

When History Repeats Itself: South Carolina's all too familiar battle with epidemics

Epidemic outbreaks are nothing new to the human population. For thousands of years, people from around the world have endured, studied, and actively fought viruses. Millions have lost, but millions have also won. South Carolina is not unique, and it's also not alone.

Fresh air, fertile land, clean water, plenty of food, and bountiful natural resources: the 1670 settlement on the banks of the Ashley River provided everything the Lord Proprietors promised when promoting the Carolina Colony to potential settlers.

They did not mention disease or illness.

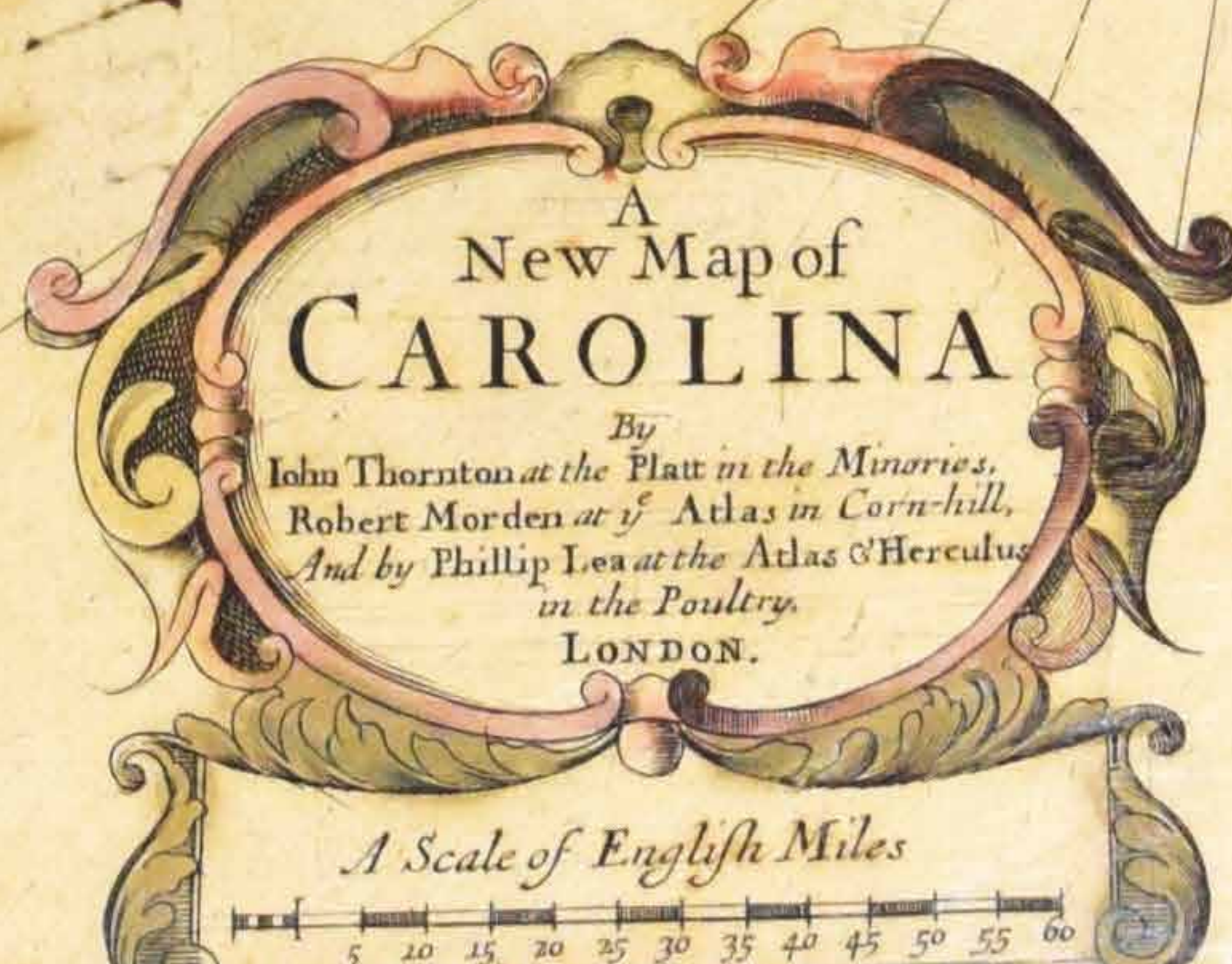
The only illnesses that appeared were related to dysentery, from drinking stagnant water, or a disease that emerged on the voyage from Europe.

"We are generally verry healthfull it being a very rare thing here to hear of anybodies death. Some years about July and August wee have the fevar and ague among us, but it is not mortall."
-Letter from a Carolina Colonist, 1680

In 1672, the settlement only boasted 400 residents, but by 1680, the population grew to 1,200 and in 1682, reached 2,200.

The boom in settlers sparked the need for a new settlement with more land to grow and access to deeper water for trade ships.

The colonists moved to Charleston's current location on the peninsula, and settled in for 350 years of epidemics.



The story continues...