Introduction

This chapter examines a campaign of criticism, reform, and abolition directed at hiring fairs and farm service by Church of England clergymen in the East Riding of Yorkshire during the mid-Victorian period. Hiring fairs were the traditional venue for the creation of annual contracts between farmers and the various categories of farm servant, male and female. Farm servants were hired on yearly contracts and “lived in” on the farm. Though in decline by the Victorian period in much of southern England, farm service and hiring fairs remained important in many northern and midland counties. In the East Riding, for example, farm servants constituted 33 percent of the male agricultural labor force in 1851. Wherever farm service remained important these fairs continued to exhibit vitality. They also tended to become the focus for moral outrage, and the East Riding of Yorkshire provides a salient example of this tendency during the mid-Victorian years. Here, a predominantly Anglican attempt to undermine the hiring fairs, and the farm service system that underpinned them, began in the early 1850s and lasted until the mid-1870s. This campaign, which has interesting echoes for modern campaigns aimed at young people and their social practices, was conducted through print outlets in particular.

Hiring Fairs

In the 1850s the campaign centered on introducing a new form of contract as the basis of relations between masters and servants. Farmers were urged to hire only those servants who possessed a written testimony of their moral
character and conduct over the past year. In seeking to emphasize the importance of such criteria at the point of engagement, the campaign hoped to reassert a moral dimension into relations between farmers and servants. The clerical view was that this dimension had become neglected and was in urgent need of restoration. This ideal of replacing verbal with written contracts remained throughout the campaign but was never fully realized. There is some evidence that written "characters," or references, gained currency among female farm servants, but virtually all male and many female servants consistently rejected the new practice.

A second phase of attack, developed from the early 1860s, focused on measures designed to compete with and erode the carnivalesque excesses associated with hiring fairs. Their absence of restraint and the opportunities they offered for the public and promiscuous mingling of the young of both sexes was a source of great anxiety. Their supposed effect upon the moral characters of female servants was considered especially regrettable. In attempting to draw servants away from the market places, streets, and public houses, reformers offered alternative hiring facilities in nearby rooms. They also attempted to compete with the commercial entertainment provided by publicans and showmen by offering alternative "rational recreations" in the form of, for example, brass bands and indoor concerts. The provision of indoor hiring rooms and the alternative rational recreations was predominantly aimed at female servants. It was designed to remove women from the dangers that prevailed in the "public sphere" of the hiring fair and to segregate male and female hiring. From the early 1860s segregation by sex gradually established itself as the norm at most of the East Riding's larger hiring fairs. This was the major long-term achievement of the campaign.

For some opponents, however, this was far from being sufficient. Hiring fairs continued to be popular, and though most females no longer stood in the open market to be hired, once hiring was finished they rejoined male servants in enjoying the excesses of the day. The continued vitality of the East Riding's hiring fairs and the passing of legislation facilitating easier abolition of fairs (in the form of the Fairs Act 1871) stimulated a final flurry of activity by their opponents in the 1870s. This phase of agitation involved an attempt to mobilize support for separate hirings for men and women or the legal suppression of hiring fairs in the East Riding. This final phase had little support and enjoyed no success. Although rural clergymen continued to complain of the iniquitous influences of hiring fairs and farm service, there was a gradual decline of their antipathy to them from the 1870s. This chapter will now explore further the meaning and nature of this campaign by analyzing it through reference to the concept of moral panic.
Immoral and Corrupt?

Cohen, in the first systematic use of the concept of moral panic in Britain, focused on an episode in the 1950s that emerged around a few minor gatherings and gang fights at seaside resorts. He demonstrated a process of amplification, construction of a stereotypical image of young adolescents that portrayed them as deviant “folk devils.” This labeling then served to motivate and legitimize repressive and counterproductive responses from the police and the courts. For Cohen, panics were likely to occur at times of social change, and part of their function was to act as a spontaneous safety valve for the cultural unease generated by social change. However, within this process, the media and “moral entrepreneurs” who utilize the media play a pivotal role in amplifying these anxieties, giving them greater focus and mobilizing support for control and the restoration of traditional values.

