

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
BULLETIN

WALTER GREGORY BRYAN
Advertising's Advertiser

By
L. MITCHELL WHITE and BRENT WILLIAMS



Walter Gregory Bryan, 1877-1941.

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1912. Issued four times monthly October through May, three times
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Preface

a S A GENERAL PROPOSITION

we make this statement: any newspaper, anywhere, can gain a Million Lines a year, for at least three years, if it Plans Its Work and Works Its Plan, intelligently, energetically, and consistently on all classifications of advertising." The statement's author, Walter Gregory Bryan, demonstrated its validity over a quarter of a century. The Big Plan, common to newspaper organization and management today, was to promote advertising, to "advertise advertising."

Mr. Bryan was for a time publisher of the leading Hearst newspaper, the *New York American*. He increased advertising revenue to about \$1,165,000 in nine months, an increase of \$522,000 over the *American's* revenue for its best previous year. "OK," William Randolph Hearst noted on a memo, "to use my name as a reference as to the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of your work."

In 1954 the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri was fortunate to come into possession of the files, scrapbooks and miscellaneous materials compiled by Mr. Bryan during his career. This was through the generosity of Miss Isabel Bryan, a surviving sister.

The Bryan Collection is a treasury of the history of advertising promotion's development. While no exact monetary value can be placed on it, the Collection has been said to represent an investment in time, study, and art work worth a quarter-million dollars. No serious student of advertising promotion can afford to pass up this panorama of its development.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Bryan had close relations with the University of Missouri. His office was located in Columbia in 1911. During that year Mr. Bryan worked with Dr. A.H.R. Fairchild of the English Department in the study of personalizing words as advertising copy activators. The idea they experimented with was to take such a sentence as "The trees extended from the house to the

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lake," and put action into it by personalizing thus: "The trees ran from the house to the lake."

Here there is some reason to believe that the two men were in the vanguard of the many who came later to write on various aspects of readability.

The writers recall Mr. Bryan and three associates working over ten pieces of advertising copy for which they had paid an expert copy writer one thousand dollars. They spent hours in conference and rewriting, and the resulting text was entirely different from the original. The results were impressive in reader response, and, it follows, in the development of more income for the source they promoted.

When Mr. Bryan departed from Columbia, he took with him as an employee Joseph Chasnoff, first advertising instructor in the School of Journalism. After service with the Bryan Organization, Mr. Chasnoff joined the *St. Louis Republic* as promotion manager, one of the first positions of its kind in newspaper history.

The school in a sense is recompensed by the Bryan Collection for the loss of its first advertising instructor.

L. Mitchell White and Brent Williams

About the authors: *Brent Williams was a member of the Bryan Organization. He was, prior to retirement, advertising counselor and director of promotion for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. He lives at Fulton, Missouri.*

L. Mitchell White was a schoolmate of Walter G. Bryan at Westminster College, Fulton, Mo. Mr. White, publisher of the Mexico (Mo.) Ledger, closely followed Mr. Bryan's career both as friend and interested newspaperman.

WALTER GREGORY BRYAN

was not just another successful advertising man. Successful he was, tremendously so. But his place in the history of American journalism is not based merely on his success but on the path he pioneered in vitalizing newspaper advertising space, display and classified, in the marketing habits of readers.

If advertising is a key cog in the intricate machinery that is American free enterprise, then Walter Bryan's stature begins to come into focus. The strength of free enterprise is that it is for masses of people—all of us. What he did was take advertising—the merchant's message—from the cold announcement stage and transform it into a vital, living, over-the-counter sales force.

Today the ideas pioneered by Mr. Bryan are accepted advertising procedure. But when lanky, hard-working Walter Bryan hurried down Main St., U.S.A., they were revolutionary. The validity of his ideas was at first doubted by many publishers.

This man from Missouri was more than an advertising man. He gave extra meaning to sales, the strength of free enterprise. He implemented the mass production lines of great industrial centers. He blazed the trees from the wilderness of plenty for only the few to today's supermarkets teeming with cart-filling customers.

