

# LEGACY

ITS ORIGINS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT



An extract from *THERE GOES A MAN* by W.B. Russell  
The biography of  
Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Savige, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C.E.D.

*First published by Longmans, 1959*  
*Re-printed for Legacy's Diamond Jubilee, 1983*  
*Re-printed for Legacy's 75th Anniversary, 1998*

## INTRODUCTION

The 75th Anniversary of the founding of Legacy is an occasion for reviving memories of the difficulties, achievements and comradeship of the first years. This reprint is intended to serve in three ways:

- it will be a small memento of our Anniversary;
- it will provide members with a readily available account of the origins and early development of Legacy, and enable them to recall with gratitude and appreciation the idealistic thought and work of the early members;
- it will be a reminder of the personal contribution made by Legatee Stan Savige, the founder of the first Legacy Club.

The extract being re-printed is the third chapter of the biography of Stan Savige - the Legacy chapter - with a lead-in from Chapter 2, which deals with World War 1. The lead-in shows how the great friendship between Gellibrand and Savige, which began at Armentieres in 1916, bore its finest fruit in September, 1923 in the founding of Legacy.

There Goes A Man was written by Legatee W. (Bill) B. Russell who gave many hours of his time in Legacy to assist Junior Legatees in their educational future.

be at a considerable disadvantage for a number of years until properly re-established.

The R.S.L. was still having teething troubles, and had by no means the present-day outlook of carrying into civilian life the service rendered in wartime. Some of the loud-voiced were bringing the whole body of returned men into disfavour. Gellibrand found the same troubles in Tasmania when he returned to his home state early in 1923.

Gellibrand had been one of the thirty-two foundation members of the first Australian Rotary Club, established in Melbourne in April, 1921. When he gave up his position as Chief Commissioner of Police in 1922 and returned to his native Tasmania, no doubt many of his fellow Rotarians suggested that he should investigate the possibility of forming a club there.

But his concern for returned soldiers not yet rehabilitated four years after the war, and possibly his regard for the Principle of War known as Concentration,<sup>1</sup> led him to adapt the Rotary idea of luncheon clubs with an ideal of service to meet the problem he found there.

He decided to form a luncheon club called the 'Remembrance Club', with the twin objects of remembrance and reciprocity. The members would assist in the rehabilitation of other members and servicemen generally; they would give a more idealistic note to the voice of the returned soldier; they would remember their fallen comrades and maintain the mateship of the war years. The club was an immediate success.

Gellibrand had maintained contact with Savige either personally or by letter since their separation in 1917 – a contact maintained until his own death in 1945. Their families, too, were close friends.

In one of his letters he outlined the nature and purpose of his new club, and suggested that Savige might be able to found a club in Melbourne. He little dreamed that he has mined the uncut diamond which, when cut and polished, would be the brightest jewel in the crown of Stan Savige.

As Chief Commissioner of Police in Victoria from 1920-22, Gellibrand had seen some of the difficulties of re-adjustment. Businessmen found that their rivals had become wealthy and had most of the contracts; tradesmen and professional men found that they had lost their old skill and had been supplanted. The labourer was 'last to come' in his union. All this meant that they would

<sup>1</sup> Set out in *Field Service Regulations*, Vol. II.

The opportunity to launch the club came shortly afterwards, when members of the 24th Battalion assembled at Phair's Hotel to bid farewell to Mr. Bert Baxter, a former 24th Battalion man who was leaving for England. At the luncheon were Cliff Ellis,<sup>1</sup> Bob Irving and Frank Selleck. Stan read the letter and moved a motion that a club be formed. The motion was warmly received and acted on immediately.

Like Merlin of old, Gellibrand had set the sword in the stone. It was the destiny of Stan Savige to draw it out and found a movement in no way inferior to the Round Table.

<sup>1</sup> Cliff had a block at Derinallum at the time and his place in later discussions was taken by Ted Pittard, and for a time by R. H. Norman, D.S.O., M.C.

## 3

*The Sword in the Stone*

(1)

*And when Matyns and the first Masse was done, there was sene in the churchyard ayenst the high aulter a grete stone four square, lyke unto a marble stone; and in myddes thereof was lyke an anvyl of stele a foot on hyghe, and thereyn stack a fayre sword naked by the poynt, and letters there were written in gold about the sword, that saiden thus: 'Whoso pulleth out this sword out of this stone and anvyl is rightwys.kynge.'*

*Malory: Morte D'Arthur'*

Tennyson described the round Table as:

'The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
Whereof this world hold record.'

If anyone were to stand before the members of any Legacy Club and suggest that the members were a goodly fellowship of noble knights the resultant mental raspberry would blast him to Thursday Island.

Yet who, except the members themselves, can think of them in lesser terms?

For Legacy is no mere hobby or spare-time social activity. It demands a man's highest talents and energies. It brooks no delay, no half measures, and no man may buy his passage. No pay, no praise, no publicity, no thanks, no acknowledgement! And personal effort is the first essential.

As for valour and chivalry, every member is required to have offered life and health for his people and his ideals, and to have served his country honourable on overseas battle-fields.

<sup>1</sup> By coincidence, the first 'valainte knightes' whose adventures were chronicled in Malory's book were 'Balyne le Saveage and Balan hys brother, that were merveyulous knightes as any tho living.'

In the words of Sir Isaac Isaacs:<sup>1</sup>

'The legacy to which every member of a Legacy Club succeeds the moment he enters into membership as a Legatee is no material benefit to him in any way. Except in the highest, most patriotic, exalted and spiritual sense it cannot be considered a benefit to him, but a burden. The legacy which comes to him and that he so willingly accepts, so far from being a material gain or advantage, is, in a worldly and pecuniary sense, a liability and life-long responsibility ... happily there were many good and noble things which came out of the war, and the Legacy Club is one of the finest of them.'

