

15' Elf & 16'6" Elfyn

by Iain Oughtred

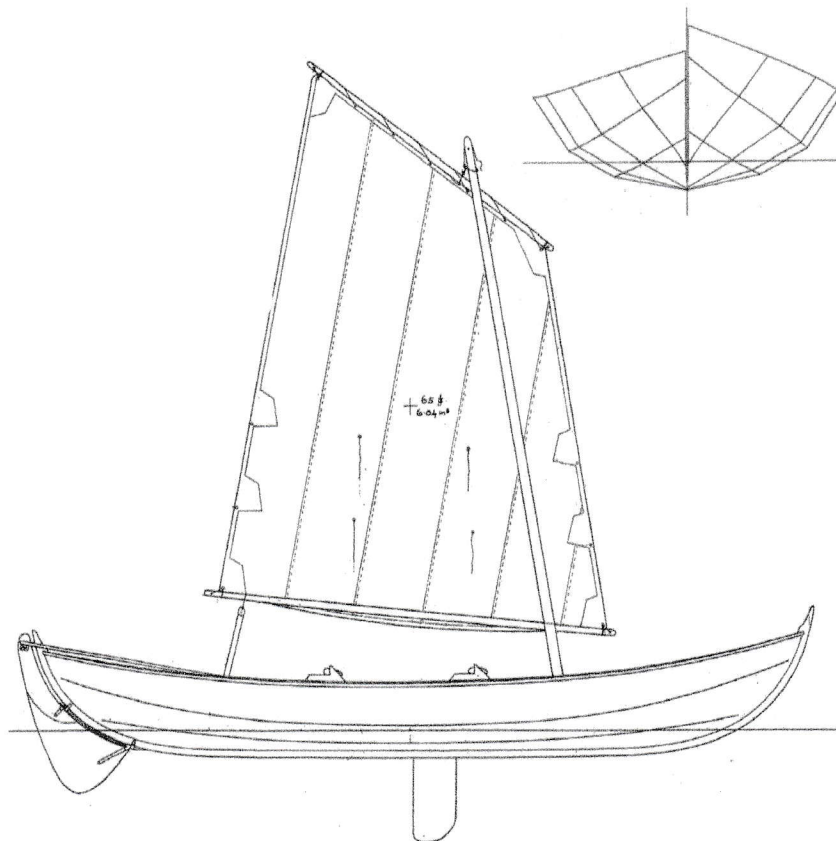
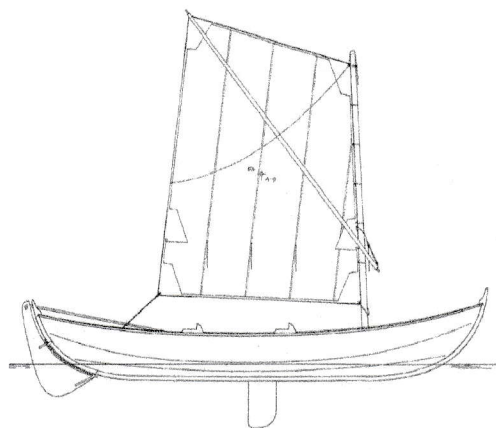
PARTICULARS

Elf

LOA	15'
Beam	4'5"
Draft	(db up) 7" (db down) 2'2"
Weight	about 140 lbs
Sail area	53 sq ft

Elfyn

LOA	16'6"
Beam	4'9½"
Draft (db up)	7"
(db down)	2'5"
Weight	about 180 lbs
Sail area	67 sq ft



The best of Norway's small craft approach aesthetic and functional perfection. Iain Oughtred chose to not tamper with the results of evolution when designing Elf and her larger cousin, Elfyn. He simply drew traditional Norwegian faering (four-oared) hulls for plywood-epoxy lapstrake construction, thereby making these timeless boats more accessible to amateur builders.

When building either of these faerings, we'll need to make and set up a more-or-less conventional backbone. (If this task seems too daunting, or if we simply prefer the advantages of a narrow flat bottom, we might build one of Oughtred's Skerrieskiffs, page 26.) The hull's strakes must be shaped and beveled, but the strength and gap-filling properties of epoxy might help to fill in for perfection. Of course, that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to get everything just right! Many years experience with this construction at the WoodenBoat waterfront have proven boats of such manufacture to be strong, light, and easy to keep.

Although Oughtred's drawings show auxiliary

sailing rigs, these faerings are primarily wonderful pulling boats meant for rowing in calm and rough water. Each has a strong sheerline that sweeps down to amidships from a bold stem and sternpost. The body plan shows a narrow waterline. Both ends of the hull are fine (sharp) below the water but gain volume, hence buoyancy, dramatically above the waterline. Elf and Elfyn are smart enough to slice through small waves and to climb over the big ones.

In keeping with the primary means of propulsion, Oughtred details an appropriate pair of 9'6" oars with blades that are long (3') and narrow (3"). After rowing Elf, the designer tells us: "She handles well in seriously rough water. I've had her in steep, tall waves where few boats her size could live. She tracks extraordinarily well."

These double-enders go together easily, yet they retain the practical elegance of their forebears.