Encouraged by Cohen’s suggestion that moral panics were a persistent feature of societies over time, a number of historians have transported the concept of moral panic and used it in their interpretation of public anxieties about street disorder and crime and the censorious campaigns that these generated. These studies have indicated that the concept, and its associated methodology, may prove instructive for the examination and analysis of the campaign against hiring fairs in the East Riding. This chapter will now attempt to utilize to this end the classic Cohen-type model of moral panic.

Cohen’s social anxiety approach model suggests that panics begin with a discourse defining something or someone as constituting a threat to the values and interests of society. Hiring fairs were portrayed in letters, tracts, and sermons as cockpits of corruption which attracted the young and exposed them to temptations that were extreme in their scale and intensity. A hiring fair was, according to a memorial issued by the York Diocesan Board of Education, “an assembly from which all moral control is simply excluded” and in which “the very force of numbers aids the work of corruption.” Because custom demanded that young men and women had to attend the fairs in order to get hired, it was suggested that this meant that the innocent and unwary who otherwise would not have chosen to visit them were exposed to their excesses. One leading opponent, the Reverend James Skinner of Driffield, claimed for example that “Many we know have gone to the statutes only for the purpose of being hired, their passions have been excited at the dancing saloon and their senses dulled by intoxicating drinks, and thus they have gone home divested of all self-respect, too often to begin a life of sin and wickedness.” Clergymen also attacked the hiring practices of farmers who, they alleged, neglected considerations of moral worth and “hired servants, of both sexes, solely on the recommendations of brute strength.”

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It was often at this point that the moral threat of the hiring fairs was linked to a perceived problem within living-in farm service. For many rural clergymen, behavior at the fairs was regarded as a reflection of the degenerate condition of farm service as a social institution. The clerical ideal was that farm service should act as a regime of moral superintendence and social control. They expected farmers to exercise discipline over their servants, care for their moral welfare, and encourage regular attendance at church. Their critique of contemporary practice suggested that farm service had deviated from this paternalistic ideal and lost its moral dimension. East Riding farmers, it was alleged, now treated their servants as “mere machines who must get through a certain amount of work” and took little or no interest in their character and conduct. This absence of care and control was regarded as having bred a sense of alienation which manifested itself in fractious and defiant behavior. It was claimed that farmers faced “the constant misconduct of their servants, and the total want on their part of any means of control over them” and that servants were “showing by their insubordination and wilfulness that the hand of authority sits lightly upon them.” The sexual promiscuity that many clergy believed rife within farm service was ascribed to farmers allowing servants to “associate together without any moral restraint” and dismissing “open and habitual fornication” among them as “mere sweetheating.” For many, therefore, the critique of hiring fairs was also a critique of farm service. Because farm service was no longer informed by paternal control and Christian morality, it had become a fallen institution generating sin and disorder.

Churchmen were especially irritated by the consequences that the custom of hiring farm servants at fairs and boarding them on farms had for what was termed “village morals.” In systemic fashion, this combination presented them with an irritating visitation each November when a clutch of new farm servants was hired into their parish. Clergymen came to regard the young farm servants (generally not born in the parishes into which they were hired) as disruptive and demoralizing influences. They were often perceived and portrayed by clergymen as rootless delinquents whose “deep degradation,” “ignorance,” and “sensuality and drunkenness” served to make them a source of moral corruption and social disorder. For some, this was the most “injurious” consequence of the system of hiring fairs and farm service: “by its means, bad and profligate persons are disseminated over the country far and wide, to work as much evil as a bad example can work in a year’s time in one parish and then move on to pursue the same work of corruption in another.”