Whence came this organization against which only one gibe<sup>2</sup> has ever been hurled, and that before Legacy 'found its soul'? Why is it that when Melbourne Legacy launched its first appeal in 1956, to establish Legacy House, the sum of £90,000 was subscribed in six months without any real need for persuasion? Why is it that no one refuses a request if 'it's for Legacy'?

The answer is twofold.

First, because Legacy is an expression of the Australian national character – especially the tendency to help the weak and less fortunate rather than jump on the band-wagon of the strong.

Secondly, because of the faith of Stanley Savige, who enunciated and worked on the principle, 'If a thing is worth doing the money will come.'

The children's work of Legacy began with a promise by Stan Savige and Donovan Joynt to the war-widows of Melbourne, at a time when their committee had no hall, not one piece of equipment, nor one shilling to back it. Stories, of how money did actually come from completely unexpected sources whenever need arose are legion in the records of Legacy.

How did Legacy begin? Following the initial meeting in Phair's Hotel, informal meetings were held on 11th and 25th September, 1923. At the second meeting fourteen people were present, eight of whom had been members of the 24th Battalion.

<sup>1</sup> When Governor-General, speaking to Canberra Legacy, 26th July, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> *The Bulletin* in 1925 described it as a luncheon club which met weekly to pass resolutions of mutual admiration.

The place of meeting was the old Anzac House on the corner of Collins and Russell Streets, the cost of the dinners being 2/-.

The 25th September, 1923, is regarded as the day of inauguration, as draft rules and regulations were provisionally adopted then. Legatees Eller, Powell and Savige codified the rules, the interpretation of all rulings to be made 'according to the un-written law of cobbers 1914 to 1918'. On that day, the first office-bearers were appointed: Secretary, Mr. P.W. Powell; Treasurer, Mr. F. Selleck; Auditors, Messrs. Rodda and Prohasky.<sup>1</sup> 'Sir John Gellibrand was appointed a patron on that day, and Sir John Monash soon afterwards.

The position of president was considered vital to the success of the movement. Stan Savige was unwilling to be selected, for two reasons. He was a very junior army officer, and it was hoped that Sir John Monash would accept the post. Moreover, he had only recently set up his new offices and undertaken his work as selling agent for the R.S.L. Mills. He had no money and no certainty of business success. He refused nomination for president again in June, 1924 and 1925.

When Sir John Monash refused the post, the services of Lieutenant-Colonel Harold Cohen<sup>2</sup> were secured as foundation president. Lieutenant-Colonel J.H.P. Eller, who had been chairman of the first meeting, was appointed vice-president. At the next meeting the General Committee (renamed the Board of Management in 1924) was elected, the members being S.G. Savige, E.J. Pittard, W.G. Laver and F. Sale<sup>3</sup>.

These names are mentioned, in defiance of the principles of Legacy, because it is essential to his biography that the part played by Stan Savige should be seen in perspective against its background and environment. The great majority of members, most of whom have given the same service as

<sup>1</sup> With an annual subscription of 10/- and no assets, the auditors must have had an onerous task.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel H. E. Cohen, C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D., had commanded the 6th A.F.A. Brigade in World War I. In World War II he was Senior Commissioner of Red Cross Services.

<sup>3</sup> In February, 1924, he was replaced by Lieutenant-Colonel Donovan Joynt, V.C.

Legatee Savige, that is, their maximum, remain unmentioned in accordance with Legacy practice.

At the second meeting of the club on 8th October, 1923, the movement received its name from Frank Selleck. Legatee Savige later described the occasion:

'He stopped in packing his papers and, with an expression on his face seen only when a man is inspired, he said,

"I have it! Legacy' is the name, with its meaning in reverse. It our legacy to serve and to give without receiving anything in return".'

The first Junior Legacy Club Committee summed up the significance of the name in these words:

'The name "Legacy" was selected as a tribute to our departed comrades who made the supreme sacrifice for the sake of Australia and Empire, and who so completely typified the spirit of the A.I.F., and in token of the heritage that has been bequeathed to us by those who so nobly commenced the work that has been left to us to carry on'.

In the minutes of the Melbourne Board of Management the titles, Mr. Dr., etc., were used until 16th August, 1926, when the term Legatee began to appear. After 5th April, 1927, when Legatee Cameron became secretary, Legatee was used invariably. It was officially adopted at the conference of Legacy Clubs in Melbourne in May, 1928.

It seems likely that the Rotary Movement influenced the framework of the Club as regards meetings and categories of membership. Colonel Harold Cohen, the first president, had been a Rotarian since 1921, and was later president of Melbourne Rotary in 1926. But Rotary is in no sense the parent of Legacy, nor has there been any connection between the two movements other than general goodwill and co-operation when occasionally their paths have crossed.

No idea in this world is every completely new. Every age builds on whatever human knowledge and experience exist. Gellibrand adapted some Rotary ideas to the needs of ex-servicemen in founding his Remembrance Club.

<sup>1</sup> A name originally suggested by L/Powell.

Savige and his henchmen adapted some ideas from both in founding Legacy. Then, with tremendous idealism and energy, they sought a field of service capable of reviving the spirit of devotion and self-denial found on the battlefield. They found it in the care of dependants of their departed comrades.

One of the prime objectives of both Remembrance and Legacy has been to assist in the rehabilitation of returned servicemen. Gellibrand himself, on his first visit to Legacy in June, 1924, stated that it was the question of preference to returned soldiers which has forced him to found the Remembrance Club in Hobart, where he had discovered conditions which showed that preference was 'a large defunct rat'.<sup>1</sup>

However, by the end of 1924 the great majority of servicemen in Victoria has been rehabilitated, and it was considered by the Club that only four categories required special help;

1. Those unemployed, or whose livelihood was precarious by reason of lack of training or instability.
2. Those physically impaired.
3. Those whose earning capacity has been permanently diminished as an indirect result of their war service.
4. Those liable to premature termination of their effective working life.