A native of Fulton, Missouri, Mr. Bryan was born September 8, 1877. His first association with newspapers came when, as a small boy, he sold the *Pennsylvania Grit* and the

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Saturday Blade. This youthful undertaking revealed that he had abundant energy, ability to plan in detail, and a determination to be thorough.

He was graduated from Kemper Military Academy (Boonville, Missouri) with highest honors. Prized possessions throughout his life were a hunting-case gold watch and a gold medal the Academy awarded him for outstanding scholastic achievement.

His college was Westminster in his home town, Fulton. Management of the college newspaper was given him because no one else wanted it. It was entirely a student enterprise, any profit made belonging to the manager—as did any losses. The paper's history of losses made it unattractive. Young Bryan studied the potentialities and decided the paper should pay a profit. From the first issue under his editorship, the paper did just that.

It was during his management of the college publication that the idea of "service to advertisers" came to him. Some of the merchants enjoying considerable student trade

Postcard messages to advertisers pointed up important Bryan ideas usually in the form of terse epigrams.

"Some people suspend their advertising during the dull seasons. That's what makes the dull seasons."

The Tribune prints far more advertising than any other Chicago paper.

The Chicago Tribune.

The World's Greatest Newspaper

Advertising

The Record-Herald Does Not Want

YOU keep good company when you advertise in The Record-Herald. The advertising of get-rich-quick concerns is not accepted, nor will the advertising of any individual or corporation be published if there is the slightest reason to believe that the advertiser intends to impose upon the public. Nor will The Record-Herald permit the use of its columns for—

- Advertising that sells a commodity of questionable quality—*
- Advertising that caters solely to an undesirable class—*
- Advertising that depends from day to day on the credulous element—*
- Advertising of questionable mining, oil or industrial stocks—*
- The advertising of a concern that refuses to live up to the statements contained in its advertising—*
- Medical advertising that is indecent or suggestive.*

We do not solicit the advertising enumerated in the preceding paragraphs because we do not believe in it.

Record-Herald readers are quality-seekers, primarily — economizers, secondarily.

And with them it is a rule that the best is generally the cheapest.

But Record-Herald advertising will increase the business of all legitimate advertisers.

Such advertisers strive continuously to raise the standard of their merchandise and their service.

They seek the patronage of all the people, but most of all that of the intelligent, discriminating buyer.

The Record-Herald can make and save money for these advertisers because it gives them a circulation that responds to the honest, sane advertising ap-

peal—the only kind The Record-Herald places before its readers.

The judicious exercise of economy is the first lesson of business.

And yet, in many establishments, the profits of the business go to cover leaks in advertising.

Simply because of a preconceived, thoughtless idea that the house, in its advertising, ought to attempt to reach everybody—an expensive delusion, ninety-nine times out of one hundred.

The Record-Herald does not claim to reach everybody. It does claim, without fear of successful contradiction, to have the *second largest circulation in the Chicago morning newspaper field*—a circulation that believes in the sincerity of the paper, and that therefore responds to honest advertising in its columns—a circulation ranging from 150,000 to 160,000 a day (Sunday over 200,000), and that is one of the first eight morning newspaper circulations of 150,000 or more in the United States.

The Record-Herald

One of the earliest newspaper self-censorship advertisements. Bryan prepared this for the Chicago Record-Herald, July 5, 1913. (Reduced from 9x16".)

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I Am Advertising

I came into being as the spoken language came; slowly, gradually and to meet an urgent need. I have been worked for evil, but mostly I have worked for good. I can still be worked for evil, but each day it grows more difficult to so misuse me.

I am at once a tool and a living force. If you use me wisely, I am a tool in your employ. If you misuse me, my double edge will injure or destroy you. If you do not use me, I am a force that works against the aims and purposes that animate your business.

I speak a thousand tongues and have a million voices.

