

## Harold Grafton CARSTAIRS

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Harold Carstairs was born in Geelong on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1875. He was educated at Geelong College and Melbourne University (Ormond College). He completed his law degree in the late 1880-90s and was admitted to practice on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1898.

Carstairs served in the local Militia (73<sup>rd</sup> infantry) and also saw colonial service in South Africa from 1900-1902, and the Transvaal volunteers from 1903-1909. In his engagement notice of February 1908, he was noted as 'resident magistrate Pretoria South Africa'. He and his wife, Emily Mabel, returned to Australia to marry in January 1909. Carstairs commenced work and family life as a barrister and solicitor in Casterton, Edenhope and Ararat.

He enlisted for war service in May 1916, with the rank of captain, at 41 years of age. Carstairs was attached to the 25<sup>th</sup> Company, Army Service Corps, No 4 Company 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisional Train.

He embarked on A19 *Afric* on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 1916 from Adelaide and reached France in November 1916.

His unit was in active supply service in the Western front battles and in France up until early 1919. In June 1918, Carstairs was mentioned in despatches for distinguished conduct on the field. He returned to Australia on the *Kashmir*, disembarking in late April 1919.

He returned to practice as a barrister and solicitor in Natimuk and Edenhope, taking a keen & active interest in community life in the district. His obituary in the *Horsham Times* (Tues 3 Aug 1943) stated "*he will be sorely missed in a district which knew him well and appreciated his sterling worth.*" Carstairs died at home in Natimuk on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1943 aged 68 years.