A year later even these categories had dwindled, and the Club appeared in danger of being left without the stimulus of an idealistic purpose, so vital to the type of man who filled its ranks. If so it might well have flickered out as did the Continuance Club<sup>2</sup> in Sydney, founded on similar lines, or it might have existed merely because of the pleasure of comradeship in such a company.

To make matters worse, The Bulletin, probably influenced by the demise of the Continuance Club, administered a resounding slap in the face – the gibe referred to earlier.

<sup>1</sup> Blatchford – *Legacy* (W. D. Joynt, 1932).

<sup>2</sup> It was founded, like Legacy, at Gellibrand's suggestion, but Hilmer Smith, when writing the history of Sydney Legacy, could find no record of it.

The criticism was unjustified, unless intended to be challenging. It might have been partly inspired by the interstate jealousies of that period of national immaturity – jealousies which still flicker up occasionally, sometimes even in Legacy. In any case, it probably served to stimulate the members in their search for a compelling and inspiring field of service.

Discussion bubbled and seethed whenever the members met. Then, out of the background at a Board of Management meeting spoke Frank Doolan. A mighty man this Doolan. Lank and lean with deep blue eyes set in a long serious face. Great as only men of simplicity, sincerity and truth can be great, he was always in the background, but – the important thing about it – always in the background whenever there was need. Even now he was only there because Secretary Arnold Wooton has been unable to take up the post of secretary because of illness, and Frank Doolan had been appointed to carry on.

Here is Frank's own account<sup>1</sup> of the epoch-making occasion and what led up to it:

'I first discussed the idea with a young school teacher, Frank Graham, who was in charge of a one-man school at Korweingeboora, a small township near Daylesford. He had lost a brother in the war, and one of the brother's children later became President of the Intermediate Legacy Club, and is still a very active member. He was enthusiastic, and at the time we envisaged education, vocational guidance and physical training. At about this time I had established a Youth Club at the township, where I had a survey camp, occupying a de-licensed hotel as main base winter quarters. The kids came from the surrounding forest district, from far and wide, and we taught them to box, skip and generally keep fit.

'I then tried the idea out on a couple of my close friends in Legacy such as Charles Copp, Lynn Kirk and Stan Savige.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From an account given to Perth Legacy by request of Legatee Eric Russell. Supplied by courtesy of Professor Amies.

<sup>2</sup> These discussions took place in August and September, 1925, the Board Meeting described below on 1st October, 1925. Cf. Blatchford *Legacy*, p. 27.

'One wintry night, before a Board of Management Meeting, we had all dined well at the Naval and Military Club before sojourning to a room in the old Anzac House site where the T. and G. now stands.'

Stan Savige has often described the rest. He loved to tell how Frank, with an evangelistic fire in his eyes, said quietly:

'Have you fellows thought that the dying wish of any of our cobbers would be that we should look after his missus and kids?'

It is said that the great Dr. Barnado was taken up on to a warehouse roof by a London waif, James Jarvis, to see where other waifs were sleeping. It was dark, and he thought that the boy had brought him up on a fool's errand. Suddenly the clouds cleared away from the moon. On the roof of the warehouse he saw a dozen children huddled together for warmth. He said later:

'It seemed as though the hand of God Himself had suddenly pulled aside the curtain which concealed from my view the miseries of forlorn child-life upon the streets of London.'<sup>1</sup>

To Stan Savige, Frank Doolan's challenge was a similar revelation. Surely it was for this that he had spent his early years looking after his scouts and his 'White Tigers'? Surely it was for this that he had survived so many deaths during the Great War? The vista widened before his imagination.

He was chosen to sell the idea to the Club. There were about 130 present at the luncheon in the Blue Room at the Victoria Palace that day. Tommy White<sup>2</sup> was President. Stan Savige could sway a meeting in those days, but here was no need for eloquence. All present realised that Legacy had found its soul.

The idea<sup>3</sup> was perfectly in tune with the Australian philosophy of life. C.J. Dennis, who understood the Australian attitude to life as only a poet can, had expressed in *The Moods of Ginger Mick*<sup>4</sup> every soldier's last prayer:

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Norman Wymer in *Father of Nobody's Children*..

<sup>2</sup> The Hon. Sir Thomas White, K.B.E., D.F.C., V.D., A.M.I.A.E., F.R.G.S., later Australian High Commissioner in London.

<sup>3</sup> A similar idea sprang up in Geelong, possibly by independent thought, early in 1926, arising out of the wartime Patriots' Club.

<sup>4</sup> *The Moods of Ginger Mick* - C.J. Dennis (Angus & Robertson), 1916.

Trent tells 'ow when they found 'im, near the end,  
 'E starts a fag an' grins orl bright an' gay,  
 An' when they arsts fer messages to send  
 To friends, 'is look goes dreamin' far away.  
 'Look after Rose', 'e sez, 'when I move on,  
 Look after...Rose...Mafeesh!' An' 'e wus gone.  
 A month ago, fer me the world went grey;  
 A month ago the light went out fer Rose;  
 Becos one common soljer crossed the way,  
 Leavin' a common message as 'e goes.  
 And ev'ry dyin' soljer's 'ope lies there:  
 'Look after Rose. Mafeesh!' Gawd! It's a pray'r

And the following lines in the same poem<sup>1</sup> express the guiding principle of Legacy, that what is done for dependants of fallen comrades is not a charity but a debt:

An' Trent 'e seems to think that in some way  
 'E owes Mick somethin' that 'e can't repay.

