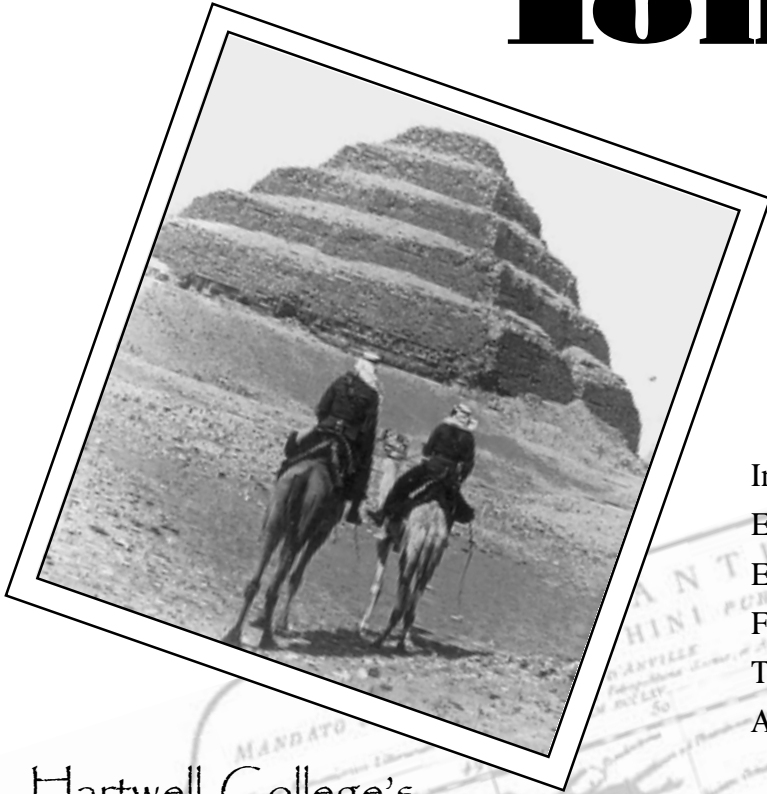


The Charioteer's Tomb



**An Any-System Key
Pulp Egypt Scenario**

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Hartwell College's archaeological expedition headed by Professor Percy Mallory penetrates the tomb of Henu-Akhet, a charioteer hero of the Battle of Kadesh. Despite misfortune and the superstitions of their workers, the characters explore the tomb and retrieve a magnificent decorated sarcophagus. Transporting this treasure back to Cairo from the Sakkara desert gives greedy laborers, antiquities thieves, and smugglers all a chance to steal it.

Credits

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Any-System Key

You can use this adventure with your favorite roleplaying game system. Just check out page 12 and use the rules there to match descriptive gamemaster character abilities and task difficulties to corresponding values in your preferred game. Use the customizable stat forms found in the adventure margins to note values for character stats in your game.

Visit the *Any-System Key* page at griffonpubstudio.com/NESys.html for examples of customizing stats into those of your favorite game system.

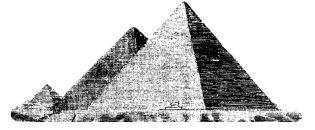
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The



Egyptian Gazette

CAIRO, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1935

2 piastres

SUTCLIFF EXAMINES QUARTERMASTER

MISSING SUPPLIES
PROMPT ENQUIRY

WHITEHALL, Feb. 12.—The Secretary of State for War and Air announced today the appointment of Colonel Winton H. C. Sutcliff as head of a special inquest into the misappropriation of supplies from the quartermaster's office at the Cairo garrison. Recent inexplicable losses of motorcars, lorries, petrol, foodstuffs, and other valuable supplies maintaining His Majesty's military forces in Egypt prompted the investigation.

"I have full confidence we can unmask the culprits and end this criminal waste of vital materiel," Sutcliff told members of the press as he left the War Ministry yesterday

Continued on Page Four

HOPE GAINS IN ROME FOR PEACE IN AFRICA

REPLY TO DEMANDS ASKED

ROME, Feb. 13.—The optimistic forecasts made yesterday as to a peaceful solution of the Italo-Abyssinian crisis became more positive today following a meeting between Negradas Yesus, Abyssinian Charge d'Affaires, and Fulvio Suvich, Italian Foreign Under-Secretary. Although it is stated semi-officially that no actual solution has been reached, the impression is that good progress has been made.

Special emphasis is laid on the fact that Signor Suvich began by assuring the Abyssinian envoy that Italy was animated in its

Continued on Page Six

MALLORY CLEARS TOMB SHAFT OF CHARIOTEER

HENU-AKHET LED RELIEF
AT BATTLE OF KADESH

BY ARCHIBALD LITTLEDALE
Special to the GAZETTE

SAKKARA, Feb. 18.—Prof. Percy Mallory and his team of archaeologists from Hartwell College have begun clearing the tomb shaft of a New Empire chariot regiment commander. Ancient records indicate that Henu-Akhet led the force of Ne'arin charioteers that came to the aid of Pharaoh Rameses the Great during the Battle of Kadesh in 1300 BC.

In the shadow of the Step Pyramid, throngs of fellahin work to remove debris from the shaft. "We're not quite sure how deep it goes," said Prof. Mallory. "But we expect to find the entrance to Henu-Akhet's tomb within the next day or two." Since the cavalry commander helped Rameses attain victory at Kadesh, Mallory estimates that he planned on taking many of his rich rewards with him to the afterlife.