I am the ambassador of civilization, the handmaiden of science and the father of invention.

I have peopled the prairie, and with my aid commerce has laid twin rails of gleaming steel in a gridiron across the continent and stretched a network of copper into the far corners of the globe.

I am the friend of humanity—for I have filled the commoner's life with a hundred comforts denied the king of yesterday.

I have brought clean food, healthful warmth, music, convenience and comfort into a hundred million homes.

I laugh at tariffs and remake laws.

I have scaled the walls of the farmer's isolation and linked him to the world of outer interests.

I build great factories and people them with happy men and women who love the labor I create.

I am a bridge that spans all distance and brings the whole world to your door, ready and eager to buy your wares.

I have made merchant princes out of corner shopkeepers and piled the wealth of a Monte Cristo into the laps of those who know my power.

I find new markets and gather the goods of the world into a handful of printed pages.

I fathered the penny newspaper.

I am either the friend or the foe to Competition—so he who finds me first is both lucky and wise.

Where it cost cents to hire me yesterday it costs quarters today, and will cost dollars tomorrow. But whosoever uses me had best have sense; for I repay ignorance with loss and wisdom with the wealth of Croesus.

I spell service, economy, abundance and opportunity; for I am the one and only universal alphabet.

I live in every spoken word and printed line—in every thought that moves man to action and every deed that displays character.

I Am Advertising!

New York American

Greatest Quality-Quantity Circulation
MORE THAN 250,000 DAILY—OVER 750,000 SUNDAY

(1918 reprinted by Mrs. E. H. Derry, with thanks. "I Am An Advertising Man.")

Copyright, 1913, by W. G. Brown.

Anti-Trust

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"I am Advertising" was produced as a full-page spread in 1913. It has been called the first full definition of advertising ever to be printed.
(Reduced from 17x19".)

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The Greatest Small Force in the World

I am the still small voice of the mighty press, and my utterances are heard 'round the world. I voice the needs of humanity, and my influence is felt over seas and across nations.

I speak, and where I should be heard there I usually find answer—whether in the next street, or the next state, or on another continent. My boundary ends only where newspapers are unknown.

I am the servant of a common cause—I discriminate between neither the classes nor the masses, the rich nor the poor, the weak nor the strong.

I go alike into homes of great wealth and into the habitations of the humble. My audience is as often in the workshop as in the private office. Democracy has no greater exponent.

I offer relief to those who suffer for lack of occupation. I provide the means by which worthy men find fitting employment. And through me, hundreds of thousands of tables are spread today which would otherwise be without food—millions of hearts are happy instead of hopeless. So have I been an instrument of salvation where mere charity might have wrought destruction.

I am an equally good friend to the employer and the employed. With my aid the services of the competent may always be commanded. I work for mutual benefits always.

I am an agent of unceasing search—I recover what is lost and restore that which is found. I comb the crowds, scan the highways and byways, peer into remote corners, and almost unerringly I locate the thing or person sought.

I bear tidings of life and death, joy and despair, and mostly am I the messenger of hope and happiness, and occasionally I afford first aid to romance.

I am a worker through whose tireless energy families find homes, buyers and sellers come together, unused commodities give place to those which are desired.

I am a successful salesman of city and suburban real estate and the originator of the Back to the Land movement.

I am an economist who makes and saves money for those who use me. I may be employed for right or wrong. But less and less easy does it become for the unrighteous to use me to their advantage.

I am the creator of business careers for men. I bring capital to business that falters, and often turn defeat into success.

I am a guide to big business because I point the way to business opportunities and acquaint men with chances for advancement and profit. I am frequently found to be the promoter of world enterprises.

I reflect every human emotion, and in the great drama of daily existence I play many roles. But more often do I move my vast audience to smiles than to tears. My efficiency is beyond estimate, and though priceless in value my cost is a trifle. There is no mission too great, no task too small to put upon me.

I am the greatest small force in the civilized world to-day—

I AM THE "WANT AD."

