

Mystery tomb could hold Tutankhamen's widow

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LONDON: It has been 84 years since Egypt's famed Valley of the Kings revealed its last great riches – the fabulous gold of Tutankhamen's tomb. Now archaeologists believe they have stumbled across one final secret: The mummified remains of the boy king's widow buried 3000 years ago.

In a mysterious shaft less than 15m from Tutankhamen's burial ground, US archaeologists found seven coffins. They believe one they have not yet been able to open may contain the remains of Queen Ankhesenpaaten. The tomb – found by accident by Memphis University team leader Dr Otto Schaden – contained seven coffins stacked closely together and ringed by 28 clay jars, each decorated with a beautiful face mask. The coffins were buried about 1320BC.

A child-sized coffin – one of five so far raised – contained a small gilded ornamental sarcophagus of a quality that was usually buried only with royalty.

Ankhesenpaaten's link to the tomb was further underlined when a coffin seal was found with part of her name on it.

"I think there is a 70 per cent chance that Ankhesenpaaten's mummy is in that last coffin," Egyptian antiquities head Dr Mansour Boraik said.

"If she is, it will be a major find because very little is known about her."

<http://dailytelegraph.news.com.au/story/0,20281,19328749-5001027,00.html>