

Coconut Grove, Florida  
February 1, 1934

Dear Mr. Van Lemp;

Your letter of January 1st was forwarded to me here and reached me quite promptly. It has of course interested me extremely. There is absolutely no question as to the identity of the "Elf" - she is my old boat which I was so fond of.

The "Elf" was built in 1888 by William H. Wilkinson for racing in the thirty foot class. She was designed and built by the George Lawley Corporation, or I think it was called at that time George Lawley & Sons, South Boston, Mass.

She was as you supposed cutter rig with a housing topmast and a much longer bowsprit than she has at present. Her main boom, I should say, extended almost as far over the stern as your mizzen boom. My recollection is that she carried altogether about 1500 feet of sail but of this I am not sure.

I bought her when she was two years old in 1890 and paid \$2000. for her which was a great bargain as she had cost about \$3500. I sold her in 1896 for \$1750. to a man who lived in Worcester whose name I do not remember. He altered her into a yawl and kept her for I think three or four years when he sold her to a professor at Cornell University who used her for many years on Lake Ithaca. After this she was bought by someone who used her on Long Island Sound and who wrote to me as you have about her. It is a great pity that her figurehead has been removed and lost as it enormously improved the lines of the bow. I suggest that you do nothing about replacing this until I get back to Newport in the spring - about May - where I have some excellent photographs of the "Elf" in her original

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rig taken during a race. The sails which she had and which I continually used during my ownership of her were as follows;

- A working jib set flying
- A forestaysail
- Balloon forestaysail
- Mainsail
- Storm trysail
- Baby Jib Topsail
- Reaching jib topsail
- Balloonjib topsail
- Spinnaker (large)
- Masthead spinnaker
- Working topsail
- Sprit topsail
- Club topsail

The spinnaker pole was of the extension type - a type which was outlawed about the time I bought the "Elf" but which I did not alter as I did not use her for racing. The spinnaker in its shorter form was used with the masthead spinnaker which was intended for heavy weather when the topmast was housed.

I made one of the first off shore cruises, <sup>in the Elf</sup> made by any small boat from Marblehead making the run from Marblehead to Halifax in sixty eight hours then spending a week in cruising back towards Cape Sable with another stright run / from there to Marblehead - completing the whole trip comfortably in my two weeks vacation with two days to spare.

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There is an excellent photograph of the "Elf" taken during a race which was published in a large collection of photographs of the racing yachts of that day published in 1890 or 1892 by Stebbins, of Boston, the leading yacht photographer of that time. This included all the leading yachts of the country. A copy of this ought to be available in the Philadelphia or New York Public Library and undoubtedly in the library of the New York Yacht Club and possibly in the library of the Philadelphia Corinthian Yacht Club.

I hope next summer you will be able to bring the "Elf" to Newport as I should enjoy very much meeting you and your wife and going over the "Elf" again.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours

*Henry Howard*  
Henry Howard

Mr. G. A. Van Lemp Jr.  
Pugh Road  
Wayne, Pa.

*P.S. Have just returned from a six weeks  
cruise in Bahamas, exploring many uncharted  
cays & Harbors - navigating principally by the  
color of the water - in which I have become quite  
expert - only charts available was in 1835 very  
inaccurate and only  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch to the mile,*