The tomb is situated in a cluster of New Empire graves amidst the Old Empire cemetery sprawled around King Zozer's Step Pyramid.

Mallory and his colleagues have battled work shortages and superstitious fellahin, who believe a curse will strike down anyone violating the tomb. Arrangements have already been made for a lorry to transport any artefacts removed from the grave to a guarded warehouse in Boulak. "The rumors of a curse are nonsense," Mallory said. "Unfortunately, fearful workers might attempt to destroy any antiquities we find, or steal them to sell for their personal profit."

EGYPTIAN HOMECOMING



TUT DISCOVERER RETURNS TO EGYPT

CARTER FOUND
LOST KING'S TOMB

WILL OFFER LECTURES
WHILE TOURING NILE

LONDON, Feb. 14.—It was announced today that Howard Carter, who discovered the tomb of boy-pharaoh Tutankhamen in 1922, plans to return to Egypt for the 1935-36 season. Although retired from archaeology after years of cataloging the find of the century, Carter will bring his popular lectures to Cairo, including a public talk at the Geographical Society and a private meeting with King Farouk. He is expected to arrive in Alexandria sometime in November, and depart after touring the Nile in February.



Introduction

Sakkara, February 1935—The characters belong to the Hartwell College Egyptian excavations led by Professor Percy Mallory. (Use the character outlines provided on pages 9–11 or make sure each hero has some connection to the expedition: bodyguard, student, assistant archaeologist, museum representative, driver, privileged observer.) Allow players to introduce their characters and describe their role in the dig.

Everyone knows a little about Henu-Akhet; give players copies of “The Egyptian Gazette” handout to set the mood and offer some information on the dig and contemporary events. Above-ground the tomb consists of little more than a ruined stone chapel where offerings were left by those faithful preserving the charioteer’s memory. For weeks the peasant *fellahin* workers have labored to clear the deep shaft that delves straight down into the stone, presumably to a tomb. Read aloud:

At noon the *fellahin* remove the last of the rubble from the tomb shaft and climb out like dusty ghosts. Their comrades crowd around the hole, gibbering rumors of treasure and murmuring prayers against curses. Their foreman, Ibrahim al-Kassam, orders them back, clearing a space around the shaft. Clutching his pipe in his grinning teeth, Professor Mallory clips a lantern to his belt and begins to descend the rope, followed by one of the more courageous *fellahin*. Mallory felt he alone deserved to be the first to open the doors to Henu-Akhet’s tomb with one assistant.

You peer down the shaft, the lantern barely making a pinprick of light, then hear the sounds of a crowbar prying apart stone. “I think we’ve almost got it,” you hear Mallory’s voice echo up the pit. Then you feel air suck down into the hole and see a great fireball engulf Mallory and his Arab assistant! Everyone huddled around the edge recoils from the rush of heat blasting up the shaft. When calm returns, you peer back down into the pit. You seen no sign and hear no sound of Mallory—everything is dark.

Assuming the heroes pull up the rope, they find it still intact, though the lower portions of it were singed by fire. Short of requisitioning a powerful searchlight from the British Army, no source of illumination reveals the situation at the bottom (torches dropped burn out from the 100-foot fall or smash on the stones). Electric torches do not pierce the depths.

None of the *fellahin* save Ibrahim dare enter the tomb, so resolving Mallory’s fate and continuing the tomb exploration remains the characters’ responsibility. Descending the shaft using the rope requires a *Routine climb* roll; increase the difficulty by one level for each character on the rope at the same time, or if anyone tries descending faster than reasonable. A ready supply of torches and two electric torches (in addition to any equipment the characters carry) provide illumination at the bottom of the shaft and throughout the tomb.

The heroes find a grim sight. The carved tomb doors stand ajar. The charred husks of Mallory and the *fellahin* worker sit against the opposite wall. Careful examination of the entrance fails to reveal any catch, tripwire, or other device that might have activated a trap. They can pull the doors open, but nothing more occurs. Beyond the portal lies the tomb of Henu-Akhet.

Tomb Inscriptions

Archaeologist characters might concern themselves with the various hieroglyphic inscriptions cover the tomb walls. Here are some sample quotes they might translate that shed some light on Henu-Akhet’s relationship to Ramses the Great:

From Scenes of the Battle:

