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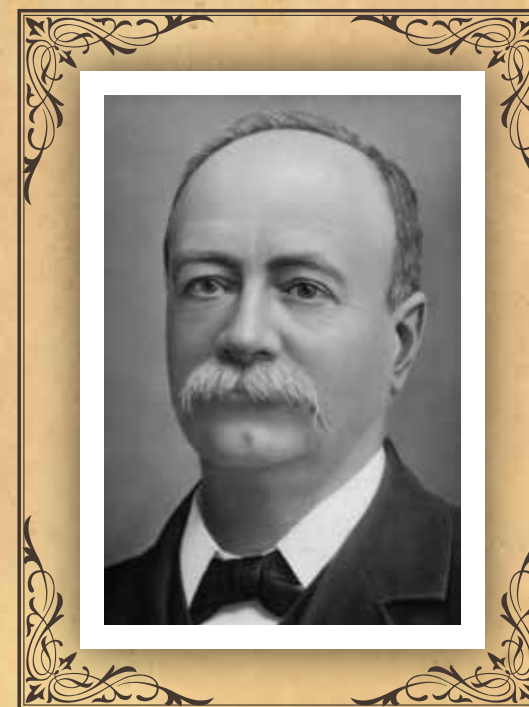
# Gawler



**- TOWN OF -  
GAWLER**

**E.H. COOMBE**

## *Walking Tour*



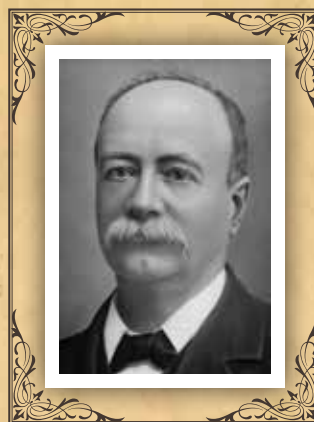
*26 August 1858 – 5 April 1917*

# Gawler



## E.H. COOMBE

# Walking Tour



Ephraim Henry (EH) Coombe is a significant person in the history of Gawler and South Australia. He was a business man, a journalist, the Editor of The Bunyip and the Member of Parliament representing the Barossa District. He used his position of influence to champion many social causes. These included temperance, votes for women and the defence of those who were persecuted during the WW1 period because of their German heritage. He opposed conscription and the closure of Lutheran schools.

*This 4 kilometre walking tour takes approximately 1.5 hours and commemorates the life and achievements of EH Coombe in Gawler, where he was born and lived for 56 of his 58 years. More information will be available in a forthcoming book on EH Coombe by Helen Hennessy.*

### 1 START: GAWLER RAILWAY STATION

EH's father, Ephraim, arrived in Gawler from Devon in late 1855 and worked as a farm labourer. In 1857, newly married and with the prospects of a family to support, Ephraim left (or more likely, reduced) his farm labouring and commenced employment as a station porter for the recently arrived railway.

### 2 GAWLER SOUTH – ELIZABETH STREET

(now Twenty-first St) EH's birth on 26 August 1858 was registered by his mother Mary, as at Elizabeth Street, Gawler South, in a cottage close to his father's place of employment as a railway porter.

### 3 GAWLER BRIDGE

The third bridge on this site was opened in 1908 by the State Governor, Sir George Le Hunte and christened by Sarah Coombe (nee Heywood), wife of EH. Mrs Coombe was given the honour in recognition of the persistence of her husband (the local Member of Parliament) in lobbying for the bridge to be built.

### 4 INCOME PRODUCING LAND OFF MURRAY STREET

This plot is located between the South Para Ford and the 1848 built Bridge, close to the 1855 built Union Flour Mill. It was purchased by Ephraim senior in May 1858. Two months later he sold the land to a tailor named George Stevens for a mortgage of £60, plus 15% per annum interest. In 1864, Ephraim sold his interest in the mortgaged land for £100, making him a tidy profit!

### 5 NATIONAL TRUST MUSEUM, MURRAY STREET

Ann Coombe arrived in 1849, two years ahead of her younger brother, Ephraim senior. In 1851 Ann married

Samuel Pope of Gawler who was the builder of the first brick house in Church Hill and the Wheatsheaf Hotel. Ann and Samuel ran this hotel from 1861–66. Their photographic portraits can be found inside the museum.

### 6 HARRIS'S GENERAL STORE, MURRAY STREET

(now Ned's) EH worked as a grocery assistant at James Harris' Gawler Stores in Murray Street during the 1870s. This was the same establishment that his father had worked at in the 1860s. Here he gained a valuable education about how to run a business.

### 7 EH COOMBE CONFECTIONER, MURRAY STREET

(now Gawler Newsagency) By 1885, EH was running his own wholesale and retail confectionery business at 296c Murray Street, opposite the Town Hall and Institute. He also worked as a corresponding country journalist and Hansard reporter for The Register newspaper.

