

A Note on the Early Editions of *The Invisible Man*

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David Lake's articles^{1,2} concerning the development of the various editions of Wells's early scientific romances are of great value in deciding which passages of text are to be preferred in any future editions of those works, and in understanding how Wells reviewed and edited his work after its original publication. When Lake wrote his section² on *The Invisible Man*, the evidence to hand indicated that the epilogues in the British line of texts developed from the Tauchnitz edition of 1898 (this text is denoted "T" by Lake). However, it has been brought to light that a British version of the epilogue in fact appeared in 1897 in Pearson's second edition (P2) of *The Invisible Man*.³

The original publishing history indicated that the epilogue's first appearance was in the first American edition of the book published by Arnold in 1897 (denoted "NY").² The first British edition of *The Invisible Man* was published by Pearson in 1897 ("P") and did not have an epilogue. The new information, that P2 of 1897 included an epilogue, is consistent with Lake's stated belief² that the 1898 T version of the epilogue (which is practically identical to that of P2) was earlier than the 1897 NY version "in spite of the official publication dates."²

The Pearson second edition is not mentioned in the standard biographies. In his *A Bibliography of the Works of H. G. Wells*⁴, Geoffrey Wells stated that the first British edition to include the epilogue was a cheap one issued in paper wrappers by Pearson in 1900. This statement is now seen to be erroneous. The 1897 P2 differs from P, not only in the addition of the epilogue, but also in a number of minor textual amendments. On the title page, the italic upper case "SECOND EDITION" is inserted in the middle

of the space above the word "London." There are no publisher's advertisements.

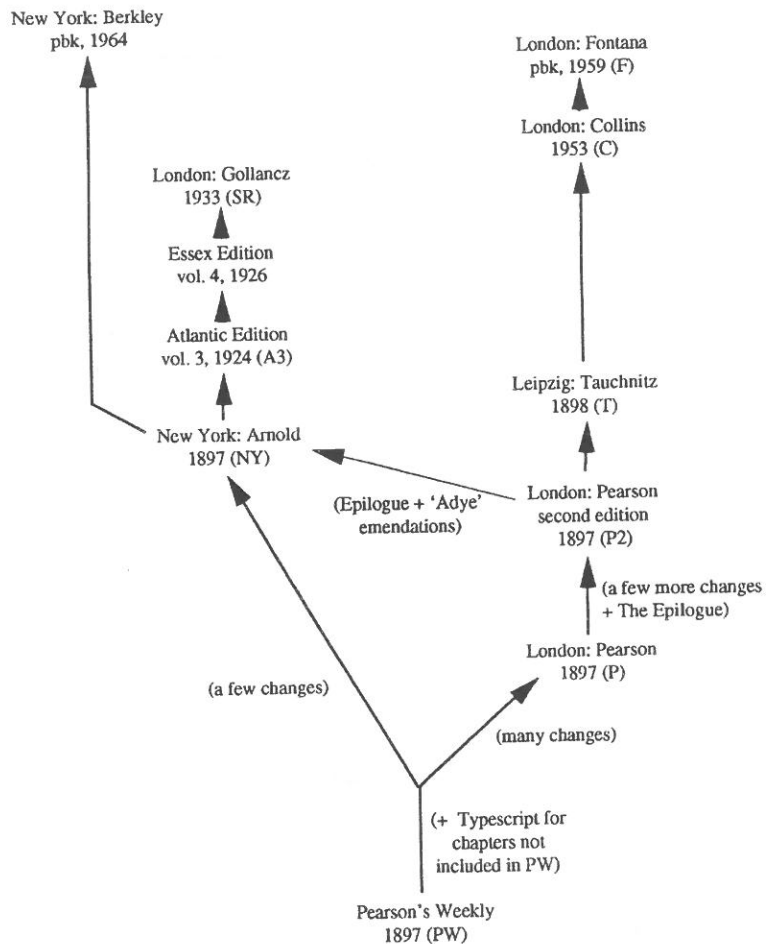
Aside from these differences, the second edition is the same as the first edition as described by Geoffrey Wells,⁴ including the incorrect numbering of the first page of the story with the numeral "2". The epilogue is not referred to in the Contents of P2.

There are some minor differences between the T and P2 editions. For example, the words "29th day of February" which appear in the first line of Chapter 3 of both P and P2 were altered to "9th day of February" in T. This correction was followed through in the subsequent British Collins edition (C), for which the guiding text must have been T, and on to the Fontana edition (F). The text "29th day of February" was retained in the NY edition, and was also included in the Atlantic and Essex editions, not being corrected to "9th day of February" in the American line of texts until the Gollancz edition of 1933.² The Tauchnitz edition should therefore lie between P2 and C in the main line of text development.

Taking account of the various textual differences, and assuming that the epilogue of T (and hence of P2) is earlier than the NY epilogue, the time lines for the development of the text of *The Invisible Man* should be revised to those shown below.

Acknowledgement

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Time lines for *The Invisible Man*. This version was prepared with the help of David Lake.

References

- 1 David Lake 'The Current Texts of Wells's Early SF Novels: Situation Unsatisfactory' *The Wellsian* (1988) pp. 3-12.
- 2 David Lake 'The Current Texts of Wells's Early SF Novels: Situation Unsatisfactory (Part 2)' *The Wellsian* (1989) pp. 21-36.
- 3 *The Invisible Man* (London, Pearson: 1897; 2nd edn), as held in the library of C. E. Little.
- 4 G. H. Wells *A Bibliography of the Works of H. G. Wells 1887-1925, with some Notes and Comments* (London: Routledge, 1925) pp. 9-10.

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