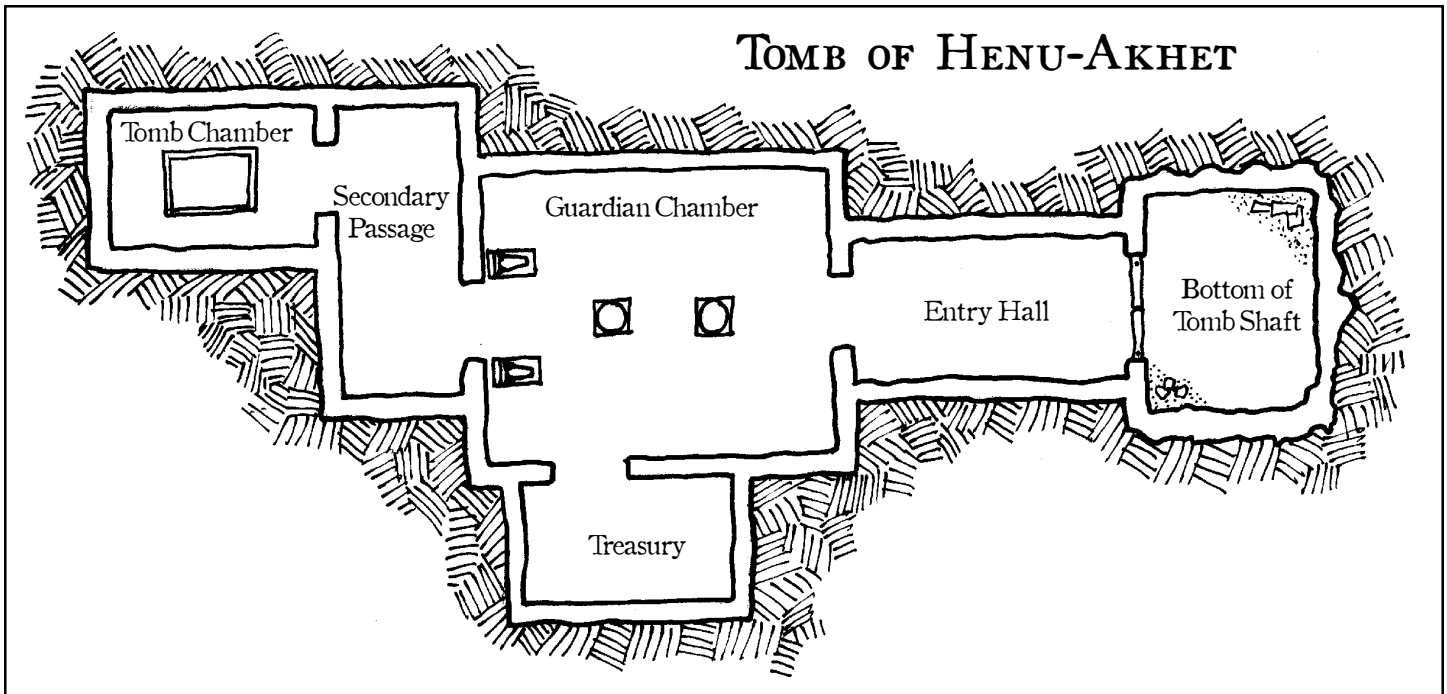
“Henu-Akhet found that the hostile ranks of the fallen ones from Hatti had hemmed in the camp of Pharaoh, while His Majesty sat alone without his army being with him. . . . Henu-Akhet called to his charioteers, ‘Stand firm, be bold-hearted, my troops! Become like Set, great in strength, like Sekhmet in the moment of her fury!’ They charged the hostile ranks of the despicable Fallen One of Hatti. They let none of them escape, their hearts confident in the great strength of Pharaoh, their good lord, being around them like a mountain of copper, like a wall of iron forever and ever and always.”

From Scenes of Pharaoh Rewarding His Servant:

“And Pharaoh showered his servant with gold and praise, saying, ‘You were strong and your heart was firm; none could stand before you. As Amun-Re favors me, I reward your loyal service as one who shoots the arrow like Sekhmet to fell the thousand foes of Pharaoh.’”

From Scenes of Henu-Akhet’s Life:

“Is there one here like Henu-Akhet? This brave warrior stood beside Pharaoh on the Plains of Kadesh against the hostile ranks of the fallen ones from Hatti. He is long gone, but his name and the writings of this house keep his memory alive.”



Episode One: Into the Tomb

The tomb consists of several chambers arranged as detailed on the accompanying map, though gamemasters can customize the layout once the heroes pass the entry hall.

Entry Hall

A long corridor leads deeper into the tomb. Hieroglyphics and scenes of daily and military life decorate the smooth, plastered walls, though some sections have deteriorated, fractured, and fallen to the floor (the rest of the tomb contains such decoration).

Troughs similar to those used for feeding or watering horses sit along each wall. They contain dry, crumbly dirt. Closer examination reveals it was once manure of some kind. Anyone making a *Routine deduce* or *science* roll theorizes that decomposing manure sealed in the tomb created a pocket of methane gas; when Mallory opened the doors, it escaped and ignited from the embers in his pipe and the lantern providing light.

Guardian Chamber

The passage opens into a vast underground chamber supported by two stone pillars. Carved square openings pierce three of the four walls, including one the heroes just entered. Two immense stone statues of Anubis, jackal-headed god of the underworld, stand guard on either side of the doorway at the chamber's far end. The floor remains clear except for a few small piles of debris that fell from the ceiling or plaster walls.

Should anyone come within five feet of the doorway guarded by Anubis, the giant statues come to life, shake off thousands of years of dust, and bash at the heroes with their large stone fists.

Since they're made of stone, these statues ignore half the damage inflicted upon them.

The colossi maneuver around the stone columns and even into passageways chasing the characters from the tomb until destroyed. Should they engage any heroes dodging around the pillars, they smash into the columns if they attack and miss a hero. If seriously damaged by blows, a pillar buckles, then collapses next round. Heroes can avoid the rockfall with a *Routine dodge* roll, or they sustain severe damage and become trapped beneath the debris. If two pillars collapse, the entire ceiling caves in and destroys the chamber.

