

The Ghost Ship Carol A. Deering: Still an Outer Banks Mystery ^[1]

The Ghost Ship *Carol A. Deering*: Still an Outer Banks Mystery

By Kelly Agan, Government & Heritage Library, 2014



Photograph of the *Carol A. Deering*, date unknown.
From the Mariners Museum, presented online by
the National Park Service, Cape Hatteras National
Seashore.

^[2]On January 31, 1921, the impressive five-masted commercial schooner *Carol A. Deering* was found wrecked on Diamond Shoals off Cape Hatteras. At the time, she was returning to Newport News from a trip to Brazil. Built in 1919 by the G. G. Deering Company in Bath, Maine – a town known for its boatworks – the ship was among the last wooden schooners built before their eclipse by iron shipbuilding.

Two days prior to discovery of the wreck, the Cape Lookout lightship reported seeing the ship. On the morning of the 3rd, the Coast Guard discovered the foundered boat, ostensibly abandoned, life-boats missing. When the seas calmed four days later permitting the Coast Guard to reach the ship, abandonment was confirmed, crew, navigational equipment, belongings, and documents gone, but with a twist: dinner was on the stove and the captain's cabin chaos. A few months later, the ship was hauled from the rocks and dynamited to eliminate hazard to other ships.

The mysterious circumstances of the wreck became the subject of investigation which included a visit to Dare County from the FBI. Various explanations for the cause surfaced, including effects of the Bermuda Triangle, Bolshevik pirates, and mutiny. Although such explanations were discredited by investigation, the cause remains a mystery.

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Image Credit:

[*Carol A. Deering*]. Photograph. [n.d.]. From the Mariners Museum. Presented by the National Park Service, Cape Hatteras National Seashore: "Ghost Ship of the Outer Banks."
<https://www.nps.gov/caha/learn/historyculture/theghostship.htm> ^[2] (accessed December 10, 2014).

Subjects:

Mysteries [3]

Ships [4]

Authors:

Agan, Kelly [5]

Origin - location:

Dare County [6]

Cape Hatteras [7]

Diamond Shoals [8]

13 December 2014 | Agan, Kelly

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Links

[1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/ghost-ship-caroll-deering-still> [2] <https://www.nps.gov/caha/learn/historyculture/theghostship.htm> [3]

<https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/mysteries> [4] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/ships> [5]

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<https://www.ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/cape> [8] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/diamond>