

1877-1918-1922  
IN THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTIONS





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Bucharest  
1998

# King CAROL the First



*Carol the First (1839–1914), Prince (1866–1881) and King of Romania (1881–1914). Engraving from the period.*

Born on April 30, 1839, at Sigmaringen, Germany, as the second son of Prince Carol Anton of Hohenzollern.

Since 1857 he studied at the Artillery and Military Engineering School in Berlin, also frequenting courses of French literature at Bonn University (1863). He was promoted Second Lieutenant in 1857 and Captain in 1866. In 1864 he enrolled as volunteer with the Prussian Army in the against Denmark.

On May 10, 1866, he arrived in Bucharest at the invitation of the Roumanian Government; as result of the plebiscite from April 8 and with the approval of the Parliament he was crowned as Prince of Romania. On July 1, 1866 he signed the new Romanian Constitution that remained valid, with some amendments, till 1923.

In 1869 he married Elisabeta of Wied; he had a daughter, Maria, born in 1870 and deceased at the age of three.

Between 1869 and 1876 Carol gave special attention to the adequate equipping with fighting techniques of the Romanian Army, also generalizing the military engineering training of the troops. Between 1877 and 1878 he had a firm attitude towards the Ottoman Empire, taking special measures to alert the Romanian troops for the defending of a possible Turkish invasion. Defending the Romanian interests, he negotiated firmly and with dignity with Alexander the Second, the Russian Tzar and his ministers the problems regarding the military and political cooperation between the two countries. Prince Carol did not accept the coordination of the Romanian Army under Russian orders. During the Independence War he was in command of the Western Army (8 000 Romanian and 52 100 Russian troops) and he coordinated the surrounding and annihilation of the Turkish group commanded by Osman Pasha. He pledged for the independence and integrity of the country during the preliminaries of the Peace Congress in Paris, in 1878.

On March 14, 1881, the Parliament proclaimed, with full unanimity, Carol the First as King of Romania. In the Government Report it was underlined: "Romania, constituted as Kingdom, fulfills and crowns the labor of its regeneration. It gives itself a name that is in agreement with the position gained as independent state". The Coronation Ceremony was held in Bucharest, on May 10, 1881. The Crown used for the this Ceremony was made of steel provenient from the Ottoman cannons captured by the Romanian Army at Plevna, in November 1877.

Peles Royal Palace was inaugurated at Sinaia in 1883. Being the Summer Residence of Carol the First, Peles Palace is a unique architectural monument in Romania. In October 1883 King Carol the First favored the signing of the Secret Political and Military pact between Romania and Austria - Hungary, later joined by Germany and Italy. This was the only solution of the time in order to counterattack an eventual Russian offensive against Romania.

The Romanian Foreign Policy at the end of the XIX th Century and the beginning of the XX th Century, promoted by King Carol the First, has as main objective the consolidation of its independence and the protection of its territorial integrity. Romania aimed at remaining as possible outside of a European conflict, Carol the First's objective being the neutrality under the protection of the Triple Alliance.

During the Crown Council that was held at the Peles Palace on August 3, 1914, King Carol the First accepted, in conformity with the country's interests, a position of expectancy, as armed neutral country.

Carol the First's entire reign was characterized by a remarkable political stability, leading with measure and modesty above the political parties and fractions. He was a proud and protocolar sovereign, with no favorites, being precise and meticulous in everything he did, trying to impose to his collaborators the same style. In the same time, he was a perfect military and an able politician with liberal views.

On September 27, 1914, after a reign of 48 years, King Carol the First of Romania deceased. Even though not Romanian by birth, he was the country's wise, equilibrate and authoritative sovereign. During his period Romania gained its independence and a wide development in all domains took part, being prepared for the Great Act of fulfilling the National Unification.

Carol the First, a constitutional and severe King, connected his name to important moments from the modern Romanian history, contributing also at the consolidation of the state democratic institutions.

# Queen ELISABETA



*Queen Elisabeta of Romania (1843-1916). Photograph from the period.*

Born on December 29, 1843 at Neuwied (Prussia) as daughter of Prince Hermann - Carol of Wied and Princess Maria-Willhelmina-Frederica-Elisabeta.