Thus the campaign against hiring fairs did largely conform to aspects of the model outlined above. Within the discourse of panic, farm servants were presented as “folk devils” who, having been demoralized by hiring fairs and
farm service, threatened the morality of rural society. The campaign also called for remedial action in the form of the restoration of control within farm service and an end to hiring fairs. The first phase of the campaign, for example, in advocating contracts based upon character references sought to reassert moral considerations at the point of their creation. It also hoped that this would continue throughout the duration of the contract, and beyond, as farmers came to realize the advantages of greater discipline. Advocates emphasized, for example, the “additional authority and power” a master would enjoy:

by having it always in his power in the event of wilful negligence, disobedience, or misconduct, to threaten that he should, at the year’s end, decline giving a satisfactory account of his behaviour; for were this system universally adopted as it ought to be, servants would soon discover the loss of having only an indifferent character to show to a person wishing to engage them.21

Clergymen also hoped to undermine the hiring fairs by promoting this alternative system of contracts. Because they were to be administered through a network of register offices located in East Riding villages, without the need for attendance, hiring fairs, it was hoped, would wither away.

Cohen suggested the moral panic discourses were heavily reliant on the media for their transmission and diffusion: the media depicts the threat to societal values in an easily recognizable form and mobilizes opinion against the folk devils. In the East Riding, editors of local newspapers such as The Yorkshire Gazette, the York Herald, the Hull and Eastern Counties Herald, The Driffield Times, and The Beverley Guardian were supportive and gave it considerable publicity. Arguably the campaign was launched in local newspapers when, in January and February of 1854, several East Riding clergymen used their letter pages to voice their concerns and outline proposals for reform.22 The positive local press response provided the campaign with publicity and moral support for much of the mid-Victorian period. Editorial columns condemned the excesses of hiring fairs and the demoralized condition of farm servants; critics of the system were also given space for extended pieces detailing its evils. Newspapers also sent correspondents to report on hiring fairs and “reveal” their practices and character to their readers.23

Some of this coverage was detailed and investigative, but there was also a tendency to offer a stylized and stereotypical representation of hiring fairs, farm service, and farm servants that served to label them as deviant. Hiring fairs were compared to “an Oriental Slave-market” with farm servants “huddled together . . . like so many cattle.”24 They were criticized for offering “powerful enticements and seductive temptations” and for encouraging “reck-
less debauchery” (males) and “vice and infamy” (females).25 Seemingly mundane and factual reporting of hiring fairs, and court cases involving farm servants, was also informed by this conversation.26 Although comparisons between the regional press of the nineteenth century and the national media of the later twentieth century need to remain tentative, the threat to society posed by hiring fairs and farm service was depicted in an easily recognized form in local newspapers. Some of this coverage was designed to mobilize opinion against them.

Another characteristic of moral panics is that as opinion is mobilized there is a rapid build-up of public concern. There is evidence of this in the East Riding, although only in a limited form. Local newspapers were primarily aimed at an upper- and middle-class readership, and the tracts, pamphlets, and letters issued by clergymen were aimed predominantly at fellow clergymen, landowners, and farmers; they tended to talk about farm servants, not to them. The language and tactics employed indicate that clergymen sought to mobilize what they regarded as their traditional constituency of support, landowners and tenant farmers, and effect change from above. Despite this qualification (which indicates that the discourse of panic was aimed at mobilizing a limited public opinion), the response in the East Riding did conform to Cohen’s model in that the moral barricades were literally “manned by editors, bishops and other right-thinking people.”27 As indicated above, the editors of local newspapers supported the campaign. William Thomson, Archbishop of York (1863–90), was also a supporter. In his primary Visitation Charge, for example, he suggested that:

The whole system of contracts with farm labourers in this county is so unfavourable to religion and good morals that I do not suppose there is one minister of religion who does not desire to see it altered. I trust the time will come when people will hear with incredulity that farmers used to take into their houses, where their wives and children dwell, young servants of both sexes without the slightest enquiry into their character; that so arranged the work of the Sunday that it should be impossible for some of their dependants to enter a place of worship from the beginning of the contract to the end of it; that they did not attempt to exercise any influence over their character or general behaviour.28

