

Charles Herbert Angwin  
Sapper 1692

The link to Kilmore and district was brief. The Rev Charles Angwin became minister of the Methodist Church, Kilmore in April 1917, after serving a term at Beeac. He left Kilmore three years later. His son Charles was already on the Western Front.

Charles Herbert Angwin, the son of Charles and Adelaide Laura Angwin (nee Thompson) was born at Casterton in 1895. At Wesley College, Charles joined the army cadets. He was also a member of the St Kilda Cricket Club.

On receiving the consent of his parents, at age 20 years and 7 months, Charles enlisted on July 13, 1915 in Melbourne, as a sapper, 1692, in 1st Signal Company Engineers, 11th Reinforcements. After training Charles embarked on the Ulysses on October 27, 1915 for Egypt.

On arrival, Charles transferred to the new 5th Division, which was being formed in Egypt. In June the 5th Division moved to France, taking over part of the "nursery" sector near Armentieres. Charles, as a sapper was attached to Headquarters and was in the Signals Company tasked with providing communications between Headquarters and the Division's many units along the front line. It was hard and dangerous work.

The 5th Division became involved in the disastrous attack at Fromelles in July 1916. In October it joined other Divisions on the Somme. In March 1917 a flying column of the Fifth Division pursued the Germans to the Hindenburg Line, capturing Bapaume. In May the Division relieved the First Division in the Second Battle of Bullecourt. In September it managed to turn an allied defeat into a major victory at the Battle of Polygon Wood.

In March 1918 the Fifth Division was rushed to the Somme region to help stem the German Offensive. There it guarded the vital Somme River bridges. In April it counterattacked at Villers Bretonneux, recovering the town. Then the 5th fought in the Battles of Hamel in July and Amiens in August. In September it forced the Somme River at Peronne and fought on the Hindenburg Line.

During this time Charles had bouts of sickness and took leave on several occasions. He transferred to England in late January 1919 and boarded the Trasos Montes; arriving Melbourne on May 22, 1919.

He was discharged in Melbourne on July 15, 1919, receiving the 1914/15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

During his time in Kilmore the Rev Charles Angwin, was very active in farewelling new recruits and welcoming home soldiers. His son Charles attended a large welcome home function at the Oddfellow's Hall, Kilmore June 6, 1919. His father gave a speech amongst others.

In 1926 Charles married Effie Hazel Marie Gale. Charles was a real estate agent in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, and he died at Heidelberg in 1968 aged 73 years.