She was educated in a Spartan, strict and regid spirit that did not match with her delicate and loving character but, in the same time, she also received a solid background in various fields: philosophy, foreign languages (English, French, Latin, Greek), German Language, music, science.

Between 1858, and 1861, she traveled a lot together with her aunt, Grand Duchess Elena of Russia, to Switzerland, Italy, Russia, Great Britain, France, Sweden.

In October 1869, in Kohn, she was introduced to Prince Carol, whose family she had already been visiting. After an hour spent together Prince Carol asked her hand Princess Elisabeta accepted.

On November 15, 1869, the Wedding Ceremony between Princess Elisabeta and Prince Carol of Romania was celebrated at Neuwied, in the "Monrepos Castle". The Princiarly Family left for the country and, after a short stop in Viena, they arrived at Giurgiu by boat along the Danube. They were welcomed by triumphal receiving ceremonies both in Giurgiu and Bucharest.

On September 8, 1870, Princess Elisabeta gave birth to a girl – the first Romanian Princess from the Hohenzollern Family – Princess Maria – baptized in the Orthodox Ritual at the Cotroceni Church. Unfortunately the little princess died of scarlet fever on March 28, 1874, therefore ending Princess Elisabeta's motherhood in an abrupt and extremely painful way.

During the Independence War, in 1877–1878, Princess Elisabeta dedicated her entire energy and knowledge to the curing and help of the wounded, being also known as "the Mother of the Wounded". On her own expenses she organized on the Cotroceni Plateau a military field hospital (two barracks with 100 beds each), the Cotroceni railway station was transformed into a receiving center and the Throne Hall in a workshop where linen, bandages and dressings for the wounded were made.

After the Proclaiming of the Romanian Kingdom on March, 14, 1881, the Coronation Ceremony of Carol the First and Elisabeta as King and Queen of Romania was held on May 10, 1881, Elisabeta becoming therefore the first Queen of Romania.

In the autumn of 1883, Queen Elisabeta participated together with King Carol the First at the Opening Ceremony of the Peles Castle.

Ever since her arrival in Romania, Princess and, afterwards, Queen Elisabeta involved herself in a vast charity work for those less fortunate: orphans, sick, poor and blind. Among the societies founded and guided by her along the years, the following are to be mentioned: "The Institute of Charity Nurses" (1870), "Queen Elisabeta", "Sf. Ecaterina Nursery", "Materna", "Queen Elisabeta School", "Furnica", "Albina" and "Munca" (1882), "Institutul Evanghelic al Diaconeselor" (1903), "Pâinea zilnică" (1904), "Țesătoarea" (1905), "Obolul" and "Concordia". Queen Elisabeta continued the organizing and guiding of the "Elena Doamna Asylum", began by Princess Elena Cuza. The most important and dear work of Queen Elisabeta is the one dedicated to the sheltering and protection of the blind, the creation of the "Vatra Luminoasă" asylum and colony (1906).

Queen Elisabeta's literary works and artistic creations can not be forgotten; she had a pen name – "Carmen Sylva". She wrote and translated poetry, prose and theater, her work "Les pensees d' une Reine" ("The thoughts of a Queen") being distinguished with the Botta Prize of the French Academy (1888). In 1886 she started at the Palace a series of musical matinees (she appreciated very much George Enescu, whom she considered to be her "soul child"). She painted a Gospel for the Curtea de Arges Cathedral, another one for the Sinaia Monastery (together with Princess Maria), a Prayer Book for King Carol the First, a Poetry book (on ivory pages) called Wanderstab (the Traveling stick) given to Princess Maria at her wedding with Prince Ferdinand. She worked many embroideries, especially for churches.

After the death of King Carol the First (September 27, 1914), Queen Elisabeta retired to the Curtea de Arges Palace, where she died on February 19, 1916.



Prince Carol, Supreme Commander of the Romanian Army during the Independence War from 1877-1878. From "Romanian Army" Album, by T. Ajdukiewicz.



The Danube crossing by the Romanian Army on the pontoon bridge from Silistioara, August 20, 1877. Engraving from the period.



