

## The mummy's curse of Herbert Ingram



Between 1884 and 1885, an expedition was sent to the Sudan to help Egyptians evacuate from Sudan after Britain decided to abandon the country after the rebellion of Mahommed Ahmed. Herbert Ingram was volunteer and joined this trip.

At the end of this expedition, he brought home a souvenir. It was a **cursed mummy**. Shortly after a curse fallen on him. In an interview from Strand Magazine, [Lord Charles Beresford](#) mentioned this terrifying story:

*“So keen was Mr. Ingram's interest in the Gordon Relief Expedition that he actually took his own steam launch out to Egypt to join the expeditionary forces. He was at Abu Klea, Metemneh, and anywhere else where there was any hot fighting to be done. As a kind of souvenir of his adventures in Egypt and the Soudan, Mr. Ingram at length bought a mummy for £50 from the English Consul at Luxor. The mummy was that of a priest of Thetis, and it bore a mysterious inscription. After obtaining, at Cairo, the necessary permits, Ingram sent the mummy home in a big case, which was opened by his brothers at the offices of the 'Illustrated London News.' Over the face was a papier-mache mask, which is now deposited in the British Museum. The last named Institution was asked to send along an expert to decipher and translate the inscription, which was long and blood-curdling. It set forth that whosoever disturbed the body of this priest should himself be deprived of decent burial ; he would meet with a violent death, and his mangled remains would be 'carried down by a rush of waters to the sea.' This is the first part of a fascinating romance of real life.”*

*“Some time after sending the mummy home, Mr. Ingram and Sir Henry Meux were elephant-shooting in Somaliland, when one day the natives brought in a great chunk of dried earth, saying it was the spoor of the biggest elephant in the world. The temptation was too much for the two sportsmen, so they hunted up that herd. 'I've left my elephant gun behind,' cried Sir Henry, in dismay. 'Take mine,' said Ingram, generously, leaving himself with a comparatively impotent small-bore.”*

*“When they sighted the elephants Sir Henry went after a bull, and Mr. Ingram turned his attention to an enormous cow. His method was to turn round in his saddle, fire a shot, and then gallop his pony on ahead, dodging the infuriated elephant among the trees. At last, looking back for another shot, he was swept out of his saddle by the drooping bough of a tree. The moment he reached the ground the wounded elephant was upon him, goring and trampling him to death, notwithstanding the heroism of his Somali servant, who poured a charge of shot right into the monster's ear.”*

*“For days the elephant would not let any one approach the spot, but eventually Mr. Ingram's remains were reverently*

*gathered up and buried for the time being in a nullah, or ravine. Never again was the body seen, for, when an expedition was afterwards despatched to the spot, only one sock and part of a human bone were found ; these pitiful relics were subsequently interred at Aden with military honours.”*

*“It was found that the floods caused by heavy rains had washed away Mr. Ingram's remains, thereby fulfilling the ancient prophecy - the awful threat of the priest of Thetis. The mummy is now in the possession of Lady Meux, and Sir Harry has the tusks of the elephant.”*

To learn more about the curses in Ancient Egypt, you can read the [The Curse of the Pharaohs' Tombs](#), written by Paul Harrison.

## **Sources**

- [The Mummy's curse – A romance of real like](#), Bowral Free Press and Berrima District Intelligencer, December 28, 1898

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