Other “right-thinking people” included Charles William Strickland, Chairman of the East Riding Magistrates who, at the April 1854 meeting of the Quarter Sessions, drew attention to the demoralized character of the farm servant population and attacked “the reckless carelessness of employers as to the character of their employees.”29 Lieutenant-Colonel B. Granville Layard, the
Chief Constable of the East Riding Police, was a critic of hiring fairs and provided police assistance to the reformers. E. B. Portman, who reported on the East Riding for the Royal Commission on Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture in the 1860s, drew attention to the campaign and its concerns. Support also came from several prominent East Riding landowners, including the region’s largest landowners, the Sykes family, who worked alongside rural clergy to promote registration societies in villages on their Sledmere estate. Gatherings of Church Congresses and the Social Science Association held at York in the 1860s also provided an opportunity for “experts” to pontificate at length as to the evils of hiring fairs and farm service and to “pronounce their diagnoses and solutions.”

There is, therefore, evidence for a degree of panic and associated public concern. However, it remained confined to a rather narrow band at the top of the rural hierarchy. In part, this reflected the aims and tactics of the Church campaign which concentrated upon sharpening the awareness of its “traditional” supporters and marshalling their influence. But it was also an indication that this particular conversation found only limited resonance within even those sections of East Riding society that the campaign had sought to mobilize. Local farmers, for example, were often indifferent and (at times) openly hostile to the campaign: in 1876 at a public meeting in York, Jonathan Dunn of the York Chamber of Agriculture dismissed those who opposed hiring fairs as “sentimental” and “mistaken”; he was applauded when he advised farmers to “quietly take no notice of them.”

Panics are also said to provoke remedial action in the form of a more regulatory and coercive mode of control toward the identified deviant practices and individuals. Despite the support already discussed, the main response continued to be the direct measures initiated by rural clergy from parishes close to hiring fairs and with a substantial farm servant population. They were at the center of the campaign throughout, and it was they who, along with their wives, daughters, and other Anglican laity, attempted to regulate, reform, and abolish hiring fairs and, in doing so, reshape the institution of farm service. Only the second phase of the campaign, centering on providing indoor hiring accommodation for women, can be regarded as having produced significant remedial action. Establishment of segregated hirings was a substantial reform in its own right, and it provided a platform for other attempts to reshape the internal character of the hirings. The establishment of indoor hiring at Driffield, for example, was accompanied by the introduction of brass-band music in the hiring rooms and in the market place outside.

It could also be argued that this panic, in helping to draw attention to the excesses of the fairs, encouraged local authorities to adopt measures to make them more orderly and disciplined. York’s City Council, for example, actively
supported attempts to end the combined hiring of men and women by issu-
ing regulations that forbade the practice and using the police to enforce
them. The police were also instrumental in the implementation of segre-
gated hiring at other East Riding fairs. The following reflection from the Re-
verend M. C. F Morris, son of the Reverend F. O. Morris (one of the
campaign’s leading lights), implied a direct correlation between the change in
hiring practices effected by the campaign and the emergence of a more orderly
hiring fair:

Happily the worst part of the old system is now done away with. The stat-
ties go on as of yore, but they are conducted in an altogether improved fash-
ion. Both clergy and laity combined to get rid of the worst phases of the
institution . . . rooms are now hired in every town, in which the girls are
assembled by themselves, and can be engaged by the farmer’s wives in an
orderly and befitting manner; the Girls’ Friendly Society and other kindred
institutions all help in the same general cause, and although occasional
brawls and disturbances take place, yet there is no comparison between the
state of things now and what it was thirty years ago.