Elisabeta "Mother of the Wounded" helping the wounded during the Independence War. From "Romanian Army" Album, by T. Ajdukiewicz.



"Crown of Romania" Order. Instituted in 1881 by King Carol the First in order to reward special services brought to the Country. Can be awarded both to military and civilians. It has five classes: Knight, Officer, Commander, Great Officer and Great Cross.



Star of Romania" Order. Instituted on May 9, 1877 in order to reward the military services during wartime; with five classes: Knight, Officer, Commander, Great Officer and Great Cross.

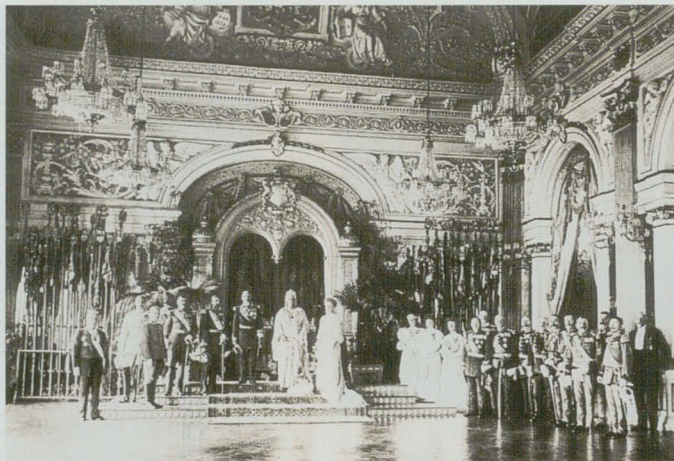
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The Crown wore by King Carol the First during the Coronation Ceremony from May 10, 1881 and by King Ferdinand at the Coronation Ceremony from October 15, 1922. Made of steel from the cannons captured at Plevna in 1877



Stamp belonging to King Carol the First. Silver.



*The Throne Hall from the Royal Palace. Photograph from the period.*



*"Carol the First" Order. Instituted on May 10, 1906, at the 40 Years Jubilee of King Carol the First's Reign. It had four degrees: Commander, Great Officer, Great Cross and Collar.*



*Queen Elisabeta's Crown wore at the Coronation Ceremony from May 10, 1881. Gold.*



*Laurel Wreath offered by the Romanian Army officers to King Carol the First at the Jubilee of 25 Years of Reign. 1866-1891. Silver.*



Tray with portrait of Queen Elisabeta of Romania.



Tray with the portrait of King Carol the First of Romania.



Carmen Sylva "On the Danube, April 27 - May 3, 1904".



Chest of drawers received by King Carol the First and Queen Elisabeta on the occasion of their 25 years of marriage, 1869-1894.



King Ferdinand 1865 - 1927. King of Romania  
(1914-1927). Chromolithography by Costin Petrescu.

## King FERDINAND

Born at Sigmaringen, Germany, in 1865, as the second son of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern (brother of King Carol the First) and Princess Antioaneta (infant of Portugal). He spent his childhood in Dusseldorf, where he graduated his Secondary Classical Studies and took his school-leaving examination. He enrolled as Second Lieutenant in the First Regiment of Imperial Guards in Potsdam, near Berlin and after two years of military life he studied at the Leipzig University and at the Superior School of Economics and Political Sciences in Tübingen. He easily learned French, English, Russian and Hebrew and, with Vasile D. Păun, professor from Bucharest, he learned Romanian Language, Literature, History and Geography.

Fair-haired, tall and thin, with dark blue and gentle eyes, with an arched nose, Ferdinand arrived for the first time in Romania in 1884. In 1889 he was named Senator in the Romanian Parliament and Heir of King Carol the First.

In December 1892, King Carol the First of Romania favored the marriage of his nephew, Ferdinand with the charming teenaged Maria Alexandra Victoria, Princess of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. From this marriage three boys and three girls emerged: 1893 - Carol (future King of Romania), 1894 - Elisabeta (future Queen of Greece), 1899 - Mărioara (future Queen of Yugoslavia), 1909 - Ileana and 1913 - Mircea, deceased in 1916.