ANIMATED ANUBIS STATUES (BOSSes)

Competent Skills:
intimidate _____

Expert Skills:
fight _____

Signature Skill:
strength _____

Natural Defenses:
stone fists _____
stone skin _____

Secondary Passage

If the heroes need more challenges, add a secondary hallway leading from the guardian chamber to either the treasury or tomb. One or several traps should keep them on their toes:

Deadfall: Characters step on a trigger stone, releasing an immense stone block from the ceiling. Anyone caught beneath takes damage, though everyone can evade it with a *Routine dodge* roll, but they may be on one side or the other. The rock might break apart, raising dust and sending smaller boulders rolling at characters; or it could remain intact, blocking the passage.

Pit Trap: A massive, cantilevered floor stone tips as a character passes above and dumps her into a 10-foot-deep pit. Debris or jagged spikes at the bottom can increase damage victims sustain.

Tomb Denizens: Depending on the campaign's mood and the players' tastes, creatures living within the tomb might emerge from their lair into the hallway to assault the heroes. Henu-Akhet's dead bodyguards, buried in the chamber floor, might claw their way up and attack the heroes. Other animals might leap from previously unseen holes leading to their nests. See the "Tomb Denizens" sidebar for more details.

Wall of Blades: When triggered, this trap sends a wall of ancient scimitars (called *khepesh*-swords by Egyptologists) swinging down from a concealed space in the ceiling. Those failing a *Routine dodge* roll sustain damage.

Difficulty Values

Routine _____

Challenging _____

Hard _____

Improbable _____

Tomb Denizens

Use one of the following encounters to liven up the action with another combat sequence. These adversaries may await characters in the secondary passage, treasury, or tomb chamber itself:

GIANT ASP (BOSS)

A giant cobra has made a nest in one part of the tomb, and resents the characters intruding. Each successful attack (either biting or spitting) has a 50 percent chance of affecting the target with venom that inflicts painful damage until the antidote is administered or the victim perishes.

Competent Skills:

sneak _____

track _____

Expert Skills:

fight _____

spit _____

strength _____

Signature Skill:

intimidate _____

Natural Defenses:

fangs _____

venom _____

WALKING DEAD (Henchmen)

Depending on the campaign's mood and the players' tastes, Henu-Akhet's dead bodyguards, buried in the chamber floor, claw their way up and attack the heroes. They may simply claw at the heroes or wield swords and shields with the same finesse as they did in life. As undead, they ignore half the damage from hits, though fire ignites their dry wrappings and inflicts full damage. They also shamle about rather slowly.

Competent Skills:

intimidate _____

track _____

Expert Skills:

fight _____

Natural Defenses/Weapons:

claws _____

khepesh sword _____

shield _____

MONSTROUS SCORPION (BOSS)

Like the asp, a huge scorpion has made the tomb its lair and defends it vigorously. On exceptionally good hits, the creature injects its victim with a toxin that slows the character and eventually paralyzes him unless someone administers an antidote.

Competent Skills:

sneak _____

strength _____

Expert Skills:

climb _____

track _____

Signature Skill:

fight _____

Natural Defenses:

claws _____

stinger _____

hard carapace _____

SCARAB SWARM (Henchman)

A skittering swarm of scarab beetles erupts out of the ground or emerges from a treasury pot one of the characters opens or breaks. One bite stings, but many bites seriously harm characters and distract them from the task at hand.

Competent Skills:

climb _____

jump _____

Expert Skills:

bite _____

Natural Defenses:

mandibles _____

Treasury

This decorated chamber contains jumbled piles of artifacts meant to aid Henu-Akhet in the afterlife: crumbly loaves of bread, mummified haunches of meat, personal items (couches, chairs, a disassembled chariot, chests of clothing and perfumes), and hundreds of small, mummiform figures called ushabtis, meant to serve the deceased in the next life. One of the large, sealed urns contains a swarm of scarab beetles waiting to engulf anyone foolish enough to rummage through the treasure pile who opens or breaks the pottery.

Although these items have great archaeological significance, they do not qualify as truly valuable "treasure." If left unguarded, the tomb would fall prey to looters who would smash everything while seeking gold and jewelry. Travelers would find the ushabti and other artifacts as quaint souvenirs, while antiquities dealers would gladly steal what they could and sell it for outrageous prices. Photographing and cataloging everything here would take too long. The characters might debate removing it all now, or leaving it in search of the more significant treasure: Henu-Akhet's sarcophagus.

Tomb Chamber

A massive stone sepulcher dominates the center of the tomb chamber. It is far too heavy to remove from the grave, but the characters can slide open the top stone with a hard lifting or strength roll. Henu-Akhet's intricately decorated coffin sits within, the seals unbroken. The coffin is clearly the most valuable treasure from the tomb, and must be removed and returned to the expedition's warehouse in Cairo before any looters can break into the underground chambers.

Once the heroes reach this point, they can summon aid from the *fellahin* on the surface, who manhandle the coffin out of the tomb and hoist it up the burial shaft. But when the characters emerge, they realize they have another challenge in transporting the coffin back to Cairo.

Episode Two: The Road to Cairo

This episode can take several courses depending on the characters' decisions. Amidst the chaos of the excavation, with the *fellahin* workers on the verge of riot, the heroes must choose whether to take the coffin to Cairo in their own lorry, or use one that conveniently shows up courtesy of the British army quartermaster. A raid by Bedouin horsemen on the road also threatens their safe passage.