It reflected the Australian willingness to acknowledge a moral debt, and tendency to stand by the weak. It appealed to the sense of citizenship and responsibility inspired by Australia's recent rise to nationhood. In the minds of the Legatees it echoed the teachings of childhood:

'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me.'

The inspiration had come. Now for the ways and means.

The ways and means committee consisted initially of Legatees Cohen, Browne, Savige and Doolan. The first meeting was held in 'Professor Browne's study'.<sup>2</sup> Enquiries quickly revealed that education had been well covered by the Repatriation Department, the McCaughey Bequest and the Canteens Trust Fund, so that the only thing needed in that field was co-operation. On 17th November, 1925, Legatee Savige moved that 'The Legacy Club co-operate with the Repatriation Department and the various Employers' Associations with a view to securing

<sup>1</sup> A Gallant Gentleman (from *The Moods of Ginger Mick* by C. J. Dennis).

<sup>2</sup> In 1958 the name of a very widely appreciated television session.

the employment and welfare of children of deceased and totally and permanently incapacitated soldiers.' Opinion gradually evolved that the immediate aim should be to bring the children into touch with the Legatees through youth club activities. These might take the form of debating and literature groups, and physical education through gymnastics, including medical inspection and treatment. Stan Savige also believed in the benefit of camps such as he had conducted before the war.

After six months of careful investigation and organization, the Enquiry Committee handed over to a new<sup>1</sup> committee of Legacy known as the Deceased Soldiers' Children's Welfare Committee, which became the Junior Legacy Club in 1929.

The chairman of this committee was Legatee Will Blackett. An architect and a lover of the artistic, he designed the Legacy Badge. Its form and symbolism will be discussed later. The other members of the first 'D.S.C.W.' for 1926/27 were Legatees Savige, Doolan, Browne, Pittard, Joynt, Beattie and, later, Cyril Smith.

Legatee Browne<sup>2</sup>, through his position in the Education Department, had been able to get particulars of the deceased soldiers' children in the schools; but the real problem was to persuade their mothers to co-operate in any plans put forward.

Most of the mothers were members of the War Widows' Association, a vigorous and practical body without whose whole-hearted support the new Legacy ideal could not have been put into effect.

To explain the scheme to the widows, the Club selected a Victoria Cross winner and a man with the D.S.O. and M.C. – Donovan Joynt and Stan Savige. They took on a little Dutch courage at the Naval and Military Club and sallied forth to the meeting at Anzac House. In their enthusiasm they arrived too early, so they suggested to Mrs. Florence Smith, the Secretary, that they should return to the Naval and Military, lest their courage should grow cold or their power

<sup>1</sup> Legatee Savige urged this so that all donations should be clearly for work with dependants. This is still the rule. The Club as such is financed by subscriptions and levies on member. Cf. Board Minutes 29/4/1927.

<sup>2</sup> Professor G. S. Browne, M.C., M.A. (Oxon.), Dip. Ed. (Oxon., Lond., Melb.). He exercised great influence on educational thought and practice in Victoria.





**LEGACY CLUB**  
MELBOURNE

**Deceased Soldiers' Children  
Welfare Committee**

W. A. M. BLACKETT	G. S. BROWNE
S. G. SAVIGE	E. J. PITTARD
F. J. DOOLAN	W. D. JOYNT

***In which one of these spheres  
are you going to help?***

<b><i>For Sons and Daughters of Deceased Soldiers</i></b>	}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LEGACY JUNIOR BOYS' CLUB.</li> <li>2. BOYS' VACATION CAMP.</li> <li>3. BIG BROTHERS FOR DECEASED COMRADES' SONS.</li> <li>4. VOCATIONAL PLACING.</li> </ol>
---	---	---

**THE BIRTH OF JUNIOR LEGACY.**

Facsimile of card issued by the D.S.C.W. Committee to members of Legacy.

of persuasion become inadequate. She was equal to the occasion. She told them to come back in half an hour and, with intuitive understanding of masculine weakness, she kept their hats, as she said, 'to make sure that you come back.' Stan rose to the occasion, and the meeting reached a triumphant conclusion when one widow announced, 'You can have my little beggar; I can't do anything with him.' The gale of laughter which followed signified that the day was won.

The boys themselves were to assemble at Anzac House on the following Monday. Again, Stan Savige was chosen to 'put the idea across'. This time his first support was Frank Meldrum. They had provided a few bottles of lemonade and a few buns, in the hope that a couple of dozen boys would come along. As they approached the building they heard a noise like that of a boys' school on break-up day. There were less than a hundred boys present, but to Stan and Frank it seemed that half the supporters of Collingwood and Richmond Football Clubs had assembled!

However, they got them inside – all except one – a pugnacious-looking small boy from Abbotsford, who was not going to take anything on trust.

'Can you fight?' asked Stan. The boy with 'the face like a Mallee-root' nodded. 'Then come inside and we'll teach you boxing.' He came in; but it was the warmth of the smile, not the boxing, that had turned the scale.

From long experience with youth clubs, Stan Savige knew that self-government and active participation by the boys would be more than half the battle.

They elected their own office bearers, their first secretary being Bill Johnson, now a solicitor in Melbourne.

The boys suggested football, lacrosse, debating and the like. And very soon they had the lot, and much else as well.

The first contact with the children had been made on 6th February, 1926, when some 200 of them were taken to Rickett's Point, Beaumaris, for a day's outing. 'One youngster,' writes Claude Blatchford, 'on presenting a penny at the ice-cream tub, had his penny put back tightly in his hand and was told, "Today it's all yours." His look of round-

eyed wonder on being so assured was most arresting.' A new age was dawning for the war orphan. The first Christmas party at Government House was held on 17th December, 1926, at which time it was the Governor-General's residence.

