

## Historic Facts

In addition to the classroom previsit, you may wish to do some supplementary activities with your class. If you are a new teacher, or do not currently have any supplementary materials, please call Anne Dealy (315-789-5151) or Fran Barbieri (315-568-8412) for suggestions and materials or see the Geneva Historical Society website ([www.genevahistoricalsociety.com](http://www.genevahistoricalsociety.com)). Go to the Educator's Page and scroll down to Taking Tea. Below are some facts that might help students understand the period, before or after their visit.

### The world of 1850

- U.S. population was 23 million
- 3.2 million Americans were enslaved
- NYS population was 3 million
- Ontario County's population was 43,929
- Seneca County's population was 25,441
- Monroe County's population was 87,650
- The president was Zachary Taylor.
- NYC was the largest city in the U.S. with 515,547 inhabitants. Philadelphia was second with 340,045.
- Wisconsin was the newest state (admitted 1848)
- Los Angeles and San Francisco become cities, although California doesn't become a state until September, as part of the Compromise of 1850.
- The nation is embroiled in controversy over the expansion of slavery and the admission of states in the territory acquired after the Mexican-American War. The Compromise of 1850, including the Fugitive Slave Law, sets the stage for Civil War in 11 years.
- Nathaniel Hawthorne publishes *The Scarlet Letter*.
- Popular American writers of the time were: James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Susan Warner and Jacob Abbott.
- Recent popular music included: Stephan Foster's "Camptown Races"; "Oh, Susannah"; "The Last Rose of Summer"; and "My Country 'Tis of Thee"
- Swedish singer Jenny Lind tours the United States and becomes the nation's first musical celebrity.

### The world of 1890

- U.S. population was 62 million
- NYS population was 6 million
- Ontario County's population was 48,453
- Seneca County's population was 28,227
- Monroe County's population was 189,586
- NYC was the largest city in the U.S. with 2.5 million inhabitants
- The president was Benjamin Harrison, who won despite Grover Cleveland's larger share of the popular vote.
- Jane Addams founded Hull House, the first settlement house, in Chicago
- Average pay for a skilled worker, \$20 per week, for unskilled, \$10 per week
- First skyscraper (10 stories) built in Chicago in 1885
- North and South Dakota, Montana and Washington were new states (admitted 1889)
- May 13, 1890, Johnstown (Pennsylvania) flood kills an estimated 5,000 people when a dam bursts 18 miles above Johnstown.
- Mark Twain publishes *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.
- Popular authors were Twain, Henry James, Louisa May Alcott and Walt Whitman.
- Recent popular music included: "Oh Promise Me"; "The Robin"; and John Phillip Sousa's "The Washington Post".