Quartermaster Lorry

When they emerge from the shaft, the heroes realize the encampment has plunged into disorder. British soldiers press the crowd of angry *fellahin* back, barring the way with rifles and forming a path from the pit entrance to the expedition's lorry. A covered truck bearing British army markings has parked next to their transport.

A young Lieutenant Connolly briskly steps up to the heroes and salutes. "We heard you might have some trouble with the natives, so we requisitioned a lorry and drove down here to offer some armed transport for the treasure." He suggests they load the sarcophagus into the truck for transport to Cairo before the angry *fellahin* crowd goes out of control. Apparently the workers are angry for a number of reasons: looting the tomb has brought a curse upon them; they want a share of the treasure; they resent the appearance of tyrannical British authority.

Anyone making a *Routine notice* roll recognizes the troops as members of the quartermaster staff, responsible for supply and transport logistics for the local garrison. The heroes have no way of knowing that these men belong to a gang of corrupt soldiers who use their authority in the quartermaster's office to siphon off goods to criminal elements and use the profits to deal in other illegal commodities. They hope to make off with the



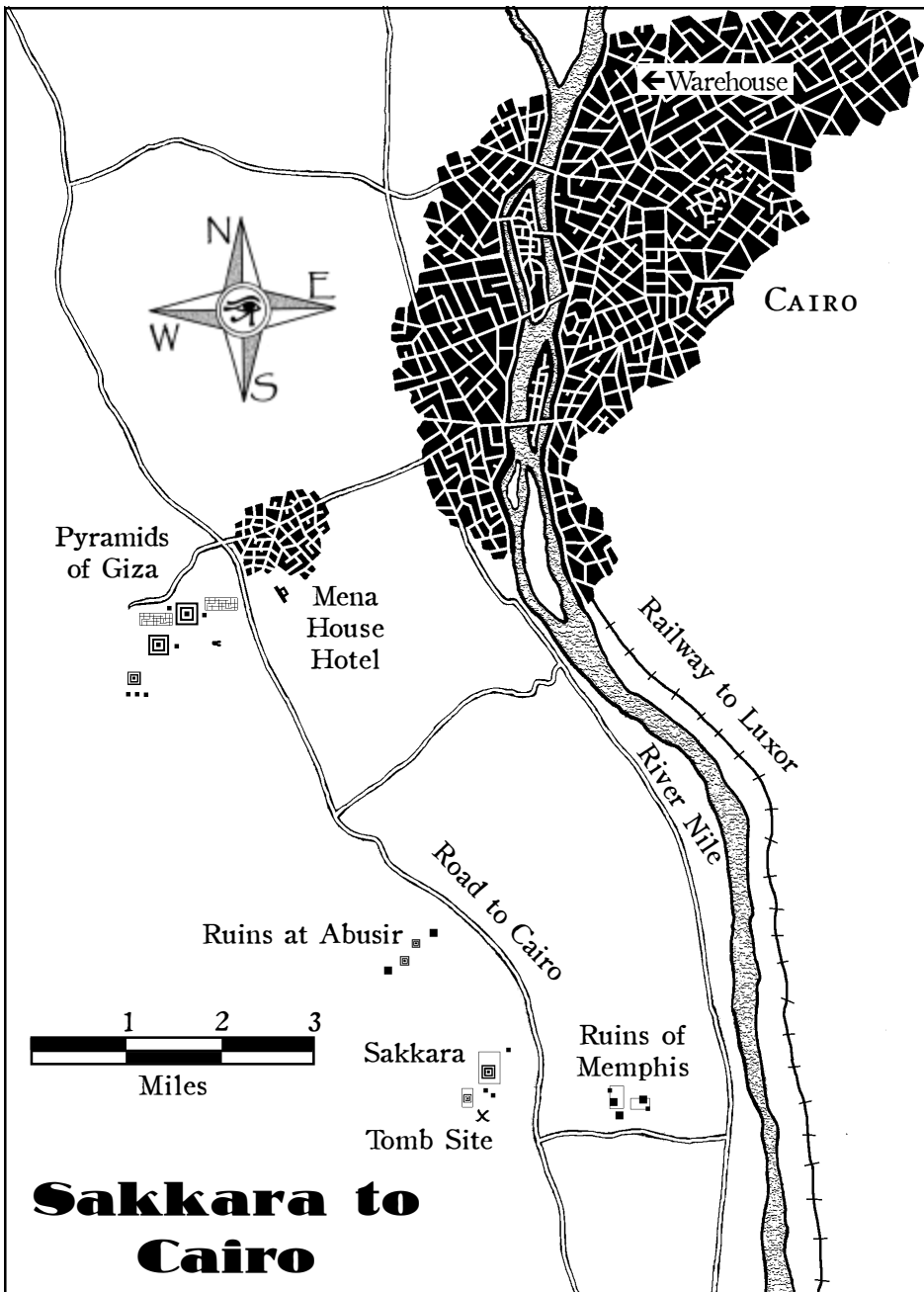
EXPEDITION LORRY

The expedition truck (or the British army lorry) has a cab up front for a driver and two passengers and a payload area covered with canvas stretched over several metal ribs. The truck isn't terribly nimble, but is sturdy enough to endure rough handling.