Although hiring fairs did continue to exhibit carnivalesque characteristics
there is more than a grain of truth in Morris’s view. The major riot that
occurred in Driffield in 1875 was remembered in the twentieth century as the
last of its kind. It may be, as Morris suggests, that this decline in the scale of
disorder was the result of the Church of England campaign. Possibly its
efforts were sufficient to render the problem less visible and this explains why
the panic receded from the late 1870s. Equally likely, given that the campaign
failed to achieve its more ambitious aims of abolishing or even fundamentally
reshaping hiring fairs and farm service, is that the panic receded due to
exhaustion and frustration.

An Ideal Breeding Ground?

This chapter has demonstrated ways in which the concept of moral panic has
some value to those interested in nineteenth-century popular culture. The
model is useful in facilitating identification of the salient aspects of what
might otherwise seem to be a sprawling and incoherent mass of opinions and
actions. Valuable though this process of analytical mapping is, the major rea-
son why historians have turned to this concept and the theories with which it
is associated is their potential for explaining why panics occur. It is to this
dimension that the chapter will now turn.
According to the classic “social anxiety” model of moral panics their fundamental cause is anxieties about social change and the cultural strains that it brings about. As a predominantly rural area the East Riding might seem an unlikely setting for such a panic. In fact, however, the Riding had experienced a significant degree of social change from the late eighteenth century as it experienced a transformation from an agricultural backwater into one of the most advanced and productive arable farming regions in England. At the heart of this process was a two-phase agricultural revolution promoting the emergence of large-scale, capital-intensive “high” farming. This process of economic transformation was accompanied by, and in many respects caused, changes in the settlement pattern. Basically, more farms were now located away from village centers as a nucleated settlement pattern gave way to a mixture of dispersed and nucleated settlements. This process of economic and spatial change had a significant impact on the nature of East Riding society as it encouraged population growth, class formation, and more overt capitalist social relations.

These changes also affected the nature of farm service. Farm service is sometimes regarded as a traditional, precapitalist form of labor organization, but in parts of Britain it was integral to the development of modern large-scale capitalist agriculture. The East Riding is a prime example of this symbiosis: the expansion of high farming also saw an increased reliance on the labor of farm servants. The larger, more capital-intensive farms associated with high farming practices were the most likely to hire and board large numbers of farm servants. Although the Church of England’s vision of what farm service had once been was informed by an imagined “golden age” of order, as farms became larger and more capitalist in their ethos, the system did witness a decline in its familial and paternalist character. Farmers were less likely to have much contact with their servants in their working lives as they delegated their control to supervisory workers. They were also less likely to share space and time with their servants after work, as they increasingly boarded and housed them away from their own families. Male and female farm servants on these farms led an increasingly proletarianized and alienated existence as the ties that bound them to their employers became predominantly economic. The larger farms also tended to be outside of village centers and their churches, which facilitated the perception of the young farm servants as outsiders and interlopers.

Farm servants were, therefore, at the heart of the region’s economic and social changes. Within the framework of the social anxiety model that has informed much of this chapter, the panic over hiring fairs and farm service might be interpreted as a product of social change. Because of their independent lifestyle, and the fact that they were often located within a reshaped form
of farm service associated with the larger capitalist farms, farm servants were well placed to act as a symbol of social change. Possibly the stress that social change had brought about found release in the critical panic directed at them. This model might, then, usefully lead us to interpret the panic as an example of pent-up tensions within rural society being channeled at the young farm servants and their deviant way of life.

The empirical referents’ deviations from the model suggest a degree of caution, however. The narrow social base of those active in the campaign and the limited response that it engendered within society in general are two examples of such dissonance between the model and the case study. More recent work might help to explain this divergence. McRobbie and Thornton have criticized Cohen and other early studies for their neglect of “counter discourses” which are able to resist and thereby limit the impact of moral panics. They have suggested that these pioneering studies were too monolithic and functionalist and, therefore, inappropriate for the analysis of contemporary panics: the complexity of modern society and its media means that responses are equally complex. Media opportunities provide space for other opinion formers to engage with moral panic discourses and negate their influence.\(^46\) Nineteenth-century East Riding society and its media were undoubtedly less complex than the modern multimedia world discussed by McRobbie and Thornton, but it was a society characterized by increased plurality and an expanding local media. Both farmers and farm servants used local newspapers and publishers to contest the discourse of panic.\(^47\) This resistance combined with the fact that the campaign enjoyed only limited support within the East Riding suggest that an explanation based solely upon the existence of anxieties within society at large is less than credible. It also suggests that a more convincing interpretation might emerge from a fuller consideration of the motivations of those most active in the campaign: Church of England clergymen.