Ferdinand joined the Romania Army as Captain in 1889, afterwards being promoted in rank till he became Army General, when he accomplished various tasks, according to his rank.

Silent, he did not interfere in the Romanian political life, living as Heir Prince under the personality of his austere and severe uncle, King Carol the First. Ferdinand had a vast culture. He was excellent in botany, where he was able to compete with the best specialists; he used to astonish his audience when he deciphered Latin and Greek inscriptions from the Histria archeological camp, when he spoke about the merits of Japanese and Chinese lyric poetry or when he sustained a real pleading to Wagner's music and personality.

On September 27, 1914, King Carol the First of Romania passed into the Shadows. The second day after his uncle's decease, Ferdinand pleaded allegiance in front of the Romanian Parliament as king of Romania, promising to be "a good Romanian", as he was till the end of his life.

After two years of neutrality, in the summer of 1916, Romania decided to join the Allied Forces in the First World War, in order to fulfill the ideal of National Unity. On August 14/27, 1916, King Ferdinand convened the Crown Council at the Cotroceni Palace, when the war against Austria - Hungary was decided. During this Council, as answer to P.P. Carp that had invoked the Dynasty interests, King Ferdinand said: "I do not know these interests. The Dynasty shall have same fate with the country: either winning together or losing together". The King's behavior during the entire duration of this historic Crown Council made the important politician Take Ionescu exclaim: "Today I realize we really have a great King".

During the entire war period, 1916 - 1918, when the country suffered dramatic moments, King Ferdinand, as Supreme Commander of the Romanian Army, stood often among his men, giving them courage and honoring the heroes and the braves with distinctions. King Ferdinand's position during the Peace Treaty between Romania and the Central Powers from April 24/May 7, 1918, was remarkable by his dignity and patriotism as he refused to sign it. Under these conditions, the Treaty, that stipulated its validity from the date of his ratification, was not put in practice.

During 1918, the Romanians from Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania pronounced for the Unification with their Mother Country, after the historical decisions from Chişinău (March 27), Cernăuţi (November 28) and Alba Iulia (December 1), therefore being formed the Great Romania.

In the same time with the fall of the Balkan front and the allied advance towards Romania's southern border, the Army Mobilization is ordered and an Ultimatum is given to the German Occupation Forces to leave the country. Under these conditions, on November 18/December 1, 1918 takes place the entrance in Bucharest of King Ferdinand, Queen Maria and the French General Berthelot, in front of the troops, being received with flowers and cheers of joy. The Mayor of Bucharest received the Sovereigns of Romania with bread and salt, under the sounds of the National Anthem. King Ferdinand took part at the blessing of the Official Fight Banners and of the troops and also the military parade. In the same day, General Eremia Grigorescu, the War Minister, gave the King the Marshall Book and Stick. Thus, Ferdinand became the first Marshall in the history of Romania.

After a glorious reign of 13 years (1914 - 1927), during which the national unity was fulfilled and the consolidation of a democratic regime in Romania was made, King Ferdinand, also known as the Unifier, the loyal and the just, passed over on July 20, 1927, after a ruthless malady, being buried at the Royal Necropolis from Curtea de Argeş.



Queen Maria (1875–1938). Queen of Romania (1914–1927). Chromolithography by Costin Petrescu.

## Queen MARIA

Born on October 17, 1875, at Eastwell Park (Great Britain), as the eldest daughter of Duke Alfred Ernest Albert of Edinburg of Saxa Coburg – Gotha, the second son of Queen Victoria of Great Britain, and of the Grand Duchess Maria Alexandrovna, the only daughter of Alexander the II<sup>nd</sup>, Tzar of Russia.

Raised in the splendid castles from the most active German and British economic and cultural centers, she received a vast and various culture. She became acquainted to Shakespeare's plays in the London theaters, Goethe's and Schiller's dramas in the German theaters in Coburg and to Wagner's music in Munich. She was attracted by philosophy (Nietzsche especially), English poetry (Tennyson, Shelley, Keats but especially by Yeats). Her favorite lectures were the Bible and the Scandinavian Sagas. She was very fond of the nature, with which she established a real communion.

