



The Defiant
Anti-conscriptionist

*The curious life of
Ephraim Henry Coombe*



Wakefield Press INVITATION

Wakefield Press are pleased to invite you to the launch by
Dr. Susan Close, MP., Deputy Premier, of

The Defiant Anti-conscriptionist *The curious life of E.H. Coombe*

BY HELEN HENNESSY AND PATRICIA BOOTH

Sunday 27 November, 2.00 pm to 3:30 pm
Gawler Civic Centre, 89-91 Murray Street, Gawler
Please RSVP by 21 November to polly@wakefieldpress.com.au




HELEN HENNESSY AND
PATRICIA BOOTH



CORIOLE

McLAREN VALE



Ephraim Henry (Harry) Coombe was a 'self-made man' of strong principles. With no more than six years of formal schooling, he became a journalist, newspaper editor and member of parliament, representing the Barossa District for a total of 14 years. He advocated for proportional voting, women's suffrage, the extension of the railway to country towns, and against the closure of Lutheran schools during the First World War.

But his steadfast anti-conscription stance led to his persecution, and many of his parliamentary colleagues labelled him a coward, a traitor to the men at the Front, and disloyal to King and country. In 1917 he was prosecuted under the War Precautions Act, at a trial deliberately held in his electorate, for using words that were 'likely to prejudice recruiting'. Shortly afterwards Harry suffered a sudden seizure while speaking at a public rally, and died a week later at the age of 58.

Determined to walk his own path, Harry is remembered as a man willing to stand up for his beliefs. A hero of the working class and many others in the community, the curious life of E.H. Coombe placed Gawler and its region firmly on the map.

Helen Hennessy experienced a varied career as a library manager, teacher, local historian and a community engagement officer with the CFS. In 2019 she was awarded the title of South Australian Regional Historian by the History Council of South Australia.

Patricia Booth is the great-granddaughter of E.H. Coombe and she spent her early years with his second son James Bright and his wife, Alma (nee Sauer).

If you cannot attend the launch of *The Defiant Anti-conscriptionist* (RRP \$39.95), but would like to order the book, please visit www.wakefieldpress.com.au or call us on (08) 8352 4455

