

Join in the fun with Nicky and Susan, proprietors of . . .

ODD-JOBBERS, LTD

By Garry Hogg

1. The first steps

"WELL," said Susan, pushing back her hair and looking across the table at her brother, "if you ask me, Nicky, that's the best name we've got for ourselves so far. At least, I can't think of any more. My brain has absolutely dried up!" She looked once more down the list of names she had scribbled on a half-sheet of paper and pushed it over to him.

Nicky stared hard at it, frowning. "Hmmm, it is, too," he agreed. "The Odd-Jobbers," he read out. "The Odd-Jobbers." Then he fell silent again, and his frown deepened. "You know, Sue," he went on slowly, "I can't help thinking it still wants just something more. Something that—that will make it sound a bit more—"

"Important?" suggested Sue.

Nicky shook his head. "No, that's not quite right. It has got to be made to look—*professional*. That is the word I mean. We have got to make people see that we mean business right from the start, somehow."

A name at last

"Well," Sue protested, "I've already told you my brain is absolutely completely worn out. I've shaken it, and there is not a single idea left in it, honestly!"

For a whole minute Nicky said nothing. And then suddenly he leapt up from his chair, his face shining with excitement. "I've—I've got it, Sue. Odd-Jobbers—LTD!"

"Of course," said Sue, a little crestfallen. "What an ass I was not to think of it myself! It is so simple. Odd-Jobbers, Ltd. All the best firms are that, aren't they? And, after all, we shall be one of the best firms ourselves!" She reached over for another sheet of paper and wrote on it in big, bold capital letters:

ODD-JOBBERS, LTD.

"It certainly looks what you said it ought to look—*professional*," she said; and taking a sharp pencil, she drew a dark, thick line round the words, like a picture-frame. "What else does it need, do you think?"

"Oh, our address. And our telephone number, of course, don't you think?"

"What about some sort of a slogan? People have got to know what it is all about, haven't they?" Sue pondered for a moment or two, and then said: "A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed. How will that do, Nick?"

He shook his head. "No. It's just a proverb. We want something that we have made up ourselves, if we can only think of something good." He frowned again and chewed on the end of his

pencil. "Poetry," he muttered. "Poetry would be best." He chewed harder than ever and his forehead wrinkled up like a piece of freckled corduroy. "I've got it," he exclaimed triumphantly. "If This You Read, Take Instant Heed. What do you think of that, Sue?"

Sue shook her head positively. "If you really want to know what I think, Nicky," she said, "it sounds more like an awful warning than anything else. The only thing it will do is put people off!"

"Are we going to ask to be paid for the jobs we do?" Susan asked.

After a minute's thought Nicky said: "No. We ought to be willing to do jobs for people without expecting to be paid for them. But, of course," he added, "if anyone actually asks us to accept payment for any job we do, then it would be silly of us to refuse, wouldn't it?"

"I'm saving up for a new bicycle," Susan said. "So I shan't exactly be disappointed if anyone does offer to pay for our services."

"Me, too," agreed Nicky.

So they had to set to work after tea to develop the idea. Now they had the name of the firm and the slogan the firm would use. The next thing was to get advertisements printed. Sue fetched a pair of scissors and a lot of sheets of plain paper. Nicky fetched his printing outfit. Then the two of them sat down again on opposite sides of the table to get on with their own jobs.

Sue took the measurements of the envelopes they were going to use, and began cutting out oblongs of paper that would fit neatly inside them. Meanwhile, Nicky began setting the rubber type in

his printing-frame, his tongue sticking farther and farther out of the corner of his mouth as he did so.

"How is it going?" Nicky asked, straightening his back for a moment and putting down the tweezers he was using to lift the rubber letters out of the box and insert them into the frame. "I've practically finished."

Professional touch

"I've done more than fifty," answered Susan. "How many ought we to do, do you think?"

"Thousands!" Nick answered, with a grin. "Well," he corrected himself when he saw the look of horror on his sister's face, "a hundred or so, anyway, if you ask me."

For a while there was silence, broken only by his heavy breathing. Then: "Finished!" he announced, and reached for the ink pad.

"One hundred!" Susan said triumphantly. "Jiminy, I'll have a sore place on my thumb and finger after all this cutting out, I expect!"

Nicky took an oblong of paper.



Nicky leapt up from his chair, his face shining with excitement

Together they racked their brains, doodling with their pencils on one scrap of paper after another, and then scrunching each one up impatiently and tipping it into the waste-paper basket.

Then: "I've got it!" squawked Sue in a high-pitched voice. "Listen: If Help You Need, We'll Come With Speed!"

"That's jolly good," said Nicky, with enthusiasm. "Better than anything I can think of. Quick, write it down before we forget it, and we will decide on it, I vote."

Bright idea wanted

It was the first day of their school holidays, and, as Nicky had said to Sue: "Let's try to think of something really new for these hols as we are not going away anywhere. What we want is a really bright idea!" And between them they had concocted this idea. They would make themselves into a sort of odd-job-man firm, ready to give a helping hand whenever it was needed.

"Of course," Nicky had remarked, "Scouts do this for a week every year. You know—Bob-a-Job Scouts."

He had been pressing the printing-frame firmly on the pad and now held it poised over the paper.

"Watch, Sue!" he said. "Here goes!"

Very carefully so as to avoid smearing, he lifted the printing-frame from the paper, and they both held their breath while he did so.

"Oh—*super!*"

There before them, in a violet-blue ink frame set in the dead centre of the paper and printed in violet-blue ink letters, they read:

ODD-JOBBERS, LTD.

If Help You Need,
We'll Come With Speed!

7 Layho Road, Telephone:
Webleigh. WEB. 2211

"It looks quite professional, doesn't it?" Susan said, snatching it up and admiring their joint handiwork.

Sit back and wait

"So it jolly well ought to," said Nicky. "From now onwards we are professionals. What is more, we are LTD., like all the best Companies, Ltd.!"

"So what do we do next?"

"Print the rest of the circulars, stick them in their envelopes, deliver them to as many houses as we have enough for, and then sit back—and wait!"

They worked steadily on, and talked as they worked. "If we get

even only one or two replies out of every ten," Susan said, "that will keep us busy for quite a bit, won't it?" She slipped another advertisement into an envelope. "I wonder what sort of jobs we shall be asked to do?"

"Running errands mostly, I expect," said Nicky gloomily. "But there will be a few interesting jobs, surely. Exercising dogs on the Common when their owners are ill, for instance. And tracking down stray cats and budgies and tortoises."

"It will be awful if we get landed with jobs like—like weeding people's gardens, won't it?" said Susan.

What sort of jobs?

"We can always refuse," Nicky reminded her. "Though we had better not, because it would get ODD-JOBBERS, LTD. a bad name." He inked his pad again and started on another pile of Susan's papers. "We might get asked to clean people's cars and— and light bonfires. Not at the same time, of course," he added. "It would be quite fun."

They fell silent and worked faster than ever. Then Susan looked up as she slipped the last paper into its envelope. "Nicky, won't it be exciting when the first letters and telephone-calls begin to roll in?" Then a sudden thought struck her. "Do you think we will be able to cope with them all?"

The first of their adventures appears in next week's CN

Blow and behold!

Bubbly Regd.

the extra big BUBBLE GUM
BIG SIZE 1d

Note to Parents: BUBBLY contains healthful, energizing glucose and sugar and is packed in hygienic conditions in our own factory.

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