Top Speed: 35 mph

Driver: 1

Passengers: 10



**LIEUTENANT CONNOLLY
(Boss)**

Competent Skills:
shoot _____
sleight of hand _____
sneak _____

Expert Skills:
business _____
charm _____
command _____
disguise _____
forge _____
notice _____
street smarts _____

Signature Skill:
bluff _____

Equipment:
Webley revolver _____
riding crop _____

**QUARTERMASTER
SOLDIER (Henchman)**

Competent Skills:
dodge _____
fight _____
shoot _____
sneak _____
strength _____

Expert Skill:
bluff _____

Equipment:
Lee-Enfield rifle _____

sarcophagus, leaving the heroes none the wiser. These scoundrels avoid using force, however, lest they blow their cover that they're friendly British soldiers.

The characters must decide how to deal with Lieutenant Connolly's offer to transport the coffin back to Cairo in the British army lorry. The corrupt quartermaster personnel do everything in their power to separate the sarcophagus from the characters. Unfortunately, with the coffin packed in the back with the soldiers and the lieutenant and driver up front, the heroes have no room to ride along. If the characters allow this, and follow in their own truck, a sharpshooter in the dunes halfway to Cairo ensures the heroes' truck sustains a flat tire, delaying them enough that they lose the army lorry, which obviously never delivers the sarcophagus to the expedition's warehouse (and the quartermaster's office denies any knowledge of a Lieutenant Connolly or orders to aid the archaeologists). If the characters insist on using their own truck, the quartermaster troops follow in theirs; the sharpshooter causes a flat tire and necessitates some transfer of cargo to the army lorry.



BEDOUIN HORSEMEN (Henchmen)

Competent Skills:

fight _____

jump _____

shoot _____

strength _____

Expert Skill:

ride _____

Equipment:

rifle _____

Bedouin Ambush

As the heroes ride back to Cairo in their lorry, a band of Bedouin horsemen charges over the desert dunes and attempts to waylay, board, and steal the truck carrying Henu-Akhet's sarcophagus. If the heroes accepted the British army truck for transport or escort, the Bedouin separate, attack, and board both lorries far enough apart that they cannot aid each other.

At first the horsemen fire rifles to keep the characters' heads down and possibly force them off the road. When the heroes persist, several Bedouin ride alongside the truck and try to board it both in the driver's cab and the payload bed. The hero driving has her hands full, too, swerving to avoid horsemen, tearing around curves, and steering around camels, carts, wagons, and other native travelers.

If the characters fend off the attack, the Bedouin retreat; destroying or disabling the lorry eliminates their ability to quickly haul off the sarcophagus.

Whether the horsemen are really Bedouin or antiquities thieves in disguise remains debatable, and the heroes can't verify it unless they actually capture a raider. They might even be cultists in disguise who simply want Henu-Akhet's mummy for their own nefarious purposes (usually something to do with resurrecting it). Nazi agents might want the mummy as an occult object to impress Hitler. Secret societies based on ancient Egyptian religion might seek to liberate Henu-Akhet's soul, or raise him to lead them once again in battle against the invading Europeans. No matter their motivation, cultists take the mummy (covertly if possible) and leave the valuable sarcophagus.

For a more other-worldly feel, especially if the lorry leaves the dig at or after dusk, the raiders could consist of ghostly charioteers, Henu-Akhet's comrades come to retrieve his remains from the pillaging infidels. Use the Bedouin Horsemen stats, but substitute bows for the rifles. They charge over the dunes, firing at the truck, and driving alongside so warriors can board and tangle with the heroes.

Need More Action?

If the adventure needs just one more action sequence, have some adversaries ambush the heroes after they drive into the warehouse and begin unloading their cargo. These foes might include the corrupt quartermaster corps soldiers (if the heroes eluded their earlier attempts to "transport" the cargo), more Bedouin, German agents seeking the treasure, or a greedy antiquities dealer and his henchmen. Use the stats for appropriate thugs in episode two and drop the heroes back into a firefight.

Fame & Fortune

Assuming the heroes successfully avoided ambushes and deceptions meant to part them from Henu-Akhet's sarcophagus and mummy, they reach the expedition's warehouse in Boulak (a suburb of Cairo on the banks of the Nile) safely. They unload their cargo, park the truck, and return to their hotel to discuss the incident, further plans for the expedition now that Professor Mallory is dead, and any rewards they might gain.

For their outstanding work, the heroes receive a special bonus stipend from Hartwell College, Professor Mallory's patron. This amounts to a monetary bonus they may save for future purchases. Their names appear in the newspapers. Members of society seek them out at tea, dinner, parties, receptions, and on the street, hoping to hear about their escapades and bask in their newfound and fleeting fame.

The heroes may also enjoy subsidiary rewards. Obviously they all receive invitations to continue their work at the tomb or at other sites in Egypt. Scholarly societies (such as the Geographical Society in Cairo) may ask archaeologists to lecture about their findings. Reporters gain material for a news story or feature. Even mere observers come away with an interesting tale for future retelling, memoirs, or their own book on Egypt.

