

## [Roger Miller](#)

A bit of Gerig historical trivia:

I included below an old artists drawing of the actual ship that brought our Gerig line to America in 1864 (only one year after the ship was built and launched). The ship was named Bellona which was later sold and renamed the Benbreck. It was shipwrecked in 1889 along the shore of the Texel Coast of Holland. At least as late as 1952, its rusted hulk was still visible on the beach (see photos below). The location of the wreck is located on a map below (blue marker surrounded with a light grey circle). This reminds me of the Wreck of the Peter Iredale on the Oregon Coast.

Here is a brief historical writeup of the ship I found on the Internet:

"The BELLONA was an iron built ship, launched in 1863 by Smith & Rodger of Glasgow for the London and New York Steamship Line.

She was a 1914 gross ton vessel, length 300.3 feet x beam 34.2 feet, and holds 24.1 feet deep (making her twice as long as the sailing ships). She had a clipper stem, one funnel, three masts (rigged for sails), iron hull, and a single screw with a speed of 10 knots. She could accommodate 20-1st class, 50-2nd class and 500-3rd class passengers.

The BELLONA left London on her maiden voyage to Havre and New York on September 26, 1863 and stayed on this service until her last trip for this company on April 29, 1870. She was then sold to the Hughes Line of Liverpool who used her on their UK to Bombay service. Resold in 1882, she was renamed BENBRACK, fitted with compound engines and wrecked on January 23, 1889 off Texel, Holland."

The ship lies 72 miles north (2 hours by car) of Amsterdam.

If you visit Holland, and the sea has removed enough of the sand, I imagine you can still visit and see the remains of the ship. Texel Island is known for its fantastic beaches and the marvelous nature reserves. As well as the thousands of sheep, a landmark of Texel is the picturesque lighthouse in the north of the island.

1.) Modern professional photo (by a Dutch photographer) of what I believe is the Bellona/ Benbrack Shipwreck on Texel Island of Holland. So it appears to be still visible and accessible on the beach. <https://www.werkaandemuur.nl/.../Scheepswrak-op-Textel/238705>

2.) I included a map of Holland that shows the Island of Texel (bordered with a thin red line) and its relation to Amsterdam - it lies north of the city.

3.) Here is the translation of a Dutch news reference from 1894. It reveals it was too costly to remove the ship so they left it buried in the sand.

"Texel, June 15, 1894. The wreck of the English steamship BENBRACK has not been demolished for a few days now. Excavating the submarine is no longer useful, while the work involves too great a cost to continue. The wreck is buried in the sand."