

Flatpack Astrolabe Kit, Mk II

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This document contains a series of images which should be printed and cut out to make a simple cardboard version of a medieval astrolabe. The resulting astrolabe is a simplified and modernised version of that described in Geoffrey Chaucer's c. 1391 *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, and has been constructed following the prescription described in Eisner (1975, 1976a, 1976b). The diagrams in this document have been produced using PyXPlot.[§]

Instructions

Pages 2, 3 and 5 should be printed out onto paper, or more preferably onto thin card. Page 4 should be printed onto a sheet of transparent acetate. The two sides of the Mother (pages 2 and 3) should be glued rigidly back-to-back, perhaps sandwiching a piece of rigid card. The Rete, printed onto transparent acetate, should be placed over the Plate, on the front of the Mother. The Label and the Rule should be placed on either side of the astrolabe: the Rule, marked out with a declination scale, should be placed over the Plate and the Rete, whilst the Label should be placed on the back of the Mother. The whole construction may then be fastened together by placing a split-pin paper fastener through the centre.

For more information, please visit: http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/library/library_exhibitions/schoolresources/astrolabe

References

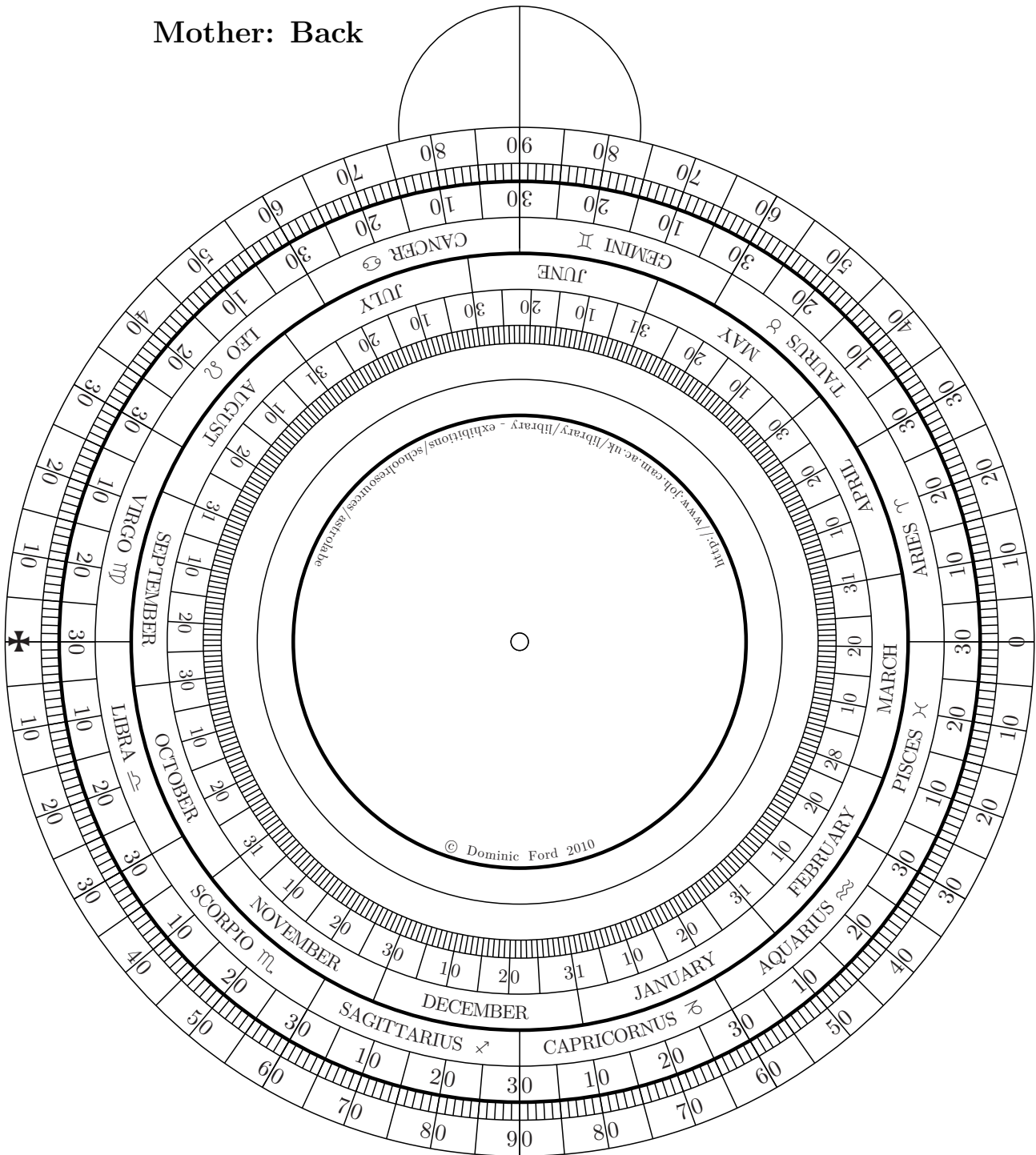
- [1] Chaucer, G., *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L.D. Benson (Boston, 1987)
- [2] Eisner, S., *J. Brit. astr. Ass.*, **86**(1), 18-29 (1975)
- [3] Eisner, S., *J. Brit. astr. Ass.*, **86**(2), 125-132 (1976a)
- [4] Eisner, S., *J. Brit. astr. Ass.*, **86**(3), 219-227 (1976b)

