

So, it turns out that it was published as non-fiction in Pearson's Weekly week ending Oct.15, 1908. It was written by Will A. Bennet, Press Representative, Moss Empires, Limited and the London Hippodrome.

The original article has a signature for Will A Bennet which matches the signature of the 1913 image found in the NYPL Digital Collections.

The timing of the original article is very interesting. Houdini hadn't appeared in London since the Mirror Challenge in 1904. The article just happens to show up right before Houdini returns to London in 1908. Was the article an apologia to cover up loose ends and divert rumors? Some Houdini experts think so.

Why the "Pearson's Weekly" as opposed to "Answers" owned by his friend Alfred Harmsworth who also owned the Daily Mirror? Possibly to cover up any rumors that the Daily Mirror paper conspired with Houdini.