Should this adventure fall into a Pulp Egypt campaign, the heroes have also earned the respect and anger of the groups they outwitted in safely transporting the treasure to Cairo. These organizations may find reason to interfere with the characters' activities again, even if simply to inflict revenge for halting their nefarious plans.

The Mallory Expedition

Use these six members of the Hartwell College's expedition, formerly under Professor Mallory's leadership, as templates for characters to use in this scenario or any Pulp Egypt adventure. Use them as written or adjust them to the campaign's themes and players' preference. Customize their skills using the *Any-System Key* found on page 12.

ELLIOTT HAMILTON

Occupation: Archaeologist

Age: 29 **Gender:** Male

Physical Description: Slight build, glasses, studious features, mop of blonde hair, dressed in tweed jacket and cap.

Background: As Professor Percy Mallory's protege, you've served as his assistant and colleague on various expeditions to Egypt. You're good friends, and spend many evenings smoking pipes and discussing theories about life in ancient times. You're a diligent scholar, studious academic, and meticulous archaeologist. You respect Mallory, even if you often sit off to the side taking on the daily tasks of the dig while he basks in the limelight. You're a quiet fellow used to listening more than barking orders.

You have a thorough understanding of Arab culture and of ancient Egyptian language and history. Thanks to generous financing from Hartwell College, you and the expedition rarely want for funds. This also ties you to the institution, obliging you to spend your time administering the expedition and overseeing the logistical aspects of its operations.

ELLIOTT HAMILTON (BOSS)

Competent Skills:

climb _____

dodge _____

persuade _____

Expert Skills:

deduce _____

search _____

speak Arabic _____

Signature Skill:

Egyptology _____

Equipment:

pocket knife _____

satchel _____

electric torch _____

magnifying glass _____

notepad, pencil, ruler, brush

MACK TANNER

Occupation: Wayward Adventurer

Age: 35 **Gender:** Male

Physical Description: Tall, well-built, with rugged good looks and a shock of wavy brown hair. Wears a leather jacket, brown fedora, and sturdy expedition boots.

Background: Your wanderlust and natural curiosity have led to a life of varied adventure across the globe: mountaineering in the Rockies, treasure hunting in India, smuggling in Italy, exploring along the Amazon. Along the way you've picked up a few useful skills that help you hold your own in a fight and get by using your wits. When you found yourself in Cairo looking for a job, you signed on with the Mallory archaeological expedition to Sakkara. Your varied past and often rough demeanor sometimes inhibit courteous interaction with others, but you get along well enough with your fellow expedition members. Although you have few academic skills that help with the dig, you oversee general security, make sure the native *fellaheen* workers stay in line, and keep the less worldly excavation personnel out of trouble.

MACK TANNER (BOSS)

Competent Skills:

navigate _____

notice _____

Expert Skills:

bluff _____

climb _____

dodge _____

fight _____

sneak _____

Signature Skill:

shoot _____

Equipment:

Webley revolver _____

compass _____

satchel _____

ISABELLE NEAVE (BOSS)

Competent Skills:

bluff _____*brawl* _____*charm* _____*dodge* _____*gamble* _____*navigation* _____*streetwise* _____

Expert Skills:

drive _____*ride* _____*shoot* _____

Signature Skill:

pilot _____

Equipment:

Derringer _____*flight jacket, leather helmet, goggles***ISABELLE NEAVE****Occupation:** Vehicle Ace**Age:** 23 **Gender:** Female**Physical Description:** Gorgeous figure accentuated by boots, riding pants, leather jacket, silk scarf, goggles and flight cap.**Background:** A rich upbringing exposed you to extravagant toys like motorcars and aeroplanes, so you naturally developed an affinity for and proficiency in operating them. You were in Cairo when your degenerate brother squandered the family fortune. You found work driving or piloting those wealthy enough to afford automobiles and aeroplanes (though they'd never let a woman do such work for the army or Royal Air Force). You still have a flair about you from growing up rich, though this means you spend more money than you make. Everything's an adventure to you, even overseeing transport and logistics for the Mallory expedition. You drive their lorry, picking up supplies and hauling artifacts back to the warehouse in Cairo. When you're not driving, you watch the dig and gamble with the *fellahin*.**IBRAHIM AL-KASSAM (BOSS)**

Competent Skills:

dodge _____*endurance* _____*lift* _____*persuade* _____*streetwise* _____

Expert Skills:

fight _____*intimidate* _____

Signature Skill:

command _____

Equipment:

stout stick _____*pipe, kaftan, tarboosh***IBRAHIM AL-KASSAM****Occupation:** *Fellahin* Foreman**Age:** 52 **Gender:** Male**Physical Description:** Hulking, dark-skinned Arab with full graying beard wearing a tarboosh and sashed kaftan**Background:** A native Egyptian, you have worked among the ancient ruins all your life. You began hauling and sifting dirt from excavations for *ferengi* (foreigners) who came to dig seeking tombs and treasures. You befriended many and soon rose to become a foreman, directing crowds of *fellahin* peasants on vast excavations and advising great archaeologists how best to unearth Egypt's regal past. You deal sternly with workers, who need strict leadership and supervision, but you've also earned their respect. Those unfamiliar with your work often treat you as infirm or senile considering your great age. To your employers you offer quiet suggestions and paternal encouragement; they are friends whom you faithfully serve.

