

Was King Tut Murdered?



Evidence Cards

King Tut

Some speculate that as Tut grew older, his views might have changed. He might have begun to exert his power over those who had once controlled him. Would this have sat well with his two main advisors?

King Tut

Many other artifacts in Tut's tomb suggest that they were not meant for him.

King Tut

King Tut and his wife Ankhesenamun did not have any children.

King Tut

However, Tut was young and was not prepared to die, like an old pharaoh would have been. So a tomb would not have been ready.

King Tut

Tut was the last of the bloodline of his family. Whoever married his wife would surely be king.

King Tut

Tut might have died of a plague that was causing many deaths in Egypt.

King Tut

Another reason for suspicion regarding Tut's death was the hurried burial.

Aye

Some think this indicates that Aye had to justify his rise to the throne in light of the events surrounding the king's death. So he had his picture painted on Tut's wall.

King Tut

The wooden coffin was made for another king but was used for Tut instead.

Aye

Aye arranged for the wall to be painted with himself (as king) giving the last rites.

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Evidence Cards *(cont.)*

Aye

Aye did not allow his future young wife to be painted on the walls of Tut's tomb, though this was the custom.

Aye

Some believe Aye was merely putting on a show for his subjects as he cared for Tut's tomb.

Aye

In the picture on the wall of the tomb, Aye is wearing a crown, suggesting that he is the rightful heir to the throne. This is very unusual in Egyptian art.

Aye

When Aye took the throne, he had no children to succeed him.

Aye

Aye would not have wanted to have a Hittite king. He knew the Hittite prince would appoint his own advisors—and so Aye would be out of a job.

Tey

Tey had already held a place of prominence in the Egyptian society as Nefertiti's confidant.

Aye

It had to be someone with the military power to order the murder of the Hittite prince. Aye had the motive and the power to do this.

Tey

She might have had the motive for murdering Ankhnesenamun.

Aye

Did Aye have Tut and this Hittite prince killed so that he could take the throne? Did Aye even kill his new young wife?

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Evidence Cards *(cont.)*

Horemheb

Under Tut's general, Horemheb, many of the Hittite warriors were killed in battle.

Horemheb

Did Horemheb believe that he could grab the throne when Aye died four years later?

Horemheb

Certainly Horemheb would not have wanted his enemy to rule over Egypt.

Horemheb

His power as general and the backing of his powerful army made sure he could take the throne upon Aye's death.

Horemheb

It had to be someone with the military power to order the murder of the Hittite prince. Horemheb had the motive and the power as general to do this.

Tey

Tey certainly would not have taken a back seat to another younger wife.

Horemheb

He did many great things for Egypt—but does all this mean that he is innocent of murder?

Ankhesenammun

In her letter, Ankhesenammun doesn't name any names but she does imply that she is being forced to marry a servant.

Horemheb

Horemheb certainly did not want Aye to keep the younger Ankhesenammun as his wife. She was young enough to have children who would ascend the throne.

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Evidence Cards *(cont.)*

Ankhesenamun

She might have been forced into the marriage.

Ankhesenamun

One of two things is sure: either her tomb has not yet been found, or she was not given a proper burial.

Ankhesenamun

Her desperate letter seems to conclude the she did not want to marry her servant. Was Ankhesenamun referring to Aye as the servant she didn't want to marry?

Ankhesenamun

Was Ankhesenamun simply punished for offering the throne to a foreigner (something considered treasonous)?

Ankhesenamun

Another interesting clue is found on the walls of Tut's tomb. It was common to include a picture of the queen on the wall of her husband's tomb so that she would spend eternity with him. She was not painted on the walls of Tut's tomb.

Ankhesenamun

Could the murderer of Tut be Ankhesenamun? Maybe she wanted to rule Egypt herself through a foreigner?

Ankhesenamun

Nor was she on the walls of Aye's tomb. Was her disappearance foul play by a murderer?

Ankhesenamun

The Hittites had a powerful military and would definitely back her up, if needed.

Ankhesenamun

Or did Ankhesenamun die of a plague that was consuming Egypt at the time?

Ankhesenamun

If Ankhesenamun killed Tut, Aye would be seen as the defender of Egypt's liberty against a scheming queen who murdered her own husband.