



Grand Commandery "King Ferdinand I" of the Knights Templar of Romania

**KNIGHT TEMPLAR NEWS
SEPTEMBER 2022**

140 years of Royal Arch in Romania

Part 2 – The Origins of Royal Arch Masonry

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The Masonic universe is fascinating because over time the symbols of the Masons, their rituals, their behavior derived from the observance of a certain code has always been a mystery that has lasted through time.

As it was normal to see exactly what the context of the emergence of the Royal Arch Freemasonry in Romania was, it is necessary to know its universal origins, but also the context of the emergence of this fraternal organization. Therefore, in this early chapter, we set out to see exactly what the roots of speculative freemasonry were, focusing on the summary details of the operative masonry documents from which it was inspired.

At the same time, we set out to show what were the first mentions of the Royal Arch masonry, how and where it developed and we will conclude with the point where it acquired the status and place that was due to it conferred by the United Grand Lodge of England.

1 – Summary of the origins of freemasonry

The beginnings of masonry lose their origin somewhere in the mists of time. Those who conceived and realized the great material and spiritual constructions of the ancient world were without a chance Freemasons, that is, the free masons. The secrets of their profession handed down for millennia from Master to disciple spread to near the end of the Middle Ages.

The time of the Crusaders, of the monk soldiers, and of the builders of the great cathedrals had passed. A new state of mind will be born, namely that of the building of man's inner light. Thus, if in the 17th century we had operative Freemasonry, which emphasized material edification, and guild members were comrades, we go to speculative Freemasonry, and its members become brothers in a universal world. So, Freemasonry will be reborn in speculative form, starting with 1716 when on St. John's Day there is a meeting of the masters and supervisors of 4 Lodges at the Apple tavern, taking the decision to establish them as the Grand Lodge pro tempore, And in June 1717¹ in London several Freemasons will meet at the place called "goose and barbecue"². The entity then formed would become the United Grand Lodge of England, which would be the Mother Grand Lodge of the World. The role of the widow's sons will be defined by Pastor James Anderson, who will condense old customs, and in 1723 he will create the Constitution of the free masons, which will be the foundation of universal freemasonry. Soon, Knight Ramsey will deliver a famous speech that will be considered for centuries the creed of universal Freemasonry.

R.E.S.K. Petre Buneci

E.S.K. Cristian Moşneanu

¹ See book: Alex Mihai Stoenescu, *History of Modern Freemasonry, Vol. I, RAO Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015, p. 23.*

² *The Grand Lodge, in Freemasonry. Organization*, 2018, [<https://www.francmasoneria.ro/marea-loja>, retrieved February 4, 2021].