In 1891, at the Grand Imperial Military Maneuvers in Cassel (Germany), Princess Maria met Prince Ferdinand of Romania, the son of Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen and nephew of King Carol of Romania.

On May 21, 1892, in the new Palace from Postdam, the Engagement Ceremony between Princess Maria of Edinburg (17 years) and Prince Ferdinand (27 years), the Heir of the Throne of Romania, takes place. On December 29, 1892, their marriage is celebrated at the ancient Hohenzollern Castle from Sigmaringen, the wedding ceremony being conducted both in the Catholic and The Church of England rituals. After a short 10 days "honeymoon" at the small Krauchenwies Hunting Castle, the princely couple parted for Romania.

On the occasion of their arrival in Romania, on January 23, 1893, important celebrations took place in the honor of Princess Maria and Prince

Ferdinand: Te Deum at the Metropolitan Church, signing of a commemorative document, Banquet at the Royal Palace, the Celebration of 32 Wedding Ceremonies (one couple from each County) at "Sf. Spiridon" Church, with the Heir Couple as God Parents, Gala Show at the National Theatre, receiving of presents, the Ball of Bucharest Mayor.

Princess Maria gave birth to six children: Carol (the future King Carol the Second, October 3/15, 1893), Elisabeta (September 29/ October 10, 1894), Maria (Mignon, December 27, 1899/ January 8, 1900), Nicolae (August 5, 1903), Ileana (December 23, 1908/ January 5, 1909) and Mircea (January 1913, deceased in 1916 of typhoid fever).

Having a dynamic and modern temperament, Princess Maria involved herself in activities from various domains: she received from King Carol the First the title of Honorary Commander of Regiment No. 4 of Rosiori (Cavalry) as Colonel, presided

numerous Charity Societies and organized Fundraising Balls in the Cotroceni Palace Park (e.g. for "Obolul" and "Materna" Charity Societies). During the Second Balkan War and First World War she organized the Field Sanitary Service, in cooperation with the Red Cross and exposing herself to all existing dangers. After the First World War she acted in Diplomatic field for the Recognition of the 1918 Unification of the Romanians and, later on, for the consolidation of the Romanian international position.

At the Romanian Entrance in the Second Balkan War (July 28/ August 10, 1913) under the circumstances when the Romanian Army was being decimated by cholera, she crossed the Danube to Bulgaria "Incognito" and founded a Field Hospital for choleric soldiers, she herself curing the ill.

In the day when King Carol I deceased, on September 27, 1914, Prince Ferdinand became the King and Princess Maria the Queen.

During the neutrality period of Romania (1914 - 1916), Queen Maria took a sustained struggle for the joining of the Allies side, using her own family relations: King George V of The United Kingdom and Tzar Nicolae II - nd of Russia.

After the retreat to Iasi (Queen Maria left Cotroceni Palace on November 25, 1916), the Sovereign, whose morale remained high, dedicated herself with all her strength to the fast reorganizing of the Sanitary Service: she founded "Queen Maria" sanitary teams, numerous field hospitals, she also traveled several times to the front line in order to cure the wounded, the typhoid fever ill, in spite of the danger of illness and death.

She refused to leave on refuge to Thesalonic together with her children as she did not want to abandon the diplomatic struggle and her work in the hospitals not even when the situation became critical, due to the situation in Russia.

During the Peace Conference in Paris, Queen Maria went to the French Capital to insist on the Recognition of the Unification of Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina with Romania. She even visited the French President, George Clemenceau, when she pleaded the Romanian Cause.

On October 15, 1922, at Alba Iulia, took place the Coronation Ceremony of King Ferdinand and Queen Maria as Sovereigns of the Greater Romania.

In 1926, together with Prince Nicolae and Princess Ileana she visited the United States of America, being received at the White House by US President Coolidge; she was received with love and enthusiasm by the Romanians and Americans from New York, Washington, Annapolis, Baltimore, Philadelphia.

After the death of King Ferdinand, on July 20, 1927, Queen Maria, even though not being part of the regency during the first reign of her minor nephew, King Mihai the First (1927-1930), had a strong influence in the Romanian political life. Even before the return to throne of her son, King Carol the Second on June 8, 1930, Queen Maria discretely left Romania for a while.