Cohen’s social anxiety approach identified the importance of “moral entrepreneurs,” though in his interpretation they are probably less significant than the media. Other recent interpretations have given them greater prominence. Goode and Ben Yahuda, for example, have argued that sectional interests try to generate panics because they offer a means through which they may further their own interests.\(^48\) Other post–Cohen approaches have emphasized that individuals and institutions who feel that their status and position have been recently eroded have a propensity to become moral entrepreneurs and launch crusades: either as a means of reasserting their status or, alternatively, as a way of exorcising their anxieties and frustrations.\(^49\) Given the central role played by Anglicans in the crusade against hiring fairs, these more conspiratorial variations of the original panic model are worthy of fuller consideration.
The first half of the nineteenth century was a time of crisis for the Church of England. Interpretation of this crisis often centers on the Church’s difficulties in adapting itself to the challenges posed by urban and industrial society, but Anglicanism also experienced problems in rural society, difficulties which were especially pronounced in parts of northern England. There, the parochial system was weak and struggled to cope with agricultural change, population growth, and rural industrial development. Nonconformist churches (especially the “New Dissent” of the Wesleyan and Primitive churches) proved more adaptable, thriving at the expense of the established church. In contrast, the mid-Victorian period is often regarded as a time of relative revival for the Anglican church.

Much of this revival took place at the local level and involved a vigorous effort to reengage with society and counter the influence of rural Methodism. At its heart was a determination to reinvigorate the role of the parish clergyman and restore the Anglican parish to its supposed former glory: a determination combining modernity and tradition. It sought to promote a sense of professionalism among its clergy: every parish needed a resident clergyman actively engaged with his parishioners’ daily lives. But it also envisaged that this would be realized within the context of the preservation and, in some cases, reinvention of traditional society: a society characterized by stability and paternalism. This parochial revival was most suited to, and successful in, southern England where the Anglican tradition and its parochial system were much stronger. Nevertheless, a similar effort was made in northern counties including the East Riding of Yorkshire where, after decades of relative decline, the Church of England sought to reassert itself in its rural parishes.

Conclusion

The campaign against hiring fairs can be interpreted as a reflection of this attempted revival in that it involved a renewed determination by clergymen to engage with, and refashion, ways of life that were a barrier before the recreation of the parochial system. In many respects, however, the East Riding proved not to be ideal terrain for this effort. The settlement pattern placed a substantial proportion of its population away from the immediate influence of clergy. The emergence of a more class-orientated society was also a problem: Anglicanism was uneasy with horizontal identities and social relations. In contrast, Methodism, with the flexibility of its circuit system (and especially Primitive Methodism with its use of working-class preachers), was able to reach out and resonate with the rural population in ways that were beyond the ideological and organizational conservatism of the Established church.
The religious census of 1851 demonstrates the strength of Methodism in the East Riding with the Methodist churches recording a combined percentage share of attendance of 47.3 compared with the Church of England's 37 percent. The problems that clergymen experienced with farm servants in some of the more remote areas of the East Riding provide a concentrated example of this adverse situation. The recent expansion of high farming in areas such as the Wolds and Holderness meant that a substantial proportion of the population outside village centers were farm servants. Unreachable, unruly, and, even worse, susceptible to the dubious attractions of the Primitive Methodists, these young proletarians were the bane of many rural clergymen's lives: a symbol of many churchmen's parochial difficulties.

