



## Nugget

### “Membership and Passing the Chair”

One of a series of Twelve short talks about the Royal Arch

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Membership and Passing the Chair - one of a series of introductory talks about the Royal Arch for Craft Meetings.

#### **Summary**

Membership and Passing the Chair - one of a series of short talks for presentation at Craft Meetings, to introduce members to the Holy Royal Arch and encourage them to join.

#### **Keywords**

Royal, Arch, Talks, Attract, Recruit

## Twelve Short Talks for Craft Lodges regarding Royal Arch Chapters

### Number 5 - MEMBERSHIP AND PASSING THE CHAIR

In the past, many of us were told that we had to have served as Master of a Lodge, or to have 'Passed the Chair', before we were eligible to join the Royal Arch. The origin of this name is explained in *The Pocket History of Freemasonry*, by Pick and Knight, published in 1953: *'For many years there was a close connection between the Royal Arch and the Craft Installation Ceremonies. Until the 1840s, it was customary for a Candidate for Exaltation, if he had not served as Master of a Lodge, to be placed formally in the Master's Chair to rule the Lodge for a moment or two. The Minutes of many old English Lodges of the time record that several Brethren at a time 'Passed of the Chair', usually at the regular Installation Meeting. There does not appear to have been any conferment of 'secrets' on these occasions'*. Freemasonry has always adapted, sought to improve, revised and tweaked the Book of Constitutions. As society has changed, so have we.

Today, the rules have changed, and Craft Master Masons no longer have to have served as Master of a Lodge before becoming Candidates for Exaltation to the Royal Arch. They merely have had to be Master Masons for at least four weeks. But nobody should feel obliged to hurry or to let themselves be bullied into joining their Lodge's Royal Arch Chapter, you should only go ahead when you feel you are ready.

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##END##

### Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings. They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; *though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.*
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

**For further nuggets and other learning materials visit "Solomon" at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>**

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