far better off under British rule than German or French. (The 'independence' some are calling for is not even worth discussing.) So any sacrifices the Egyptians are called upon to make for the defence of British power will be well worthwhile. And we may be assured that any further attempts by rabble-rousers to foment peasant unrest will be met with firmness by the colonial authorities!