When placed within this wider context, the Church critique of farm service and hiring fairs, and the crusade that flowed from it, correlates with the interpretations offered by the more conspiratorial post-Cohen interpretations of panics. The Anglican critique was based upon a genuine concern for the moral and spiritual health of those supposedly exposed to demoralizing influences, but it was also a response to the relative weakness of the Church in many East Riding parishes. To further the practical political end of reasserting their role and status, clergymen became moral entrepreneurs. This offered an opportunity for them to project themselves and their concerns within civil society. In doing so, they revealed themselves to be adept and prescient users of an expanding and increasingly important media: the provincial press. The anxieties and criticisms articulated in this and other media combined outrage and panic with a discourse of nostalgia rooted in anxieties about recent social change. This conversation sought to secure consent for action designed to restore order and control through the scapegoating of hiring fairs and farm service. The iniquities of both were presented as a threat to society in general, but it was the Church of England which experienced the greatest contradiction between its interests and the lifestyle of the farm servants. Confronting this contradiction created an opportunity for the Church to assert the values of deference and paternalism, to work toward their restoration, and to engage with the challenges posed by social change and Nonconformity.

Finally, as well as functioning as a vehicle for the practical political objective of advancing the role and status of the Anglican Church, the panic and its expressions of moral outrage also served as a form of symbolic politics. The critique of farm service and hiring fairs allowed clergymen to vent their spleen at a specific problem that symbolized other broader frustrations. Farm service and the farm servants' way of life were symbolic of broader difficulties facing the Church of England in the East Riding of Yorkshire: its failure to respond to social change with the same degree of flair and success as the Methodist churches. Ultimately the farm servants were scapegoats, not for anxieties
within society in general, but for the failure of the Established Church to achieve a contemporary relevance.

Notes


2. J. A. Sheppard, “East Yorkshire’s Agricultural Labour Force in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” Agricultural History Review 9, 48 (1961): 43–51. In parts of the Riding where isolated farmsteads were common the proportion of farm servants in the labor force rose to over 50 percent.


4. Ibid., 9.
5. Ibid., 9.
6. Ibid., 8–10.


11. Rev. J. Skinner, “A Letter to the Masters and Mistresses of Farm Houses in the East Riding of Yorkshire.” This was distributed to farmhouses in the Riding and reprinted in newspapers. See, for example, the York Herald, 10 November 1860.


13. For an early articulation of these arguments see Rev. R. I. Wilberforce, A Letter to the Gentry, Yeomen, and Farmers of the Archdeaconry of the East Riding (York: J. Furby,
1842); see also Rev. J. Eddowes, *The Agricultural Labourer as He Really Is; or, Village Morals in 1854* (Driffield, 1854).
17. Simpson, “Hiring of Farm Servants.”
22. For examples of theses early proposals see *The Yorkshire Gazette*, 28 January 1854.
30. See, for example, Chief Constable’s Reports to the East Riding Quarter Sessions, reported in *The Hull and Eastern Counties Herald*, 5 January 1865; 4 January 1866; 3 January 1867; 2 January 1868; 7 January 1869; and 6 January 1870.
34. *York Herald*, 14 July 1876.
36. For details of the gradual success of this policy see *York Herald*, 29 November 1866; 28 November 1868; 29 November 1869; 26 November 1870.
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44. Caunce, *Farm Horses*, 86.

45. On the contradictions between the Anglican parochial ideal and farm service in the East Riding, see also Moses, “Popular Culture and the ‘Golden Age’”; Moses, “Social Relations.”


47. For a farmer’s response to clerical criticisms see W. Barugh, “‘Master and Man,’ A Reply to the Pamphlet of the Rev. John Eddowes, Entitled ‘The Agricultural Labourer As He Really Is’” (Driffield: James Blakeston, 1854). A reporter from *The Yorkshire Gazette* spoke to servants congregated at York’s Martinmas Fair and found that they were opposed to change: *The Yorkshire Gazette*, 25 November 1854.


55. Ibid.