The first of the youth club activities was the Boy's Literary and Debating Class, for which 142<sup>1</sup> boys enrolled on 27th July, 1926. Under the direction of Legatees Harold Peters and Alan Murray the boys achieved signal success in debating and public speaking, including remarkable victories at the Ballarat South Street competitions. Later in the year, classes in gymnastics were begun, first at the Forester's Hall in Latrobe Street, and later the Drill Hall in Alexandra Avenue, Legatees Williams and Meldrum were the instructors, with Legatee Vavjanovski to teach boxing. However, they were only amateurs, and the classes did not go as well as expected; so Frank Meldrum persuaded Aaron Beattie, a top ranking physical culture instructor, to join the club and take over responsibility, which he did in October, 1926. The class at that time numbered seventy boys. It soon rose to 145. Aaron recruited Jim Tierney, a naval type who had fought under Jellicoe in the Royal Navy. He was then Physical Training Director at Scotch College. Since his appointment the boys' classes have never looked back. Legacy boys have much for which to thank him, as well as his successor, 'Sergeant' Brown. Sergeant Brown, an Aldershot man, has served since 1930 without a break. Melbourne Rotary donated the first equipment – the horizontal bars – during their 'Welfare of Youth Week', a gesture inspired by a visit to the classes.

To illustrate the faith upon which the various activities were founded, Blatchford's *Legacy* may be quoted:

'Having regard to the manner in which the work amongst the children has developed, it is intensely interesting to recall that that work was undertaken practically upon faith. There were no assured sources of income from which to defray the expenses incidental to the establishment and maintenance of the classes. At one stage, there were personal debits against Legatees S.G. Savige and Aaron Beattie for gymnasium clothing for very considerable amounts. The work was its own advertising,

<sup>1</sup> Report by Legatee Savige at luncheon, 3/8/1926.

and it was not long before money was forthcoming; but the fact that it was undertaken before the necessary financial arrangements were made is a tribute, not only to the sincerity of purpose of those closely associated with it, but also to their vision.'

The same faith was shown in undertaking the first boy's camp at Balnarring in December, 1926. The idea of a camp was of basic importance in the mind of Stan Savige. He was accustomed to say, 'A boy doesn't become a man until he has fallen out of a tree and has eaten a pound of dirt.' It worried him to think that the Junior Legacy boys, many of them from inner suburbs, were denied the benefits which he had experienced in the bush and swimming-holes of Korumburra, and which he had given to the scouts in his South Yarra days. It must be remembered that the motor car was by no means as ubiquitous as it is today and certainly not within the reach of the war widow.

Stan has been in the habit of camping (with his wife and small daughter, Gwen) in the scrub where Balnarring now stands. In 1926, he bought some land at Palm Beach, now known as Somers, and was ready to put his camp scheme into effect.

There was no money – the Club's credit balance each year having been under £7. In that year it was £5/10/3, but Stan Savige's faith was already becoming a Legacy tradition. The youngsters were to be charged nothing (except their rail fares, 4/6d. for juniors). The Army provided seven tents, the hotels provided utensils, various men gave foodstuffs and the members of the club helped with donations. As with the loaves and fishes, there was even a small credit balance.

The boys' groups had now been launched on a very sound basis, but nothing had been done about the girls. There was very good reason for hesitancy. The club did not have its present reputation, which could only come from many years of unblemished service. One unfortunate incident, or even a false statement from a mentally-unstable girl, could have been sufficient to destroy the club.

However, Aaron Beattie and Stan Savige were convinced that the risk, if any, must be taken, and they secured a promise from Mrs. Gillies, formerly Miss Gertie Anderson, of the Education Department's Physical Culture Staff, that she would take charge if required.

Fierce opposition met their request to the Committee, for the reasons just given. Finally Stan declared, 'We have been given general permission to establish classes for the children of deceased soldiers without mention of whether they are boys or girls, and we will go ahead.'

Mention of the eminently suitable Gertie Anderson as leader had brought Professor Browne in behind them, and the battle was won. Aaron Beattie, Donovan Joynt and Cyril Smith went ahead with the proposals, and the classes were successfully launched about the middle of 1927. Girls' camps began in 1930 during the presidency of Legatee Savige. He was the organiser and Mrs. Gillies was in charge.

Mrs. Gillies gave her services free for eight years. Two years later, Miss Enez Domec-Carré<sup>1</sup> became the guiding spirit. Brilliant as she is in physical education and creative dancing, her greatest contribution is in developing an attitude to life and other people, in building up self-esteem and setting standards of deportment and conduct, and above all in helping her charges to retain the charm of girlhood.

Just as the shoes and gym, clothes of the boys were obtained on the personal credit of Stan Savige, since Legacy had no money,<sup>2</sup> so the silk for the girls' gym uniforms was obtained from Makower, McBeath and Co. on the credit of Aaron Beattie.

The next group which came up for consideration were those who had grown too old for the junior classes – fine young men, anxious to give service, now that they were able to stand on what Stan Savige often referred to as 'their own little flat feet'. In 1929, under the guidance of Legatees Carleton and Wilkinson, the Intermediate Legacy Club was formed, its existence being officially recognized at the Sydney conference in 1932. Membership was small, and they

<sup>1</sup> 'Miss Victoria' and runner-up to 'Miss Australia'.

<sup>2</sup> The early correspondence for Legacy and much secretarial work for many years afterwards were done in an honorary capacity by Stan Savige's secretary, Miss Vi Bagnell.

had no name, no badge, no constitution and, as yet, no fully satisfying purpose. In 1929, they were appointed Prefects of Junior Legacy to help with the work in classes and camps. The first members were Junior Legatees McGregor, Kennedy, Davidson (two) and Hollingsworth. Not all Junior Legatees became Intermediates when they turned eighteen, but those who did had a fine attitude to life and service, and were willing to turn a hand to any Legacy activity.