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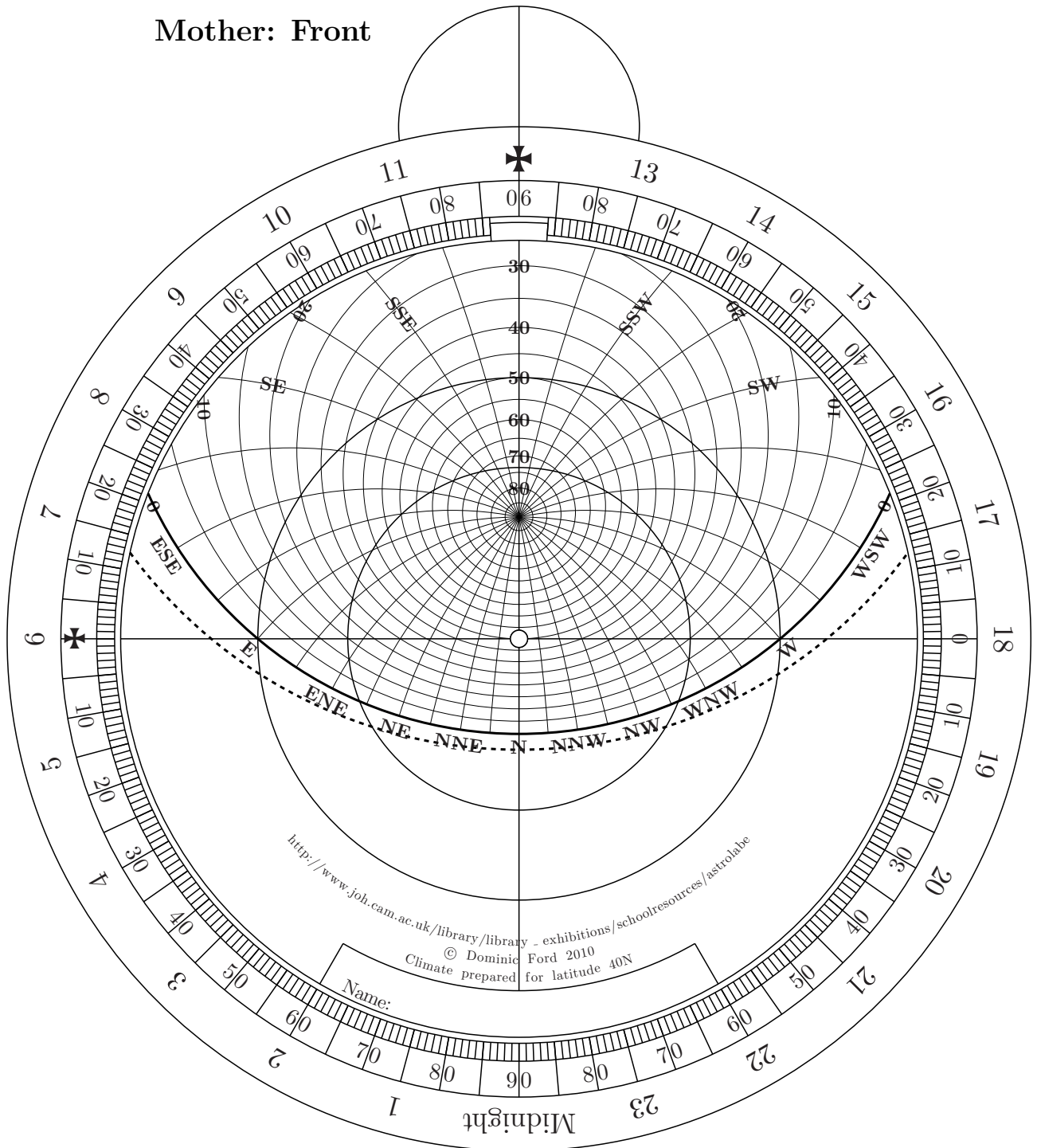
[‡]St John's College Library, Cambridge, CB2 1TP, UK.

