On 26 November 1922, after eight years of work in the Valley of the Kings, Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen, a pharaoh of the 18th dynasty (around 1300 BCE). Different than all the tombs hitherto excavated, this was the first to be virtually undisturbed, and Carter's words on a first look into the tomb "Yes, wonderful things!" have gone down in history. Excavating the tomb in full took eight years, and most of the 5,398 items that were found in the tomb are now on display in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, with the exception of the mummy of Tut-Ankh-Amen, that remained in the tomb where it was laid to rest.

This first volume of Howard Carter's memoirs, written in late 1923 recounts the finding and opening of the tomb, the clearing of the antechamber, and the opening of the sealed door leading to the burial chamber.