In 1930, when Legatee Savige stood for Parliament, they offered their support in gratitude for his interest and help:

"This club realizes the valuable yet silent work you have been doing for us. First in starting Junior Legacy and keeping it going, then in starting this club and making a good job of it. So we feel that we can render you some assistance and keep you along the road to success in the coming elections. We therefore offer the services of every member of this club in any way which may be beneficial to you.'

The first Junior and Intermediate Legatee to pass into the senior ranks was Legatee Len Frazer, who went abroad with the Engineers attached to the 17th Brigade. Stan Savige liked to tell how the road in Libya was blocked by a derelict Italian tank, believed to be mined. Lieutenant Frazer (a married man with three children) immediately volunteered to de-louse it and the advance was resumed.

After Greece and Crete he was ordered to surrender by a senior officer, but, after delivering a short lecture about an officer's duty under King's Regulations, he walked off into the bush. After weeks of pursuit he escaped by submarine to rejoin his unit in Egypt. He survived to be City Engineer of Melbourne.

It was a proud day for Legatees Stan Savige and Bill Cremor when, on leave during the war, they were present to see Captain Len Frazer, who had 'eaten his pound of dirt' in their Somers camp, become Legatee Frazer.

The high achievements of Junior and Intermediate Legatees in peace and war are too numerous to mention.

Most Intermediate Legatees had been to the camps at Somers, and there was a deep bond of affection between them and 'the Colonel'. When he became a General, Norm Smith,

for years the secretary of the Intermediate Club, said to him, 'What are we going to call you now, Colonel?' 'Norm,' he said, with the heart-warming twinkle they knew so well, 'I don't care what you call me, so long as you have a smile on your face.'

There is still one group to be mentioned, surely the most important of all, in their own right as well as that of their children – the 'Mums'. Stan Savige never tired of talking about their importance, almost to the point of boring his listeners in later years.

The War Widows' Association gave him their warmest co-operation from the time of his inspired and somewhat illuminated address in 1926. In July, 1929, they sent him the following letter:

'The Committee and members of the above Association desire me to write and congratulate you on attaining the Presidentship of the Legacy Club.

'We appreciate everything that your Club has done in the past for us and our children; but the greatest pleasure was when we heard that you had been elected to the Chair. You have all Good Wishes and Luck from our 400 members. Please convey to the Legacy Club our gratitude for everything in the past and accept my personal congratulations.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) F. Smith, Hon. Secretary.'

So, in less than four years from Frank Doolan's question, the main fields of Legacy has been opened up; and Legatee Stan Savige had been a driving force in each field.

In the words of the first historian<sup>1</sup> of Legacy – 'It is difficult to over-estimate the value of the work performed by Legatee S.G. Savige at the inception of the Club, and since. He was the real founder of the Club.'

These words are specially significant because they were written within eight or nine years of the founding of the Club, while memories were fresh and all the foundation members of the Club, except five,<sup>2</sup> were still living, and

<sup>1</sup> *Legacy* – C. Blatchford (C. D. Joynt, 1932) p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Legatees Eric Tulloch, Robert Lowe, E. T. Leane, Fred Forrest and C. V. Watson.

available for reference. The Adelaide Club planned writing a history in 1939; but it was not until 1944 that the second history appeared – the first volume of Hilmer Smith's comprehensive two-volume *History of the Legacy Club of Sydney*.

While the activities described above were being initiated the expansion of Legacy had begun. In August, 1925, a club was established in Geelong, with Dr. K.D. Purnell as President, and E.J. Fairnie, of the R.S.L. Mill, as Secretary. In January, 1926, the Ballarat Club was formed with Legatee A.F. Heseltine as President and R.C. Bishop as Secretary. Sydney<sup>1</sup> Legacy was established on 10th June, 1926, and Bendigo on the 17th, with Legatees F. Levy and D.L. Parry as President and Secretary.

Sydney Legacy, the first Legacy Club to be established outside Victoria, in Australia's largest city and in the most heavily populated state, required organization far beyond that of any other state at the time.

Melbourne began on a rather haphazard trial and error basis, though the errors were few. Sydney's organization became a model for large-scale work. The founders of the Sydney Club were all men of considerable stature both in military and civilian life. All except two held the rank of Major or higher.

By coincidence, their preliminary discussions were held over a round table – at the Imperial Services Club – where Melbourne Legatees White, Savige and Hilmer Smith explained the purpose of Legacy. Hilmer Smith, a prominent banker, was transferred to Sydney, and he took the actual steps that led to the founding of the club. The meeting for the purpose of forming the Sydney Club was held on 27th July, 1926,<sup>2</sup> and the first luncheon was held on Thursday, 19th August, 1926, at Sargent's in Market Street.

Early in March, 1927, Legatee Savige explained to Sydney the work being accomplished by the Melbourne Club in connection with Child Welfare:

'Legatee Savige mentioned that a Boys' Club, with a gymnasium and debating society, has been formed in

<sup>1</sup> At first it was called New South Wales Legacy.

<sup>2</sup> The Legacy Club of Sydney – Hilmer Smith, 1944, p. 4.

Melbourne, and that it had a membership of 175 boys, all sons of deceased soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

Later in the year, a Junior Legacy Boy's Club with thirty-six members was started in Sydney, and a Girls' Club followed in 1929, in which year there were sixty-two boys and sixty-one girls enrolled.<sup>2</sup> By 1935 there were 299 children in Sydney Junior Legacy.

The full story of Sydney Legacy's mammoth endeavour is told in the two volumes mentioned earlier and in Malcom Ellis's semi-official over-all picture, *The Torch*, much of which applies to Legacy work in all states.

Because of these accounts, there will be no attempt in this book to make a detailed, comprehensive survey of Legacy activities either in Victoria or further afield.