### 8 THE GAWLER INSTITUTE

The Gawler Institute was established in 1857 with this building built in 1871. The Institute offered a library, reading room and technical education classes that provided secondary education for many young men and women. EH was a member of the Institute Committee for 14 years and its President in 1898 and 1899. He taught book keeping, typing and shorthand classes here.

### 9 THE FIRST WESLEYAN CHURCH IN GAWLER

(corner Tod St & Schneibner Terrace) Built in 1850, this church is where EH's parents, 29 year old Ephraim and 21 year old Mary, were married on the 27th October 1857. This was just two years after Ephraim's arrival in Gawler and six years after Mary's. Mary's parents, Henry

and Hannah Lock and maternal grandparents, Henry and Mary Riggs were local farmers.

### 10 BUNYIP OFFICE

In 1885, a fire destroyed the first site of the Bunyip Newspaper which was located on the other side of the street, between The Prince Albert Hotel and the now ANZ Bank. Five years later, EH commenced employment as Editor of The Bunyip, a position he held for 24 years, until 1914.

### 11 PIONEER PARK

EH's mother, Mary, died "of decline" in February 1864, barely three months after her baby daughter, Elizabeth. They are both buried here. Allocated as Gawler's first cemetery, in Colonel Light's 1839 plan, it was closed in 1870 after a decade long community controversy over its impact on public health.

### 12 \*FIRST RED BRICK COTTAGE IN CHURCH HILL

This was built in 1845 by Samuel Pope on Finnis Street, at a time when there were only pine cottages along the main street area. Pope was EH's uncle by marriage. Walter and Phoebe Duffield later resided in this cottage before their five room home opposite was built in 1847. This house would overlook Walter's newly acquired (from Stephen King) Victoria Mill. Sadly the cottage no longer stands.

### 13 \*ST GEORGE'S PARISH HALL

In 1866, a new building was erected for the St George's School and its popular teacher, Leonard S Burton. It was here, that EH was sent to be educated until the age of 11 – a matter that he remained very proud of all his life.

### 14 5 & 7 MAIN NORTH ROAD, WILLASTON

(now Dodd's Deli & Gawler Books) It is likely that Ephraim senior, his new wife, Elizabeth (nee Tall) and his two sons, moved to Willaston shortly after their 1866 marriage, evidenced by his involvement in the new Willaston church and his new position as a storeman in Willaston. Seven years later in 1875, he took over the business to become the storekeeper and postmaster of The Willaston General Store.

### 15 \*28 BURROWS STREET, WILLASTON

This is described as a gentleman's residence, built in the 1890s, and was EH's residence from 1906 until his departure from Gawler in 1914. It has sweeping views over the townships of Willaston and Gawler.

### 16 WESLEYAN CHURCH, WILLASTON

(now self accommodation) This church was built in 1867. Ephraim senior was one of the first Trustees and Superintendent of the associated Sunday school. EH's younger brother, Thomas, would later succeed his father as a Trustee. The foundation stone was laid by Mr John Dawkins of Gawler River.

### 17 \*WILLASTON CEMETERY

Opened in 1866, this cemetery is the burial site for Ephraim and Elizabeth Coombe [Block 2 Row C Site 42], EH, and his wife Sarah and their eldest son Harry Heywood (who died in WWI) Block 2 Row C Site 29.

### 18 FINISH: GAWLER CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION

The station was opened in May 1911 as 'Willaston', then renamed 'North Gawler' in September 1911, and finally renamed 'Gawler Central' in 1984.



### Walking Tour

- 1 START: GAWLER RAILWAY STATION
- 2 GAWLER SOUTH - ELIZABETH STREET
- 3 GAWLER BRIDGE
- 4 INCOME PRODUCING LAND ON MURRAY STREET
- 5 NATIONAL TRUST MUSEUM, MURRAY STREET
- 6 HARRIS'S GENERAL STORE, MURRAY STREET
- 7 EH COOMBE CONNECTIONER, MURRAY STREET
- 8 THE GAWLER INSTITUTE
- 9 THE FIRST WESLEYAN CHURCH IN GAWLER
- 10 BUNYIP OFFICE
- 11 PIONEER PARK
- 12 FIRST RED BRICK COTTAGE IN CHURCH HILL
- 13 ST GEORGE'S PARISH HALL
- 14 5 & 7 MAIN NORTH ROAD, WILLASTON
- 15 28 BURROWS STREET, WILLASTON
- 16 WESLEYAN CHURCH, WILLASTON
- 17 WILLASTON CEMETERY
- 18 FINISH: GAWLER CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION

\* Location not directly on the tour but included because of their relevancy

4 KM WALK COMMENCING & ENDING  
AT LOCAL RAILWAY STATIONS  
TOTAL TIME APPROXIMATELY 1.5 HOURS

