



Rosenfeld

William F. Crosby

ON MONDAY, August 17, Bill Crosby died after a short illness. He was taken away at the age of sixty-two during what might have proven to be one of the most active parts of a very active life.

It is a difficult duty for me to write these lines. I knew Bill well and liked him. It was he who hired me to be his associate editor on *The Rudder*, and while we worked together we had a great deal of fun. Quick, intelligent and with an unquenchable sense of humor, he made work appear play. The days passed easily and for me profitably since I never failed to acquire knowledge from his vast store of experience.

Bill was gifted and his versatility never failed to amaze me. We might raise some point in conversation and before I knew it he would be sketching free-hand in great detail the top hamper of a revolutionary man of war.

Bill was a prolific writer and at one time there were eight books of his in print. The best known perhaps is his now standard text on amateur boat construction.

To watch him design a boat was a pleasure. Neat, quick and accurate, he was the most rapid draftsman I ever observed. He probably is responsible for more boats than any man in the field. Besides the plans which were published there were those for private owners throughout the civilized world.

Of course his greatest claim to fame is the Snipe. This smart small one-design sloop enabled literally thousands of people to enter the sport and, what is more, it gave amateur builders a chance to enter the ranks of smart racing skippers with little expense.

Bill Crosby was editor of *The Rudder* for about twelve years preceding World War II. This period was

one of blossoming for our venerable publication. He believed in and gave the reader practical material, always trying to aid the newcomer. His boats were a feature, short clear designs with the amateur builder in mind. He always tried to bring as many people as possible to the enjoyment of the water and the sport he loved so much.

When the war broke out Bill, active and energetic, began to chafe at the bit. I saw then that he wanted to go out and do his part, that editing became too confining for him. He designed war boats of all types, some on speculation, others as proposals. There were fast freighters, fireboats, torpedo boats, and other conceptions far ahead of the day, rolling off his board.

He finally gave in to the urgings of his friend Pembroke Huckins, famous yacht builder in Jacksonville, Florida, and joined him as designer to help develop fast navy torpedo boats. After the completion of that program he went over to the Gibbs Corporation as designer in charge of new boats and conversions.

Upon the termination of the war Bill Crosby took over the editorship of *Motor Boat*. I was pleased and proud to note how efficiently he entered power boating, and he guided this interesting publication skillfully until his death.

Needless to say, his niche in the world of yachting is both prominent and secure. I saw him a few days before he died, he was happy, bouncy and full of energy . . . in fact, he belied his age by many years.

Let us all think of William F. Crosby not as a person who has ceased to exist, but as a sailor who has departed for another port . . .

BORIS LAUER-LEONARDI