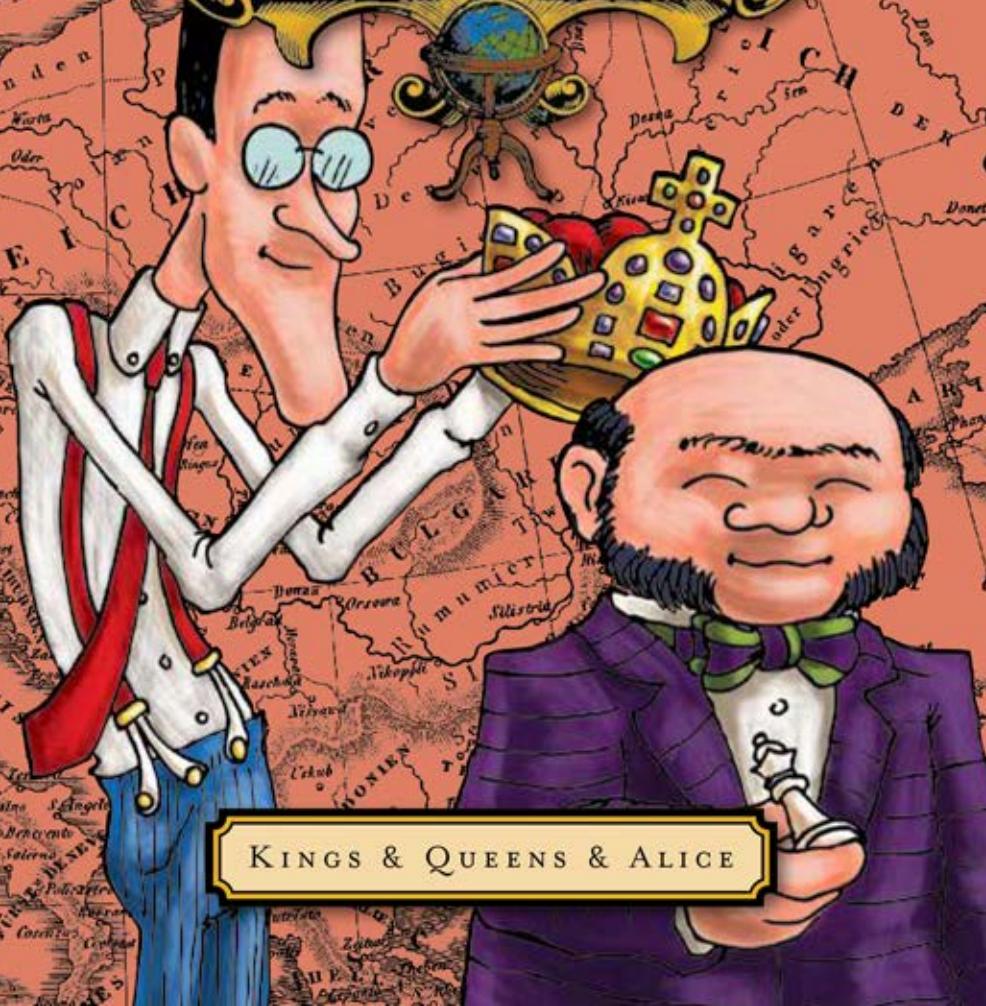


NED BUSTARD

LEGENDS & LEAGUES NORTH



KINGS & QUEENS & ALICE

L E G E N D S
E & LEAGUES

N O R T H

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KINGs & QUEENS
& ALICE

Written by Ned Bustard

*Illustrated by Ned Bustard
& Matthew Clark*

THIS BOOK
is dedicated to my cousin,
LYDIA YARDLEY
BUSTARD MIDWOOD
—who has been quite the
WORLD TRAVELER



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CHAPTER 1

in which

WE MEET ALICE

AND WE LEARN
ABOUT CONSTANCE
AND OCEANIA

SOMEWHERE between the 51st and 52nd parallels—and not too far from the Flamsteed House—you will find Legends & Leagues, Ltd., the overstuffed offices of Mr. Azimuth Latitude and Mr. Meridian Longitude.

In these offices, one Thursday morning, Mr. Latitude was playing chess. But not with Mr. Longitude. Mr. Latitude was playing chess with a



young girl named Alice.

“When my wife, Oceania, asked me to watch her young friend this morning, I had no idea it would lead to a rousing game of chess,” said Mr. Latitude. “I must say that I am delighted. Mr. Longitude has no aptitude for the game. He is only interested in the rooks, since they travel across the board in long straight lines.”

“I’m not young,” protested Alice as she moved a pawn two spaces. “I am seven and a half exactly.”

“Seven is my wife’s favorite number,” interjected Mr. Longitude from behind his desk. “My dear Constance says it is the perfect number. Mrs. Latitude’s favorite number is four, though mine is thirty-six.”

“Mrs. Latitude did not say what your company does,” continued Alice as if uninterrupted. “You have a great many books and maps and oddities in your office but no visitors at all.”