The history of the Legacy movement may be divided into four periods:

1. The formative period 1923-1930.
2. Growth and co-ordination, 1931-1939.
3. The difficult war years and early post-war years, 1939-1951.
4. The years of maturity from 1952 onwards.

The formative years have been briefly described above, but there will be further references to this period from time to time.

'During 1927-28 much was done towards the establishment of Legacy Clubs in other States. Visits by Legatee S.G. Savige to Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth<sup>3</sup> were utilized by him to communicate Legacy ideals to prominent returned soldiers in these capitals. Largely as a result of this propaganda, Legacy Clubs were subsequently established in these cities mentioned.'<sup>4</sup>

In the year Legatee Savige was President of Melbourne Legacy, new clubs were formed at Ararat and Fremantle, so

<sup>1</sup> *The Legacy Club of Sydney* - Hillmer Smith p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *The Legacy Club of Sydney* - Hillmer Smith p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Legatee Savige had the honour of addressing the inaugural meeting of Perth Club.

<sup>4</sup> *Legacy* - Blatchford, pp. 60 and 61.

that after only seven years of existence there were twelve clubs and a membership of about 1,000.<sup>1</sup> A few months afterwards, in the presidency of Cyril Smith, Launceston Remembrance Club accepted the Legacy Charter and ideals, so that in every state of Australia there were Legacy Clubs pledged to the care of dependants of their departed comrades.

The Legacy Clubs up till 1932, as listed in Blatchford's Legacy, are listed below:

LIST OF LEGACY CLUBS WITH DATE OF FOUNDATION

Club	Founded	Club	Founded
Melbourne	September, 1923	Canberra	April, 1928
Geelong	August, 1925	Brisbane	May, 1928
Ballarat	September, 1925	Perth	June, 1928
Sydney	June, 1926	Ipswich	June, 1929
Bendigo	June, 1926	Ararat	September, 1929
Adelaide	January, 1928	Fremantle	January, 1930
		Albury	August, 1932
Affiliated Club			Date of affiliation
Launceston Remembrance Club			November, 1930

(2)

Before the story of Stan Savige's work in Legacy is resumed, it must be made clear that even Legatees have some home life of their own; and, although Legatee Savige had rather less than most, it is essential to his biography. His home life was further restricted by his continued army service in peace-time.

The period of the formation of Legacy found the Savige family living in Grant Street, Malvern<sup>2</sup> There were three of them, Stan, Lilian and their small daughter, Gwen. Gwen Savige was an extremely lively, intelligent and affectionate child, but almost from birth she suffered a succession of painful illnesses which imposed a heavy burden of anxiety on her mother and father, the mother, of course, taking the heaviest strain. The parents had suffered a sad blow when

<sup>1</sup> The judicious distribution of Legacy 'Bulletins' also helped greatly in spreading information.

<sup>2</sup> Later they moved to Carlyle Street, Hawthorn, where they lived for nearly twenty years.

the expected birth of a boy had brought serious illness to the mother and had ended for ever their hopes of further children.

Lilian Savige to all outward appearances enjoyed good health; but she suffered from a chronic low state of health which made ordinary activities a great effort of will, although she always put up a brave front. She also suffered in spirit because the change in Stan's religious beliefs, mentioned earlier, had drawn them away from the Baptist Church and the friends who had comforted her lonely war years.

But Stan was a very loving if somewhat dictatorial husband, and, although they were in their thirties when married, many of their long-cherished dreams of married bliss came true. For the first three years, although Stan had to make interstate trips from time to time, the demands of Legacy, a Militia Command and all the associated activities which quickly snowball around these had not yet begun. Their lives for those years followed the normal, happy pattern of early married life, the occasional storms making the calms all the sweeter.

At home, Lilian frequently played the piano and sang the old favourites, especially the war-time songs. Stan enjoyed listening, though he had little talent in that direction himself. They were often able to indulge in the luxury of dining out, for choice at the Florentino, as a prelude to dancing, which they both loved, or the theatre. Stan enjoyed playing the host at a small dinner party, and did it extremely well. He gave thought to small details, such as cards or flowers to mark places, and to niceties of placing, and of promoting a happy atmosphere.

His sense of humour was extremely keen and associated with a general good-humour, except when his 'paddy' was stirred up. It was not the kind of humour which goes down in endless stories and quotations; but more the kind that brings frequent small smiles and general cheerfulness.

At Christmas-time, Stan and 'his little offsider', Gwen, would set off for Balnarring to set up camp in the scrub. Then mother would follow and enjoy Stan's camp cooking – and he was no mean cook – especially of his own freshly-caught fish.

As business prospered and the initial expenditure of married life was mastered, the possibility of a week-end house began to open up, and in 1926 he bought several blocks of land at Balnarring East, or 'Palm Beach', now called Somers. There were then no trees, no houses, no shops. Stan and his father, with the help of a local builder, erected the seaside house which was probably the saving of the whole family – the scene of many happy gatherings of Legacy friends and innumerable other visitors from all walks of life.

Here, the pressures of his supercharged life were eased, as he made jam or pickles on a scale to feed a platoon. Here he could sit on the front verandah and look across the beach and the soothing waves to the ever-changing beaches and headlands of Phillip Island. From here he could step into his boat in the backwater below and enjoy a day's fishing. Here, in the evenings, he could relax before huge log fires in the den, and yarn with Pat Hanna, Donovan Joynt, Carl Carleton, Bill Cremor, Jim Gillespie and numerous other friends. Here, too, Lilian could feel that the man for whom she had waited so faithfully was hers without the competition of public duties.

And at night the stars were gentle with the sea mist, as the sea breathed evenly on the beach, and the golden lights of Phillip Island winked and nodded their approval.