ARCHIBALD LITTLEDALE

Occupation: Reporter

Age: 25 **Gender:** Male

Physical Description: Tall and wiry, with a thin mustache, wearing a dapper suit and broad-rimmed hat, and carrying a pen and pad in his hand.

Background: As the son of a cotton mill owner in the Nile Delta, you spent much of your youth in Cairo among both wealthy Europeans and common Egyptians. You made friends with everyone you met, finding something interesting in each person and encouraging them to talk about themselves and their work. You used this natural rapport when you got a job reporting for Cairo's English-language newspaper, the *Egyptian Gazette*. You cover various beats: archaeological digs, society gossip, business news, military happenings. Cairo can be a pretty rough city, so you carry a two-shot Derringer in your pocket in case of trouble. You maintain a wide cast of low-level contacts throughout Cairo, people who can offer more information or other angles on stories you're researching. Your solid understanding of Arabic culture also aids you in navigating the exotic terrain of Egyptian society.

**ARCHIBALD LITTLEDALE
(BOSS)**

Competent Skills:

dodge _____

sneak _____

speak Arabic _____

Expert Skills:

bluff _____

charm _____

notice _____

persuade _____

search _____

streetwise _____

Signature Skill:

investigate _____

Equipment:

Derringer _____

camera _____

notepad, pen

MAJOR WILSON BROOMHALL

Occupation: British Military Officer

Age: 41 **Gender:** Male

Physical Description: Aging fellow with stern face, meticulously trimmed mustache, army uniform and hat, and military bearing.

Background: Life had little direction until the outbreak of the Great War. You received a commission in the British Army and fought the Hun in France. Since then you've remained in the service, rising in rank and going wherever His Majesty required: India, Hong Kong, Singapore, British East Africa, and lately Egypt. You understand obedience and the chain of command, but realize individual soldiers must rise to the occasion to prevail. You hold authority over lower-ranked British military personnel and have the respect of many Englishmen in Egypt. Your duty to King and country is beyond reproach, though many native Egyptians treat you with resentment for occupying and ruling their country. Between your light duties at the Cairo garrison, you dabble in archaeology, tagging along on excavations, observing, and occasionally helping to supervise operations.

**MAJOR WILSON
BROOMHALL (BOSS)**

Competent Skills:

brawl _____

dodge _____

navigate _____

Expert Skills:

investigate _____

streetwise _____

survival _____

Signature Skill:

command _____

Equipment:

Webley Mk4 revolver _____

riding crop _____

army uniform



Any-System Key



An Adaptable Stat System

By Peter Schweighofer

The *Any-System Key* describes character skills and task difficulties in terms that easily translate into different game systems. These terms do not key into any one game engine, but serve as general guidelines to give readers an overall sense of how they fit within their own game's stat and difficulty scale. *Any-System Key* publications provide settings, characters, adventures, and other source material adaptable to your favorite roleplaying game.

Character Stats

Assume characters have the average rating in most skills, with several rated at the level of a competent professional, a few considered expert in their field, and sometimes one signature skill for which the character is renown.

SKILL LEVELS

Competent Skills: Displays a professional level of training

Expert Skills: Possesses specialized knowledge

Signature Skill: Ranks among the best in the world

Three character levels further describe their abilities. Henchmen do not possess Signature skills and only have one Expert skill. Bosses have the usual complement of skills. Masterminds boost all their skills by one level; their Competent skills have the same value as Expert skills normally possess, Expert skills have values equivalent to the Signature level, and Signature skills increase by one increment beyond their maximum game value.

CHARACTER LEVELS

Henchman: No Signature Skill, only one Expert Skill

Boss: Normal skill levels

Mastermind: Skills boosted one level, Signature Skill gains bonus

An equipment category defines a character's possessions (or an animal's natural weapons) gamers can easily look up for damage, cost, and other stats in their preferred game.

Example:

ORC (Henchman)

Competent Skills: archery, brawl, carouse, climb, intimidate, track

Expert Skills: melee

Equipment: leather armor, sword

Task Difficulties

Any-System Key publications use four levels to describe the degree of difficulty for tasks undertaken by a person with professional training and proficiency in relevant skills.

TASK DIFFICULTIES

Routine: Low chance of failure (25%).

Challenging: Moderate chance of failure (50%).

Hard: High chance of failure (75%).

Improbable: Almost certain chance of failure (99%).

Example:

The characters must leap across a chasm to reach safety. Doing so successfully requires a *Challenging jump* roll; they have a moderate chance of failure, but also a moderate chance of success. If flames leaped out of the chasm, the difficulty might increase to *Hard*; not only must they jump the chasm, but they must withstand intense heat.

Higher Level Games

Running a setting or scenario with heroes who seem to waltz through encounters? Simply raise the gamemaster character levels and the task difficulty levels. Nothing turns Henchman-level mooks into challenging opponents better than upgrading their Expert skill into a Signature skill.

Fits Your Favorite Games

Game character skills have different degrees of competence defined by stats. Simply figure out which stats best represent the levels of Competent, Expert, and Signature skills and use those values when integrating *Any-System Key* material into your game.

The same applies for difficulties. Just match the *Any-System Key* difficulty descriptions with the corresponding values for rating tasks in your own game.

Visit the Griffon Publishing Studio website
griffonpubstudio.com
for more *Any-System Key* material, including free adventures
and sample character stats.
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