

# Egypt's Lost Queen

Are scientists close to solving an ancient mystery?

She was one of the most powerful women of ancient Egypt. But not much is known about Queen Nefertiti (neh-fur-TEE-tee). No one knows for sure where she was born or where she died. For years, archaeologists have been trying to find out where the mysterious queen was buried.

Now, British archaeologist Nicholas Reeves says he may have the answer. He thinks the queen's body may be hidden inside the tomb of Egypt's most famous ruler: Tutankhamen (TOO-tan-KAH-men), better known as King Tut.

## Hidden Chambers?

Nefertiti is believed to have ruled Egypt more than 3,300



A famous sculpture of Queen Nefertiti

years ago, shortly before King Tut became **pharaoh** at about age 9. Some experts think Tut was Nefertiti's stepson.

Tut's tomb was discovered in 1922. Filled with gold and other treasures, the tomb still fascinates people around the world. In 2009, archaeologists began to build an exact copy of Tut's tomb. Visitors can now see the burial place without damaging the original. As part of that project, researchers used



a special scanner to take pictures of the tomb's walls.

When Reeves studied the scans, strange markings caught his eye. He saw the outlines of two doors that had been painted over. Reeves thinks the doors could lead to secret chambers—including the tomb of Nefertiti. He says paintings around the doors are a clue that Nefertiti was buried there.

Some experts believe Nefertiti's tomb could hold treasures even more amazing than those found in Tut's.

## More Work Ahead

This month, with the help of Egyptian archaeologists, Reeves plans to use high-tech equipment to “see” through the walls without damaging them. That may let him know what is hidden behind them.

“If I’m wrong, I’m wrong,” Reeves told *The Economist* magazine. “But if I’m right, this is potentially the biggest archaeological discovery ever made.”

## Word to Know

**pharaoh** (FEHR-oh) *noun*. a ruler of ancient Egypt



Nicholas Reeves (second from left) examines King Tut's tomb.