The Daily News

Chicago's "Want Ad" Directory

Telephone Franklin 1

A classic piece of advertising copy. Copyrighted by Bryan in 1914, this still stands as the finest tribute ever paid classified advertising. (Reduced from 16x21".)

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had neither knowledge nor time to write advertisements. So the staff, under Mr. Bryan, commenced to write advertisements that were easily sold to the merchants.

A particularly hard problem in redressing an advertisement was posed by a barbershop owned by two elderly colored barbers profiting for many years from college trade. They could not, however, resist this new copy: "We have shaved and bathed three generations of gentlemen."

Walter Bryan's experience with advertisers on the college paper undoubtedly led him in later years to establish on a metropolitan newspaper what probably was the first advertisers' service bureau in the United States. This is presently considered a necessary and profitable department of practically every paper of size in the country.

His second newspaper connection was as local news reporter for Fulton's daily paper. He quickly advanced to city editor. His work attracted the attention of the *Kansas City Times*. This paper hired him as a reporter, then lost him to the advertising department of the *Kansas City Journal*.

Given charge of resort and school and college advertising, Mr. Bryan advanced this department to a point where it carried a larger volume of such advertising than any other newspaper in the United States. Appointed advertising manager of the *Journal*, he proceeded to establish, as previously mentioned, likely the first advertisers' service bureau in the metropolitan daily field. It paid.

During his connection with this newspaper, he first experimented with what he called "advertising advertising". It was his theory that subscribers who did read the advertisements could be convinced, through "advertising advertising," that reading the advertisements was an informative and money-saving undertaking.

Another Bryan theory was that by increasing the number of subscribers who read the advertisements the advertisers could derive benefits identical to those of increased circulation.

To illustrate, he used arbitrary figures and emphasized

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that they were arbitrary. Suppose, for example, a newspaper had a circulation of 100,000 and sixty-five per cent read the advertisements. That would mean, to the advertiser, that 65,000 subscribers were ad readers. If, through advertising advertising, an additional fifteen per cent could be made ad readers, that would add 9,750 to total advertisement readership without any increased circulation expense or ad rate increase.

It was conclusively proved that weak interest in certain classifications could be noticeably strengthened through advertising the advantages of reading the advertising in those classifications. Unfortunately, the percentage of increased interest could not be measured. It was, however, proved that reader interest increased to a point making the advertising more profitable to the advertiser.

Between positions on the *Kansas City Journal* and the *Chicago Tribune*, Mr. Bryan worked with Dr. A.H.R. Fairchild of the English Department, University of Missouri, on language uses for better advertising copy. During this

*Bryan made the penny post-card a medium
for repeating and repeating and repeating again
sound sales messages — long before there
was radio to adopt the idea.*

YEAR in and year out The Tribune carries far more advertising than any other Chicago paper. You cannot impugn the judgment of those who win. But you can "cash in" on their experience by starting a campaign NOW.

The Chicago Tribune

The World's Greatest Newspaper

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Go After the Kind of People You Want in Your Store

BUSINESS is a battle. And the master of business is the man who thinks—plans—directs the fight with the cool and calculating eye of an experienced general. Competition is daily becoming keener in every line of trade. Scientific methods are demanded in every department of business. And all commercial organizations lead to definite and centralized effort.

In no other feature of modern business is the expediency of concentration so universally emphasized as in the advertising end. Topsy-turvy publicity will quickly eat up the profits. In order to create a demand for an article through newspaper advertising you must first formulate a specific proposition for the right people.

This accomplished, you next seek an economical and effective vehicle of publicity for the marketing of your goods. The selection of your medium should be made with regard to the character of the merchandise you are offering. If you are engaged in distributing goods of the better grade, you know that your logical field of sale is that of the substantial, prosperous class of people—the folks who can appreciate and afford your wares.

Your problem is to reach possible buyers—and no others.

Maximum results at minimum cost—that's the New York American's claim on your advertising appropriation.

