

Hotchkiss Street,⁶ Clipsham's carriage works and blacksmith shop, established in 1877, as well as a "sash, door and planing mill."

In 1887 Gravenhurst was incorporated as a town. By this time its population had grown to nearly 2,000, and among its acquisitions were an enduring weekly newspaper (The Gravenhurst Banner), a Baptist Church, the Presbyterian manse, a library, an office of The Bell Telephone Company, 2 dentists, a veterinarian, a furniture and undertaking business, and 3 more resident physicians. (One of the latter, Dr. Albert P. Cornell, was listed on Norman Bethune's birth certificate as having been the "accoucheur.")

That same year, on September 22, disaster struck the town, as almost the whole business section of the main street was burned down by a fire which began in Mowry's Foundry.⁷ The Gravenhurst fire brigade "could at first not be got into working order." According to the Orillia newspaper report, Bracebridge and Barrie brigades were rushed to the town by special trains. "Bracebridge rendered some assistance but the Barrie brigades arrived too late to do much." No

6 The company was relocated in a new building on the present site in the 1880s. That structure was torn down and its replacement erected in the 1950s. Brown's Beverages is claimed to be "the oldest continuing industry" in the town.

7 Only 4 months before the fire, the new municipal council had passed a bylaw which prohibited the erection of any building which was neither brick, stone nor concrete within stated limits of the town without a permit from the council. After the fire, the limits of the town referred to in the bylaw were extended.