Sir Walter Ralegh

FROM JOHN BODENHAM'S England's Helicon, 1600

The nymph's reply to the shepherd

(W. Rayleigh)

If all the world and love were young, And truth in every shepherd's tongue, These pretty pleasures might me move To live with thee and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold When rivers rage and rocks grow cold, And Philomel becometh dumb; The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields To wayward winter reckoning yields; A honey tongue, a heart of gall, Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

The gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses, Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,— In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds, Thy coral clasps and amber studs, All these in me no means can move To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last and love still breed, Had joys no date nor age no need, Then these delights my mind might move To live with thee and be thy love.

Source:

Poetry of the English Renaissance 1509-1660. J. William Hebel and Hoyt H. Hudson, Eds. New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1941. 137-138.

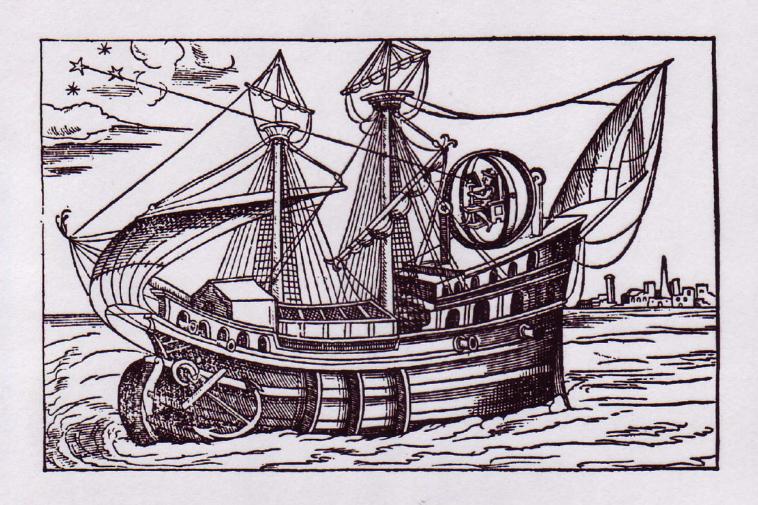
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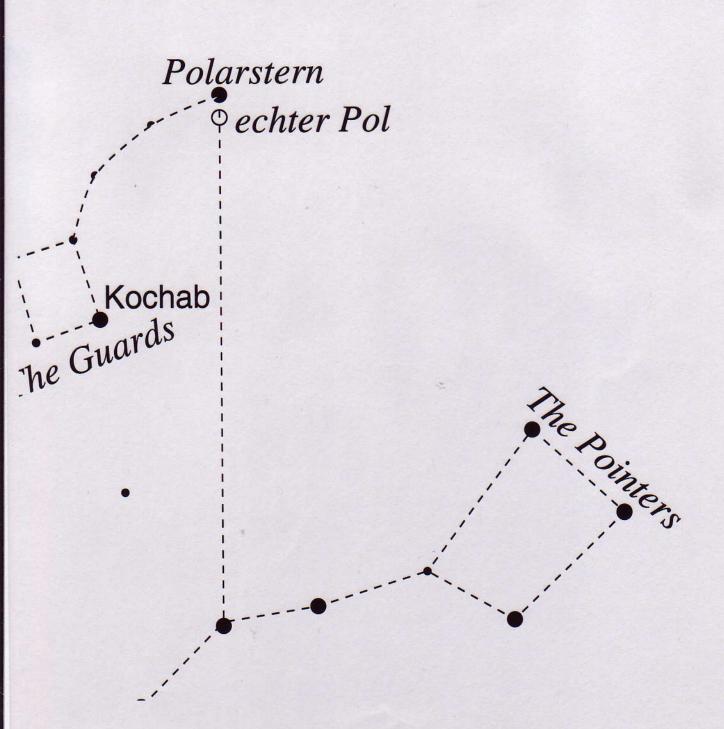
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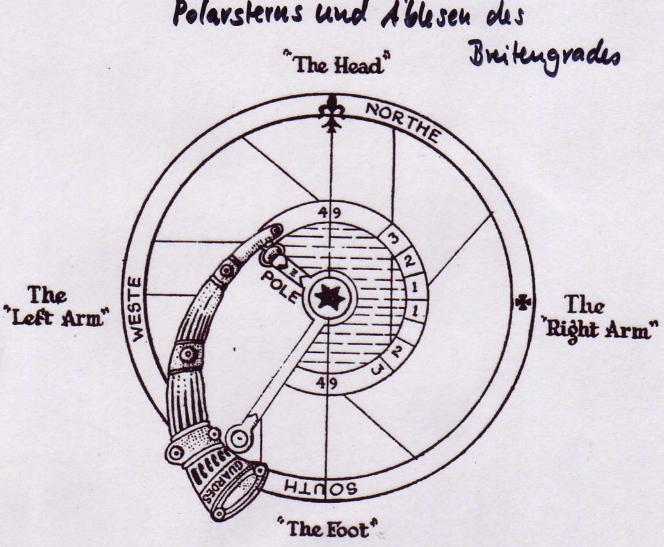
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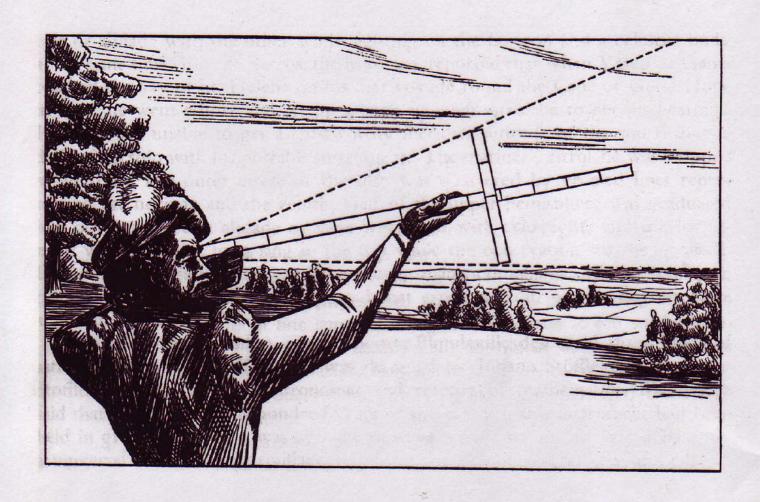
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