[§]<http://www.pyxplot.org.uk>

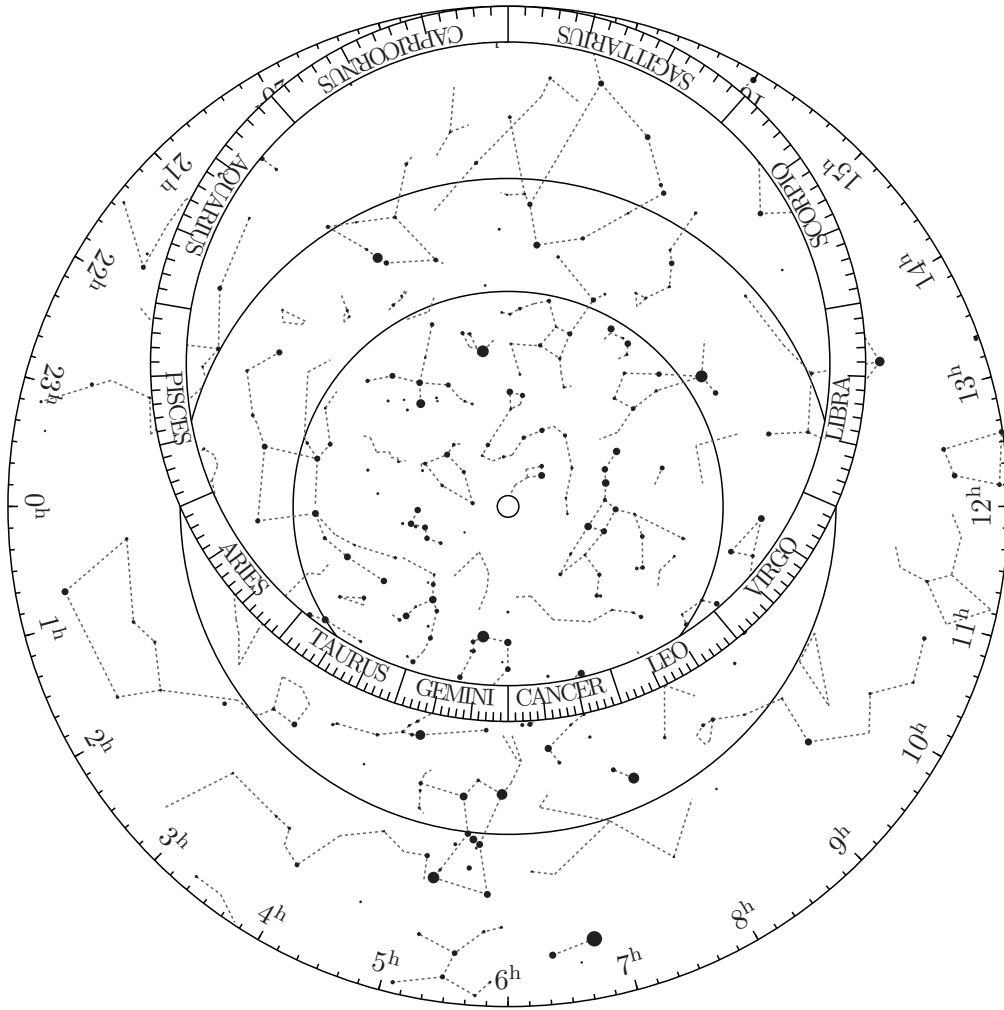
Mother: Back



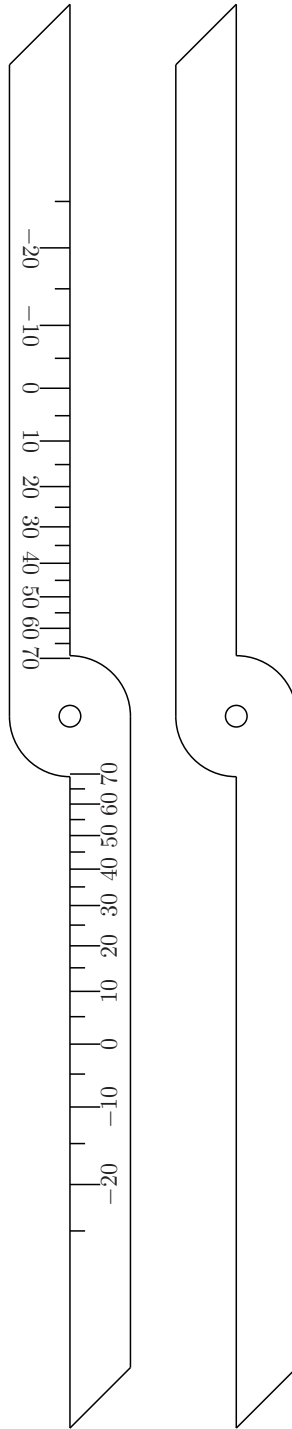
Mother: Front



The Rete



The Label and Rule



(a) Rule

(b) Alidade

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