

## Yeoman's Cottage, Church Lane, Shearsby



The tie-beam of the half-timbered house opposite Shearsby parish church and which is now known as Yeoman's Cottage, Church Lane bears the date 1669 with the initials "WHAH". This without doubt refers to William Howcott (1628-1701) and his wife Anne Garrett (buried 1675). When William paid tax on three hearths at Shearsby in Michaelmas 1670, he was the only householder (either liable or exempt from payment) in the village whose surname began with an "H". It is not clear if the 1669 carving indicates that the house was built or extended or merely occupied by the Howcott family in that year; the Michaelmas 1664 hearth tax list also shows William Howcott as having three hearths at Shearsby and may refer to the same building.

In 1673, William was a churchwarden and served as "parish register". The two copies of the Shearsby bishop's transcripts for that year are in his fluent handwriting, as are the entries in the portion of the parish register from which they were copied.