“Legends & Leagues, Ltd. provides geographic services for people who need help knowing how to get from Here to There,” answered Mr. Latitude.

Alice brightened and said, “I know all about geography. London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is



WE MEET ALICE



the capital of Rome, and Rome . . .”

“No, that’s all wrong!” yelled Mr. Longitude as he fell off his chair in shock.

Stunned by Mr. Longitude’s exclamation and extreme behavior, Alice made a very foolish move with one of her pawns, exposing her king to one of Mr. Latitude’s bishops.

“Alice, you are endangering your king,” said Mr. Latitude, seemingly unruffled by Mr. Longitude’s outrageous outburst.

Roused, Alice replied, “Oh, that is alright. I never met a king or queen that I ever liked. No way, no how. In fact, one king I met ate ham sandwiches and hay. *Can you imagine?* And once I met a queen who wanted to hire me as a lady’s-maid—paying me two pence a week, and jam every other day.”

“Then it is settled,” proclaimed Mr. Longitude as he raised himself to his full height (which was *quite* high). “We must introduce you to some good kings and queens we know. That will cure you of your dislike for them.” And in a bit of a mumble, he added, “Perhaps along the way we can cure you of your woeful ignorance of geography as well!”



CHAPTER 2

in which

WE VISIT

THE BRITISH ISLES

& THE QUEEN

NORTH, East, South, and West are the four cardinal directions,” said Mr. Longitude. “Perhaps on another visit we’ll introduce you to our sister-in-law, Rose. She has made the study of the points of the compass her favorite past time. But for now, to make it easy: if you stand with your right arm stretched out to the side in the direction that the Sun came up this morning—that is the East. Standing thusly, you are



facing North, your back is toward the South, and your left arm is stretched out pointing West.”

“Now, your true location can only be known by where you are in relationship to other things. And the best thing for that is a map,” explained Mr. Longitude while he spun a globe for Alice to see. “But for a map to work you need to have a starting point from which to begin. We are in London, England, which is in the North when you look on a map of the Earth.”

“Yet if you asked someone from Scotland where our offices are located, they’d say that we’re in the South,” interjected Mr. Latitude. “It all depends, as Mr. Longitude said, on where you begin. Since we are here in the offices of Legends & Leagues, Ltd., we refer to other places using this spot as our starting point.”

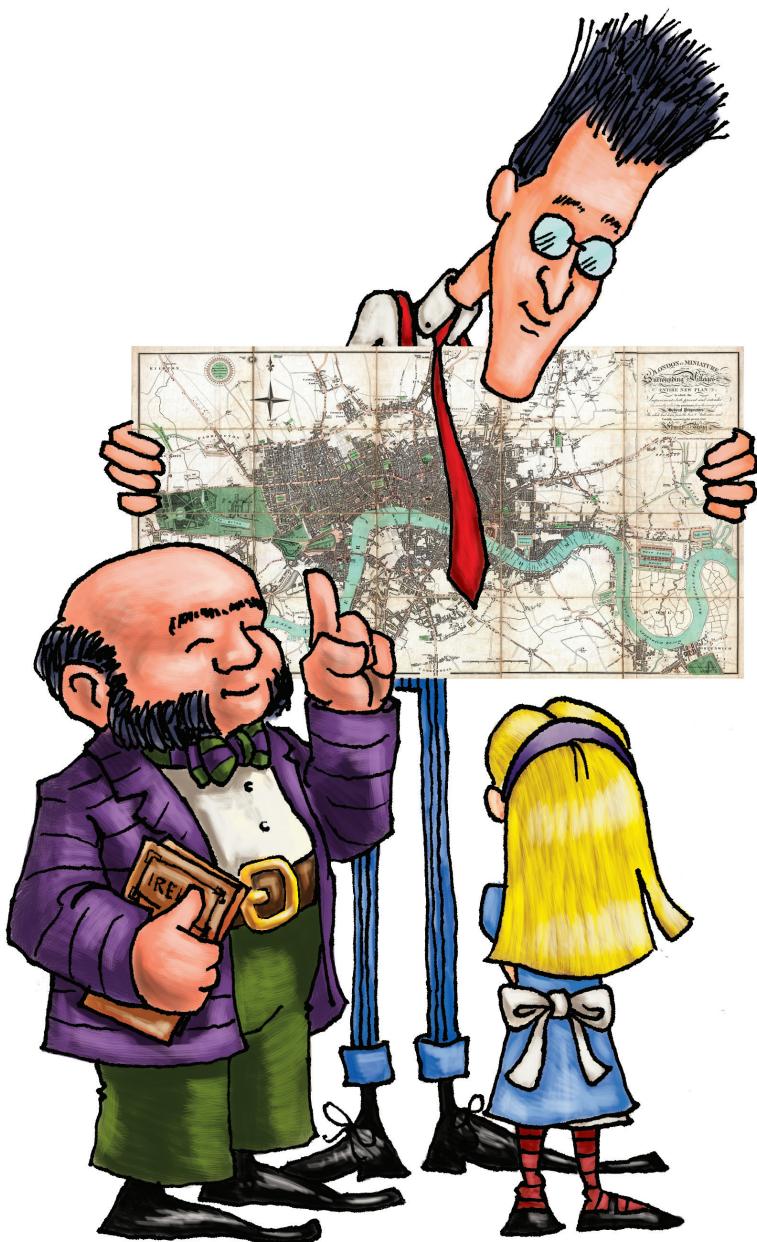
“Here is a current map of London,” said Mr. Longitude as he unfolded the colorful paper. “With the new and old maps we have in our offices, we can go anywhere and anytime. Alice, if you look at the center of London you can see the City of Westminster. That is where the Queen is—in Buckingham Palace. We will visit her first.”