In the following period - 1930 - 1938 - Queen Maria spent most of the time traveling, writing her memoirs published under the title: "The story of my life", in which she proved once again her real talent as a writer. During her stays in Romania she lived at the Cotroceni Palace, her main residence, Bran Castle, received as a gift from the inhabitants of Brasov and during spring and autumn she regularly returned to the Balceac Palace, a place that she loved so much as in her will she asked to have her heart placed there, at the "Stella Maris" Church, after her death, that actually happened on November 1938. She died after a long a painful sufferance on July 18, 1938, at the Peles Castle, in Sinaia.



*Field uniform of King Ferdinand.*



*King Ferdinand and Queen Maria awarding medals to officers and soldiers distinguished in the battles from Otuz. August 29, 1917. Photograph from the period.*



*Banner of Regiment No. 12 Rosiori (Cavalry).*



*The King at the Caiut Hospital. Queen Maria organized the hospital in the years of the First World War. August 23, 1917. Photograph from the period.*



*Charity Nurse uniform wore by Queen Maria in the years of the First World War.*



King Ferdinand's Scepter, wore at the Coronation Ceremony in Alba Iulia from October 15, 1922.



"Ferdinand the First" Order. Instituted in 1929 to continue the memory of the King that fulfilled the Romanian Unification. Awarded only to the Romanians with distinguished merits for the completion of the Unification from 1918. The number of members is divided in six ranks: Knight, Officer, Commander, Great Officer, Great Crosse and Collar. Together with "Carol the First" Order, "Ferdinand the First" Order is the highest Romanian Distinction.



King Ferdinand. Unifier of Romania. 1922.



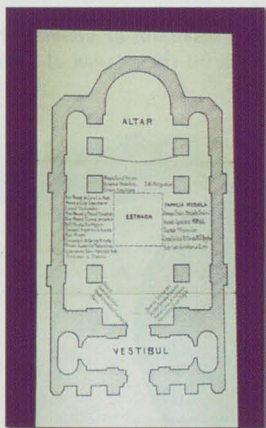
The Coronation Ceremony of the Romanian Sovereigns Alba Iulia. October 15, 1922.



Tray with the portrait of Queen Maria wearing the distinctions and Robe from the Coronation Ceremony from October 15, 1922.



Tray with the portrait of King Ferdinand wearing the distinctions and Uniform from the Coronation Ceremony from October 15, 1922.

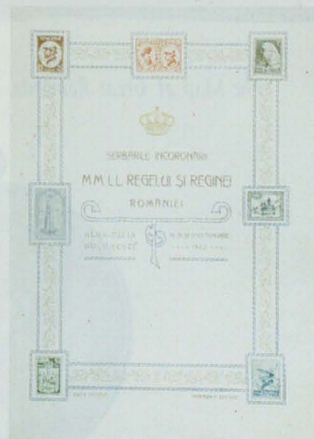


The plan of the Alba Iulia Cathedral with the positioning of the seats reserved for guests at the Coronation Ceremony.



The Crown wore by Queen Maria at the Coronation Ceremony from October 15, 1922. Gold, gems.

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"The Coronation Celebrations of their Majesties King and Queen of Romania". Alba Iulia, Bucharest, October 15, 16 and 17, 1922. Special edition.



*The Map of Great Romania. Tapestry from the period.*



*Silver tray offered by the inhabitants of Chisinau to King Ferdinand and Queen Maria on the occasion of their visit May 20, 1920.*



*Medal dedicated to the Unification of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania with Romania in 1918.*



*Tray with the portrait of King Ferdinand of Romania.*



*Revolver of King Ferdinand.  
Made in Spain, plated with gold and ivory; caliber 8 mm.*



Princess Maria in "rosior" uniform. From "Romanian Army". Album, by T. Aşdukiewich



Tray with the portrait of Queen Maria.



Golden silver box offered to Princess Maria by "the Romanian Ladies". After her death (1938) in this box was deposited another silver box with Queen Maria's heart. On the front the following inscription was engraved: "To her Royal Majesty Princess Maria of Romania: The Romanian Ladies".



Dress and robe of Queen Maria.

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