New York American

Greatest Quality-Quantity Circulation
MORE THAN 280,000 DAILY—OVER 750,000 SUNDAY

Copyright, 1913. By W. G. Bryan

Typical Bryan simplicity in a message directed to careless advertisers as well as to non-advertisers.
Bryan prepared hundreds of such advertisements.
(Reduced from 8x13")

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Shoes for the Growing Generation

SCHOOL days are here. That means school shoes, for the great army of young feet which tramp daily into grade and high schools, colleges and universities, must be well shod if it is to carry on efficiently.

Shoes are more than a means of protection. Properly fitted, they insure the health and comfort which help to make strong men and women. Carelessly chosen, they lay the foundation for broken arches, flat feet and scores of foot troubles that mean a slowing up of the mental processes and endless physical suffering.

The pride of youth in an attractive appearance is strong and should be encouraged. The shoes of the boys and girls, therefore, no less than those of the young college men and women, should combine absolute comfort with correct lines and attractive styles, and should be suitable for the occasion.

Such shoes the merchants of Spokane are specializing in right now.

Parents concerned with insuring to their children the utmost in health and happiness, will find it easy to make the right selection and secure the proper fit by taking or sending them to the shoe stores and shoe departments advertising in

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW
The Newspaper of the Home

Copyright, 1925, by W. G. Bryan. The Spokesman-Review.

Here the Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman-Review implements the advertising of shoe stores. (Reduced from 9x16".)

Arizona E 48th State

WASHINGTON: Arizona Territ forty-eighth st. After the t

THE TEN POINTS to SUCCESS



THE encouragement of Thrift helps the individual in money matters in the realm of earning, spending, saving, investing and giving.

It is based on the following ten-point creed :

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Work and earn.</i> | <i>Own your home.</i> |
| <i>Make a budget.</i> | <i>Make a will.</i> |
| <i>Record expenditures.</i> | <i>Invest in safe securities.</i> |
| <i>Have a bank account.</i> | <i>Pay bills promptly.</i> |
| <i>Carry life insurance.</i> | <i>Share with others.</i> |

To accomplish these much desired things start a Savings account To-day. The Banks, Trust Companies and Saving Institutions advertising in The World extend their every facility.

It will pay you to read and heed their announcements because they indicate the right road to success and future Independence. To continue in the right direction and for all financial news and information, read regularly the Financial pages of

The World
A Constructive Newspaper

Copyright Press Publishing Company (New York World) 1928

The New York World, February 2, 1928, used this Bryan piece to encourage advertising of financial institutions by appealing for financial news and advertising leadership.
(Reduced from 9x15".)

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period, 1911-1912, according to his sister, Miss Isabel Bryan, "he developed plans for the service which he called 'Advertising Newspaper Advertising.'" The Bryan Organization Service was established early in 1913, with offices in the old Chicago *Daily News* building. The Service functioned for twenty years, counting 35 newspapers as clients, and ceased operations in 1933.

One of Mr. Bryan's newspaper clients led its field in circulation and in display and classified advertising with the exception of the real estate classification, where it ran second. There was no reason for this position except, perhaps, in the minds of the real estate advertisers. What follows is a typical action of the Bryan Organization.

Commencing with a series of advertisements announcing "Real Estate Week," the newspaper stimulated reader interest. Real estate advertisers were informed of the promotion through letters enclosing proofs of the advertisements and circulars emphasizing the newspaper's leadership in circulation. Other classifications of advertising were mailed at frequent intervals. The advertising salesmen were given daily explanations of the campaign as it progressed.

"Real Estate Week" succeeded in increasing lineage and results to advertisers. Advertising calling the readers' attention to the real estate advertising was continued in a modest way for several months. That campaign began a leadership in real estate advertising that has continued for more than twenty-five years.

