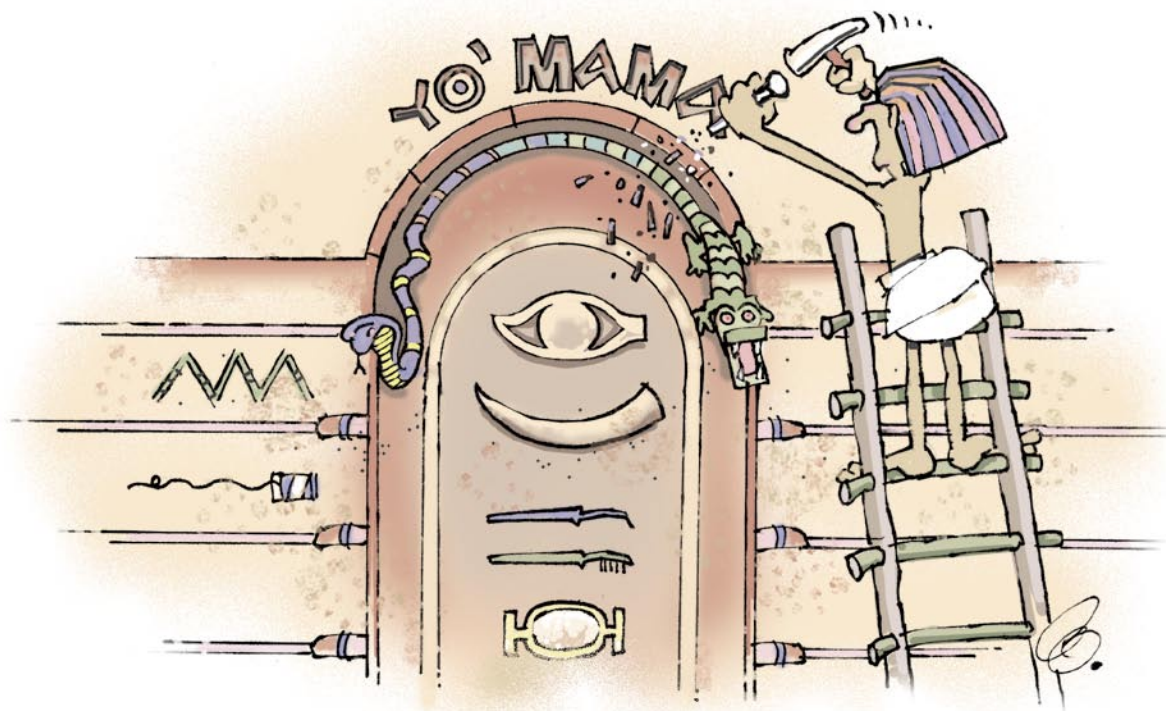


# Raiders of the Lost Arch



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ILLUSTRATION  
BY CHARLIE O.  
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Saqqara, Egypt — An extraordinary archeological find in Saqqara, about 12 miles south of Cairo, is credited to tomb raiders who were arrested before they actually found anything.

According to the *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Dr. Zahi Hawass, chief of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, is quoted as saying, "We have to thank the thieves." The robbers, whose raiding skills have been compared with the Three Stooges, were properly thanked, then it is said were given 56,000 hours of public service that included building a 1,500-foot pyramid with only a pancake spatula and two ice tongs.

The irony is that they were not digging for anything in particular, believing that sand is sand and one might as well start here as there.

Their defense attorney, Shyster Windlesprat, petitioned that they were

merely engaged in a local sand castle competition. "Denied!" declared presiding Judge Metisaphah Schwartz who later recused himself after describing the defendants as "prime examples of unmitigated cretinism."

As it turned out, the bumbler were unknowingly on top of a very special tomb that dated back 4,000 years to the Fifth Dynasty. This was the time Lara Croft was voted No. 1 Tomb Raider in the Greater Memphite Necropolis area by members of the Undocumented Cemetery Pilferers Society.

The very special tomb, according to authorized archeologists who continued to dig in the same raiders' site, was the first necropolis ever found dedicated to dentists. It is probably the last if our research is correct. John Greenwood, G.V. Black, and all

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the presidential dentists following — they never got a tomb. Ancient pharaohs, kings, and future big-shot mummies attained an almost lyrical pitch in their respect for their dentists and could hardly wait until they were ceremoniously entombed, sometimes before their actual deaths.

Unfortunately, this respect was not shared by the working-class schlubs schlepping 50-ton blocks of limestone up the ramps during the pyramid building craze (April 4003 B.C.). No dental plan, no Tooth Fairy, no Nile Smile Clinics — it was Eden-tulous City for the common folks.

Archeologists instantly recognized they had a dental phenomenon in this particular unraided tomb. It was built to honor and respect Drs. Iy Mry, Kem Msw and Sekham Ka, personal dentists to the royal family. For the three dentists buried here, it was the whole Forest Lawn catered deluxe package and more. Depicted on the walls doing their regular family things, the men are shown playing games, slaughtering animals, and offering the standard 1,000 loaves of bread and 1,000 vases of beer to the dead.

Featured prominently over the usual hieroglyphics was the dental logo of the time — an eye over a tusk. In retrospect, this is a much better dental logo than the present caduceus within a triangle and a superimposed “D.” The entwined snakes have never inspired confidence in a dental patient, not that the current grisly simulacrum of a smirking two-rooted molar is much of an improvement.

Impressive as all this is, no mention is made of what the royal dentists actually did during their office hours at the king’s palace. The foreign press never takes into account what the nations’ dentists would really like to know, i.e., without digital X-rays, high-speed handpieces, 8 mm curing lights and intra-oral cameras, where did all the respect come from? We know when

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respect dissipated and probably why when dentists slipped from second or third place on the national respect scale to about 27th. Maybe canceling the loaves and beer offerings had something to do with it.

To make certain the dentists’ tombs

would remain inviolate throughout the millennium, a curse inscription was engraved on a false door featuring a snake and a crocodile. If you want a curse to really grab the cursee’s attention, a snake and croc is the place to start. Personally, I’m glad I had nothing to do with this recent tomb entrance. The idea of another dentist siccing a snake and a crocodile on me is very unprofessional, to say the least.

If you’re still interested in the respect angle, you might check the want ads of the *Cairo Pyramidal Tribune* to see if there are any openings for royal dentists with tomb benefits. ■■■■