“And don’t forget to curtsey,” added Mr. Latitude.

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WE VISIT THE BRITISH ISLES



A few moments later, mid-air in the Marble Hall of Buckingham Palace, Mr. Longitude's map of London unfolded, with Alice and the two proprietors of Legends & Leagues, Ltd. falling out onto the floor.

"That was most curious," gasped Alice. "I once tried a drink that made me fold up, but I have never folded up and *traveled* anywhere before."

"Traveling by map is the quickest way to get from Here to There," said Mr. Latitude. "Although one misses out on the views along the way."

Mr. Latitude led them all to the 1844 Room, where they found the Queen.

"It is most fortunate that you should visit our royal person today," said Queen Victoria after the lanky Mr. Longitude and stout Mr. Latitude had bowed. (Alice forgot to curtsey.) "We need your help. The Prince Consort has returned from a visit to Balmoral with dire news—the Loch Ness Monster is *missing*."

"This is terrible," exclaimed Mr. Longitude. "A catastrophe of this sort is sure to send the whole island into a tizzy. But I must say, Your Majesty is handling it very calmly."

"Great events make me quiet and calm; it is only trifles that irritate my nerves," replied the Queen.



CHAPTER 3

in which

WE DISCUSS LEPRECHAUNS AND DEVISE A PLAN

THE QUEEN is most anxious to enlist every one who can assist in recovering the plesiosaur," said Queen Victoria.

"What's a plee-see-uh-sohr" whispered Alice to Mr. Latitude. "And does she want us to find that *and* the Laknis Monster?"

"A plesiosaur is a type of aquatic reptile believed to have died out many, many years ago. It is thought



that ‘Niseag’ (as the Scots call her) is a plesiosaur,” answered Mr. Latitude. “And it isn’t *Laknis*, it is *Loch Ness*. The creature lives in a *loch*—that is the Scottish name for a lake—called Ness.

“Then they should call it the *Lake Ness Monster*,” quipped Alice.

Uninvolved with the loch lesson, Mr. Longitude continued speaking with the Queen. “We would be happy to help in the search, Your Majesty. But Niseag might not be missing—just hiding. It hid for an extremely long time after Columba, the Irish saint from Iona, rebuked it. And it would take a long time to search Ness since it contains more fresh water than all of the lakes in England and Wales combined.”

“Yes, we thought of that,” responded the Queen. “So my husband Albert went and consulted with Mòrag—Niseag’s kin in Loch Morar—and that beast confirmed the disappearance.”

“Then we might want to look for Niseag in Ireland,” suggested Mr. Latitude. “I have a map for Éire on me. At the very least we could go and contact the leprechauns. Using their extensive rainbow system they could quickly search the various lakes to see if the creature ended up there.”



WE DISCUSS LEPRECHAUNS



“I am positive we would have already heard from a banshee if Niseag was in Ireland,” countered Mr. Longitude. “You know how chatty they are. Wailing all the latest gossip here, there, and everywhere.”

“Ah, yes, quite true,” conceded Mr. Latitude. “And Wales is likely not worth searching for a large aquatic reptile, since it is so mountainous.”

“My thoughts exactly,” said Mr. Longitude. “Which really is too bad, since I was planning to introduce Alice to King Arthur on our *Good-Kings-and-Queens-Trip* today. Unfortunately, the only map we have for his time period is for Britannia—the Roman Britain—so there would be quite a long walk to get to the Round Table, and with the Loch Ness Monster missing, we need to make haste.”

So Mr. Longitude, Mr. Latitude, and Alice paid their respects to Queen Victoria. (This time Alice remembered to curtsey.) Then the three travelers folded themselves back into the map and unfolded in the Legends & Leagues office. Mr. Longitude found a map of Western Europe almost immediately (his cataloging system is exceptional), and they were soon on their way again.



LEGENDS & LEAGUES, LTD.

provides geographic services for anyone who needs help knowing how to get from *Here* to *There*. Using their old and new maps, Mr. Latitude and Mr. Longitude are able to take their clients anywhere anytime.

In this story, they travel North with a wonderful girl named Alice. Their adventures include sea serpents, St. George, King Wenceslas, and a witch—but no mad hatters or jabberwockys.

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