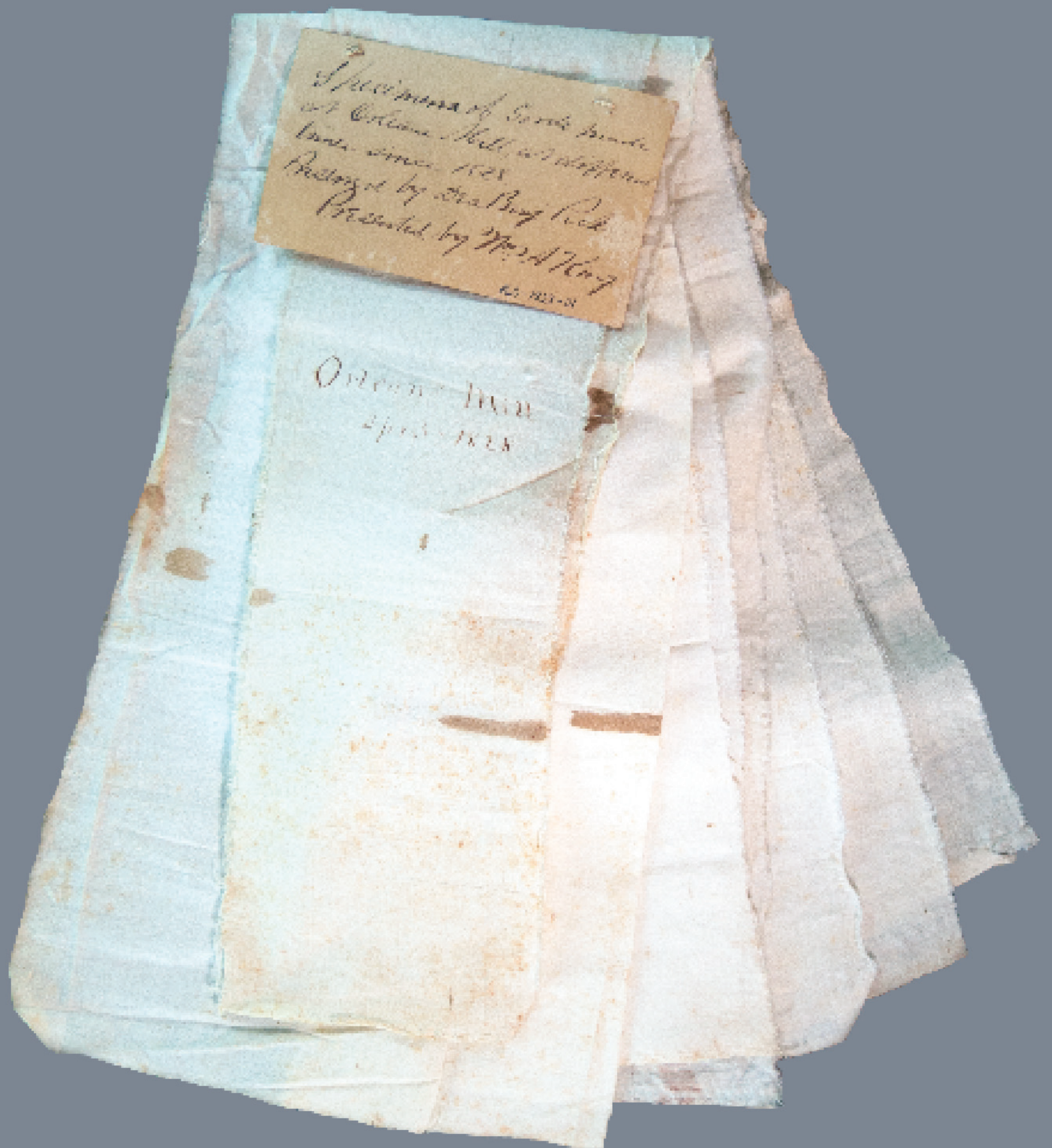


A NEW AMERICA (1783-1815)

Cloth from the Orleans Mill

This sample of cotton was manufactured at the Orleans Mill on the Palmer River. In 1826, the Orleans Manufacturing Company took over operations on the site where various mills had been in existence since 1662 (the first on the site was a grist mill). The Orleans Manufacturing Co. produced cotton goods with high-quality raw material from New Orleans, a major player in the American textile economy. The Orleans mill was one of the first in America to introduce the power loom, which harnessed steam power to mechanically produce cloth from cotton thread.

1828-160-001



1786

Following the Revolutionary War, Rehoboth and its neighboring towns face economic and political uncertainty. Rehoboth votes to establish a committee that will meet with other towns in Bristol County in order to “consult on the rights of the people” and “petition the General Court for redress of grievances.”

Shays’ Rebellion takes place in Springfield, Massachusetts, when farmers attack an armory in protest of high taxes and widespread debt.

1790

The first textile mill in America, Slater Mill, is constructed in Pawtucket, parts of which fall within the bounds of old Rehoboth. The Industrial Revolution that follows transforms Rehoboth into a textile manufacturing town. Mills in Rehoboth Village and Perryville, and at the Shad Factory Pond, all contribute to the growing cotton industry.

1812

After years of tension between eastern and western residents of Rehoboth regarding representation in legislation—including a town meeting where blows are struck—the State Legislature of Massachusetts grants permission to divide the settlement. The western section breaks off from Rehoboth to become the town of Seekonk.

The Three-Fifths clause in the U.S. Constitution is made official, which counts three-fifths of each state’s slave total toward its population numbers. This formula affords Southern states more political power.

1787

The cotton gin, which revolutionized cotton production, is invented and patented by Eli Whitney in New Haven, Connecticut.

1794