There were numerous instances of leadership being won for various classifications of display and classified advertising through publicity promotions by the Bryan Organization. Regarded as more important, however, was the general increase in reader-interest in newspaper advertising. It is significant that all—or almost all—of the newspapers variously served by the Bryan Organization later established or enlarged their own promotion departments.

This list of newspapers served by the Bryan Organization Service represents some outstanding publications in the United States:

WALTER GREGORY BRYAN

Advertising's Advertiser

Atlanta <i>Georgian-American</i>	New York <i>American</i>
Boston <i>American</i>	New York <i>World</i>
Birmingham <i>News</i>	Philadelphia <i>Bulletin</i>
Chicago <i>Daily News</i>	Philadelphia <i>North American</i>
Chicago <i>Record-Herald</i>	Philadelphia <i>Public Ledger</i>
Chicago <i>Examiner</i>	Philadelphia <i>Record</i>
Chicago <i>Tribune</i>	Portland <i>News-Press-Herald</i>
Cleveland <i>Plain-Dealer</i>	Portland <i>Telegram</i>
Denver <i>Post</i>	San Francisco <i>Bulletin</i>
Dallas <i>News</i>	San Francisco <i>Examiner</i>
Fort Worth <i>Record</i>	Spokesman <i>Review</i>
Harrisburg <i>Patriot and News</i>	St. Louis <i>Post-Dispatch</i>
Kansas City <i>Journal-Post</i>	St. Louis <i>Star</i>
Los Angeles <i>Examiner</i>	Tulsa <i>World</i>
Memphis <i>Commercial Appeal</i>	Group of Pennsylvania News- papers through P.N.P.A.
Milwaukee <i>News and Tribune</i>	
Minneapolis <i>Tribune</i>	

More than one newspaper in a city was not served simultaneously.

Mr. Bryan's service to the Hearst newspapers so impressed William Randolph Hearst that he prevailed upon the advertising promoter to go to Atlanta and take over as publisher of the ailing *Georgian-American*. Here was ample opportunity for the exercise of his long-time study of efficiencies in newspaper management and production. In due time Mr. Bryan lifted the *Georgian-American* from the red. His reward was promotion to the publishership of the New York *American*, and this promotion was later capped by election to membership in the general management of all Hearst publications.

His spectacular success did not diminish Mr. Bryan's long cherished ambition to publish a genuinely country-styled newspaper in the nation's largest city. In 1933 *The Villager* made its bow to Greenwich Village, New York. It was announced as "A Weekly Newspaper Reflecting the Finest Traditions of Washington Square and Greenwich Village." Following the pattern of most new publications, *The Villager* had its up-and-downs, but now, 1956, after twenty-two years of continuous publication, it is regarded as a profitable newspaper property. Its unusual character

WALTER GREGORY BRYAN

Advertising's Advertiser

has made it the subject of numerous magazine articles.

Walter Gregory Bryan died in 1941. *The Villager* has been continued by his sister, Miss Isabel Bryan, who has faithfully and successfully observed the principles and integrity with which Mr. Bryan endowed it.

Careful student of journalism, able publisher, and, above all, a powerful force in creating greater interest in reading of advertising—Walter Gregory Bryan, 1877-1941.

Atlanta Georgian-American
Boston American
Birmingham News
Chicago Daily News
Cincinnati Record-Herald
Cleveland Plain Dealer
Columbus Tribune
Crescent City Post-Dispatch
Denver Post
Dallas News
Fort Worth Record
Harrisburg Patriot and News
Kansas City Journal-Post
Los Angeles Examiner
Memphis Commercial Appeal
Milwaukee News and Tribune
Minneapolis Tribune
New York American
New York World
Philadelphia Bulletin
Philadelphia North American
Philadelphia Public Ledger
Philadelphia Record
Portland News-Press Herald
Portland Telegram
San Francisco Bulletin
San Francisco Examiner
Spokesman Review
St. Louis Post-Dispatch
St. Louis Star
Tulsa World
Group of Pennsylvania Newspapers through P.N.P.A.