

## A59 LAUGHING ANNE 1923

LAUGHING ANNE | A PLAY BY | JOSEPH CONRAD | [*in green: cut of three palm trees by the sea*] | LONDON: MCMXXIII

*Collation:* [1–9]<sup>4</sup> pp. [1–8] 9–11 [12–14] 15–66 [67–68] [4]; 240 x 160 mm.; printed on Kelmcott hand-made paper watermarked with a hammer and anvil.

*Contents:* pp. 1–2, blank; p. 3, series half-title ‘[*in green: cut of grape vines and head lettered in hollow type*] THE | VINE | BOOKS [*the two O’s linked*]’; p. 4, certificate of issue ‘This edition is limited to 200 copies, | numbered and signed by the Author, | of which 175 are for sale. This is | No. [*numbered and signed by Conrad in blue-black ink*]’ p. 5, half-title ‘[*in green*] LAUGHING ANNE’; p. 6, blank; p. 7, title, p. 8, blank; pp. 9–11, ‘[*in green*] SUMMARY DESCRIPTION | [*in green*] OF PERSONAGES IN | [*in green*] THE PLAY’; p. 12, blank; p. 13, ‘[*in green*] ACT ONE’; p. 14, blank; pp. 15–66, text; p. 67, colophon ‘Laughing Anne. – By Joseph Conrad | [*leaf*] | This is the fourth of the VINE BOOKS issued | to subscribers from “The Bookman’s | Journal” Office, London. Set by | hand and printed in two colours | on Kelmscott hand-made paper | at The Morland Press, and | bound in full vellum | September 1923’; p. 68 and the last four pages, blank.

*Binding:* a. Limp vellum. Spine stamped in gold lengthwise from bottom to top ‘LAUGHING ANNE – A PLAY, BY JOSEPH CONRAD’. Top edge gilt, other edges untrimmed. White laid end-papers. Issued in a green linen finish paper covered box with a white paper label (121.5 x 11 mm.) on the hinged side printed in black lengthwise from bottom to top ‘LAUGHING ANNE: BY JOSEPH CONRAD’.

b. Grey smooth cloth. Spine stamped in gold from bottom to top ‘LAUGHING ANNE; A PLAY, BY JOSEPH CONRAD’. Top edge gilt, other edges untrimmed. End-papers of Kelmscott hand-made paper. This cheaper binding was used for the eight out of series depository copies. The following holograph note appears in the British Museum depository copy below the crossed out certificate of issue: “This is one of eight unsigned copies printed, in excess of the Edition of 200 described in the above certificate, for Library copyright copies, etc. Wilfred G. Partington”. The same note appears unsigned in the depository copies in the Bodelian and National Library of Scotland.

*Copies examined:*

*Notes*

*Laughing Anne* is a dramatization of Conrad’s story “Because of the Dollars” from the collection *Within the Tides* (1915). The dramatized version of the story was completed in December 1921 but, as John Galsworthy notes in his preface to the later publication of the play in *Laughing Anne & One Day More*, it presents physical drawbacks which will not go down on the stage. The play was never represented.

On 26 February 1923, Wilfred G. Partington, editor of the *Bookman’s Journal and Print Collector*, wrote to Pinker outlining an agreement for printing 175 copies of *Laughing Anne* of which 150 were to be offered for sale and ten copies were to be given to Conrad. Presumably, the other fifteen copies were for Mr. Partington’s own use. Before printing was finally accomplished in September, the total number of copies was increased from 175 to 200. According to

Partington's letter as transcribed on folio 41 of Miss Hallowes' notebook now in the Bodleian Library, it was originally planned to have the printed sheets ready for Conrad to sign before he left for America in April. As this proved impossible, printing was delayed until after Conrad's return to England.