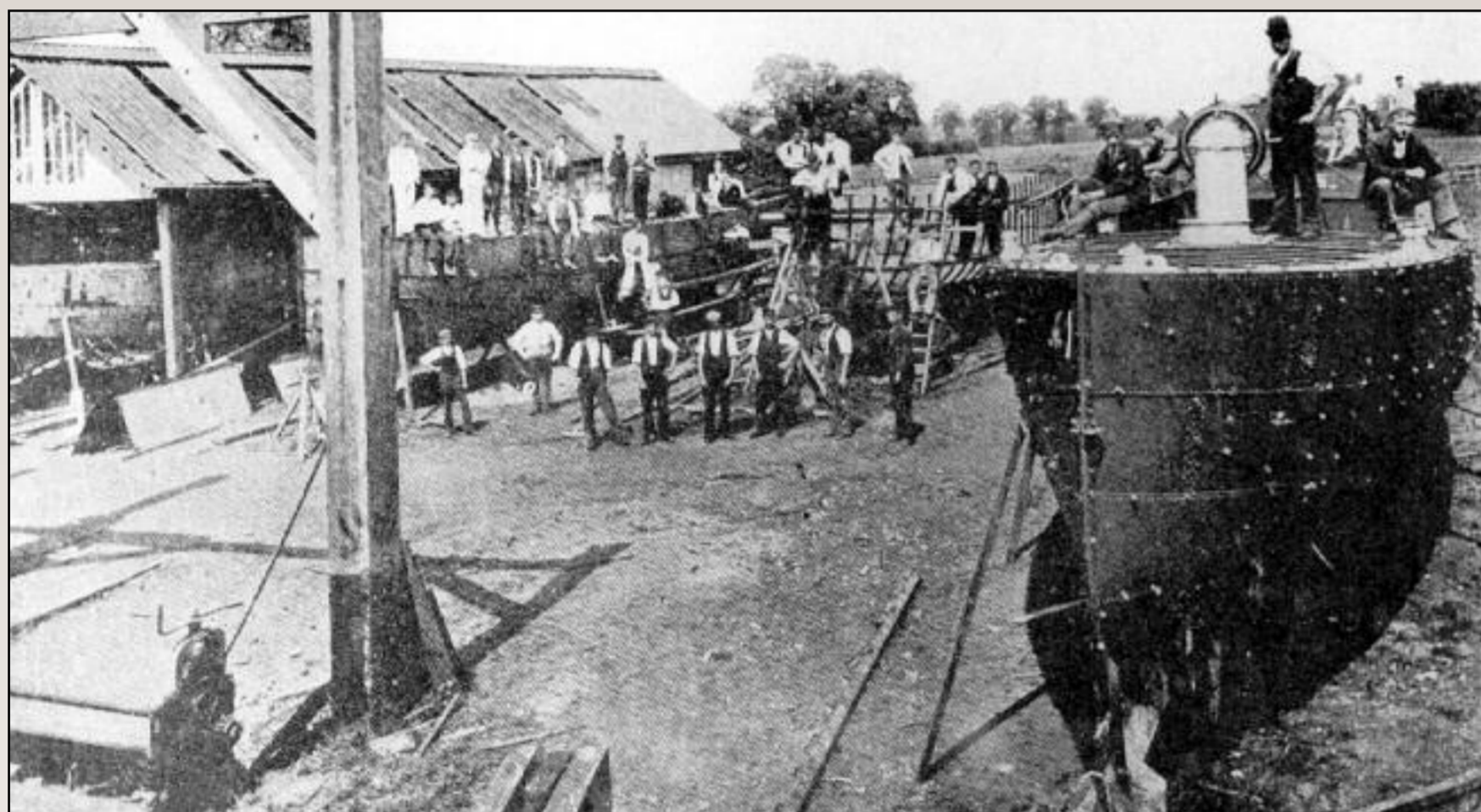
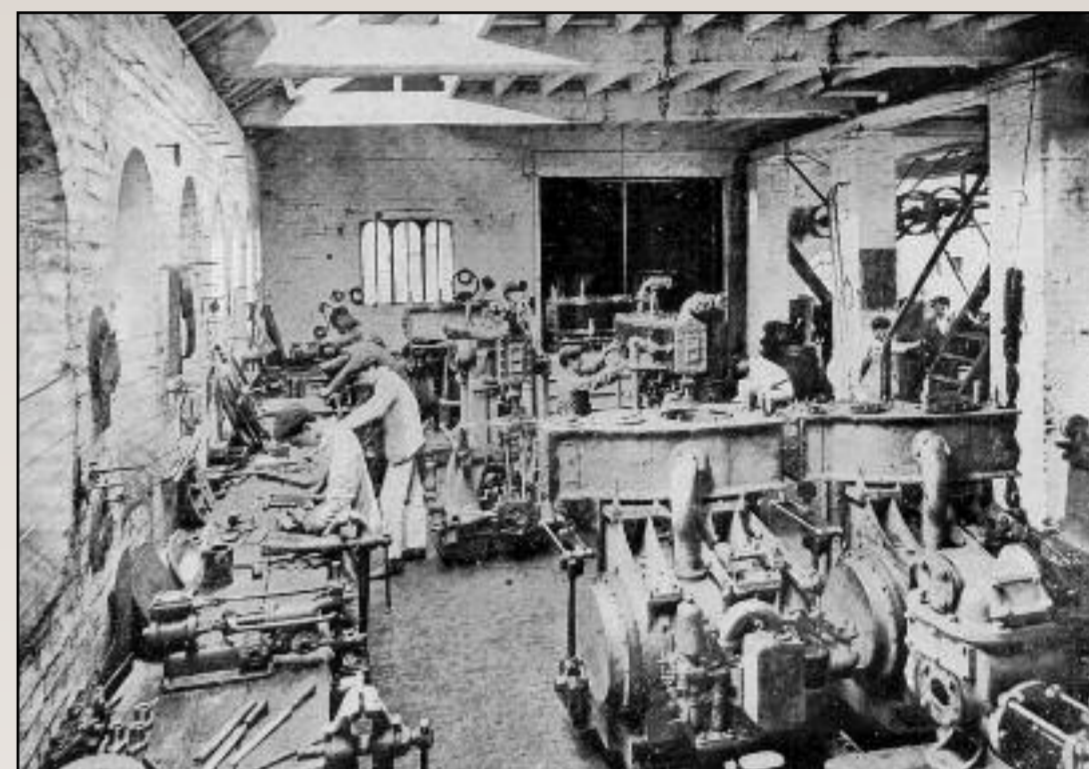


The Watling Works

Boatbuilding in Stony Stratford



The Hayes Boatyard



The Hayes fitting shop



Taking the vessel to the water



Edward Hayes



A steam powered truck towing a vessel along Stony Stratford High Street



Housing on the site of the old works in Stony Stratford

Unlikely though it may seem being so far from the sea, the historic coaching town of Stony Stratford was once known internationally for its marine heritage.

The Watling Works were managed by three generations of the Hayes family. Starting as a highly acclaimed agricultural engineering business in the late 1840s it evolved to produce steam engines and marine vessels.

Many of the boats were of standard patterns, commissioned by overseas companies and sent as far as South America, Russia, India, and South Africa.

“Specials” including gunboats, firefloats and even a paddle steamer. High specification individual commissions of launches and steam yachts were also built.

After construction, the vessels were towed by traction engine to be launched broadside into the canal at Old Stratford for fitting out, before travelling via the Grand Junction Canal to the Thames for trials.

The firm eventually ceased trading in 1925. The works in London Road incorporated into a garage business which traded on the site until recently, being replaced by a housing development.

