

*Steamer Anna C. Wilson at Brittain and Elliot Shipyard, 1912*

# SHIPBUILDING

Reuben Rogers and Charles Bird operated a shipyard, first on Hoffman Street, and later at the site of the present-day Butler Restaurant. They constructed the steamship *Bon Voyage*, which at 153 feet long and 500 tons was the largest ship built in Saugatuck. It had 65 state rooms with running water and electricity – it was 20 years before the village of Saugatuck had the same!

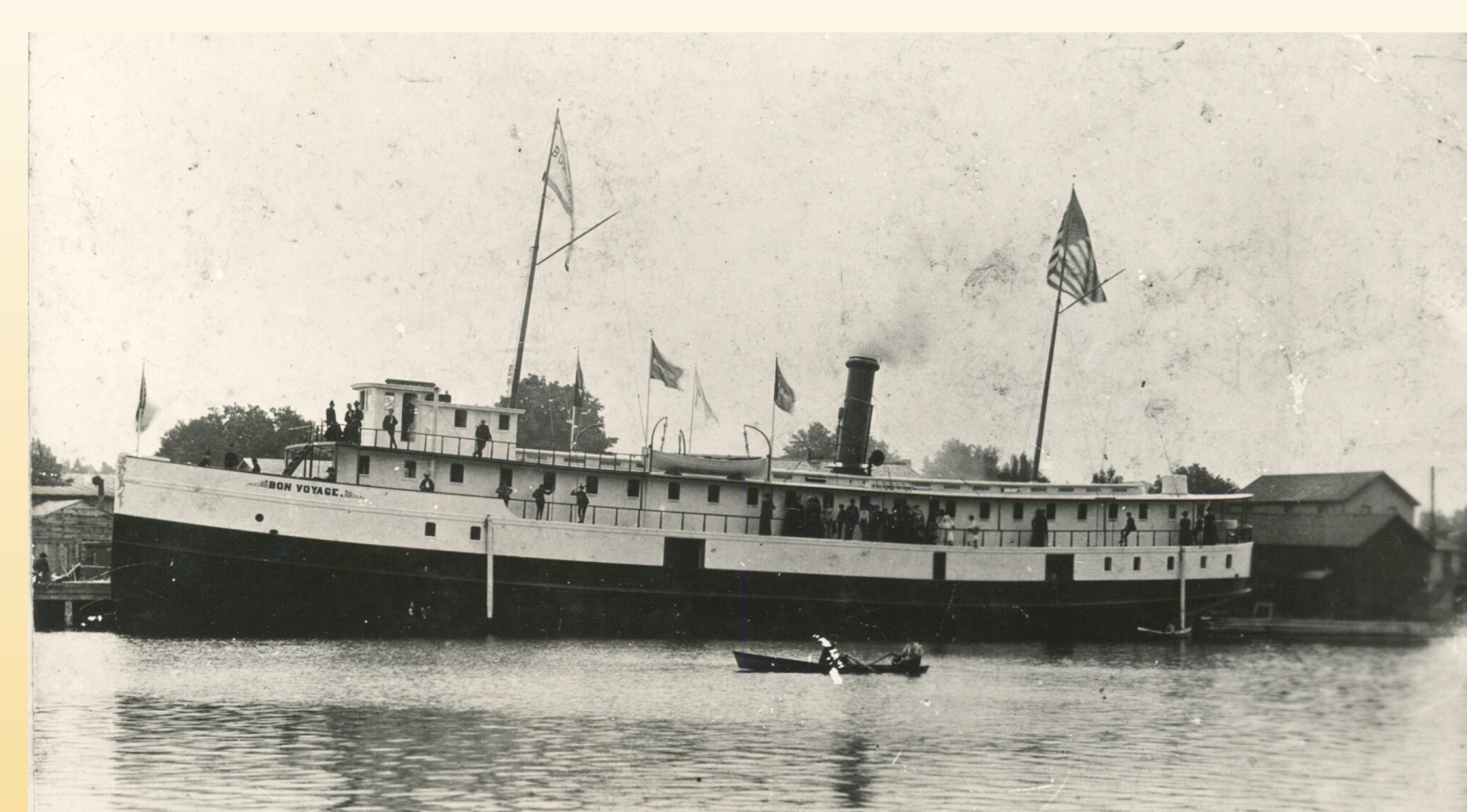
Ralph C. Brittain and James Elliott operated a shipyard on the river between Mary and Main Streets in Wicks Park. The ships *Charles McVea* and *R.C. Reid* were built and launched here, and both went on to serve Saugatuck, carrying both passengers and fruit.



*Steamer Bon Voyage under construction, Rogers & Bird Shipyard, 1891*



*Steamer Charles McVea at Brittain and Elliot shipyard, 1888*



*Steamer Bon Voyage completed*

Among the last of the large steamships made in Saugatuck was the *Anna C. Wilson*, built in 1912. Another fruit and passenger steamer from the Brittain and Elliot shipyard, the *Anna C. Wilson* made frequent trips between Saugatuck and Chicago. By the 1910s, railroads and highways created greater competition for freight services and new industries moved into Saugatuck's waterfront. Today boats continue to dock along the banks of the Kalamazoo where steamships were once made.



*Launch of the steamer R.C. Reid from Brittain and Elliot shipyard in 1889*