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T:*IGNORAMUS Today,*

IGNORAMUS Tomorrow.

Introduction: This quarter, I worked on multiple ballads that discussed variety of topics. One that stood out to me surrounded the word “ignoramus”. Currently used to refer to an ignorant or unthinking person, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “ignoramus” as “The endorsement formerly made by a Grand Jury upon a bill or indictment presented to them, when they considered the evidence for the prosecution insufficient to warrant the case going to a petty jury” (n.1.a). The ballad of “*IGNORAMUS: An Excellent New Song*” (UTHRC_DA_448_A233_1681_001) describes the lack of equity and justice throughout the nation. Similarly, “*A NEW IGNORAMUS: Being the second New SONG,*” (UTHRC_DA_448_A56_1651_001) continues to describe similar tensions throughout multiple political and religious groups, among them the Whiggs, Tories, and Protestants. These ballads were used the way a person today would receive their news from an ad on TV or a post on social media. They were quick, informative, and gave the people enough information to spark an interest and curiosity on the matters of the world.

Discussion: This quarter I worked as a Research Assistant for EBBA. This was my second quarter working for EBBA and my first time working with raw transcriptions. This was something I really enjoyed due to my studies in translation. Not many difficulties arose during

my transcriptions; problems would appear every now and then when it was unclear whether letters were capitalized or not. Aside from that, problem letters such as “j” and “f,” or “s” and “f,” could be solved by looking at context clues: the consonants that surround them and the theme of the ballad itself. I learned that importance that rhyme had during this time. Because they are ballads, they are meant to be sung. What surprised me was the cheeriness behind them. Like political cartoons, many will speak of serious topics and poke fun at them. This is what makes them appealing to the audience not only during their publication, but in modern times as well. Printing during this period was a lengthy and tiresome practice. Thus, even though ballads were expendable, they informed and entertained people in witty ways, making them worthy of mass printing. In the future, I expect to use the observation and deductive skills I have gained in working for EBBA.

Conclusion: In working on these ballads, I did grow a bit tired. The ballads themselves were entertaining, but the content seems to echo that which is still encountered today. EBBA continues to show me the relevance between the Early Modern period and the 21st century. It is said that fashion comes back in style, history repeats itself, etc., these ballads seem to me to be the perfect example of this.