In Melbourne, Lilian had to fight a losing battle for Stan's crowded hours. As the years passed, more and more of his evenings were taken over, and the Saturday afternoon military parades grew into week-end T.E.W.T.'s<sup>1</sup> for his young officers.

These young men, of course, often came to the house for evening classes, and she exchanged the gift of her gentle, gracious presence and kindly hospitality for their cheerful noise and their gay nonsense.

Second only to his love of children and the less fortunate of his fellow men was his love of animals and birds. He always had a fine collection of cats and dogs, and Somers made it possible to provide horses<sup>2</sup> for the children. The first horse, a big roan, was an unhappy purchase. After it had threatened the children, Stan went up to its paddock to look into the matter; whereupon it seized him by the chest with its

<sup>1</sup> Tactical exercises without troops.

<sup>2</sup> Big Boy, Dolly, Bess and Peggy.

teeth and prepared to maul him. Although almost out of his mind with the pain, Stan fought back and, managing to strike the horse in the eyes, was able to break free. The bite was serious and it became septic, endangering his life. However, the incident has its funny side, seen after the event. Luckily for the family, for Stan was a shocking sight, Pat Hanna was at hand. Now Pat was a master of the art of entertainment; but there were some gaps in his medical knowledge. Moreover, the only thing in sight with a medical flavour was a bottle of Friar's Balsam. Pat applied this, hot and pungent, to the raw wound, to be startled by wild exclamations in lurid Persian, or some such. The local doctor sent Stan smartly up to Melbourne for treatment so that neither the horse's bite nor Pat's treatment proved fatal.

Pat, however, records an interesting sidelight. It was quite often said in Militia and Returned Soldier circles that in the event of another war the returned men would lack the necessary razor-edged response to danger. In the midst of the reeking balsam Stan referred to this, and mentioned with satisfaction that there was nothing wrong with his reactions. Apparently the idea had worried him and he was glad to have had it tested. Although Stan appeared hearty and carefree, he had a very serious attitude to all aspects of his militia soldiering. In 1931, for example, his battalion was acknowledged the best<sup>1</sup> in the Division; but he wrote a long appraisal of its weaknesses, directing the searchlight first on his own deficiencies as battalion commander.

Many of the military and semi-military activities to be described later took him to the Naval and Military Club, which in those days must have been a very lively spot, with something of the atmosphere and behaviour of a Junior Officers' Mess. Here he met General Blamey, who fascinated him not only by his knowledge and intelligence, but by a certain naughtiness and delight in defying opinion.

Wherever Stan Savige went he attracted men around him like the centre of a solar system. It was not so much his wit or his conversation as a warmth and good-humour that produced good fun, good-humour and good comradeship in those around him. They loved his cheerfulness and warm-heartedness, and his appreciation of their company.

<sup>1</sup> It won the cup for the most efficient battalion (in tactical exercises, bivouac, field firing, Vickers-gun work, guards, turn-out, etc.) and the Sports Cup.

William Tainsh, Australian poet and philosopher, addressing Legacy on 17th June, 1957, regarding man's priceless gift of friendship, said, 'Talking of friendship, what greater friend could any man have than your founder, the late Stanley Savige?' Savige and Tainsh often met at the Savage Club, of which Stan was a member for nearly thirty years, and where he met many notable thinkers as well as some whom he valued merely as good companions.

In the army he appeared to consider people in three broad categories: the 'good blokes', the 'funny men' and 'the drongoes'. In case this should start some quick self-classification among readers, it should be added that there were many shades and combinations of all three groups.

His closest friend was probably Frank Meldrum, his 'little play-mate', a mightily atom capable of unleashing tremendous mental or physical energy when the occasion demanded (When condemned to 'rest and care' some years ago, he promptly headed for Central Australia, and then bought a pineapple farm in New South Wales, where he continues to astonish the natives). He was greatly helped by his wife, Doris, who was also a source of spiritual strength to Lilian Savige. Lilian's other close friends were Mary Gillespie, Win Heley, Edith Joynt, May Cooper and Lady Elizabeth Gellibrand (May Cooper being her girlhood friend, May Cameron).

Revered, loved and trusted by both Stan and Lilian Savige was little Miss Ruth James, Sunday School teacher at South Yarra Baptist Church, wise and kindly friend for half a century.

Gellibrand was his friend and adviser for over thirty years; but Gellibrand was eighteen years his senior. Meldrum and Savige were associated for a similar period, but they were in closer and more regular contact. They were of the same age group, they held the same ideals, shared the same beliefs about Legacy, and would fight for them at the faintest whisper. This statement takes nothing from the comradeship of many deeply valued friends of twenty-five or more years, or scores of others with somewhat shorter or less intimate friendship.

A few of his sayings have passed into Legacy and 2nd A.I.F. legend: 'Let's give it a fly, boys!' (a favourite in the old 24th). 'the only "experience" is transferred trust in God then trial and error.' 'this is the tamest fight I've seen - let's liven it up.' 'Keep your ears open, your mouth shut and be prepared for any eventuality.'<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1920's, there was some danger that alcohol might get the better of him but he recognised the danger signs and the threat did not develop. It was characteristic that when he could see a heavy night coming up he would send home, if he could, any younger companion who would be better out of it.

In 1930, the death of Legatee Fred Forrest, Member of the House of Representatives for Caulfield, almost changed Stan Savage's life, for he allowed himself to be persuaded to stand for Parliament. On his committee - a unique and, in fact, an incredible honour - were four Victoria Cross winners; Albert Jacka (14th Battalion), Donovan Joynt (8th Battalion), Robert Grieve (37th Battalion) and George Ingram (24th Battalion).

It was the second year of the depression, and all candidates were Nationalists. Stan was placed second, the seat being won by Sir Harold Luxton, then Lord Mayor of Melbourne. Had Stan been an astute or unscrupulous politician, he could probably have won the election. He had three chances. He was offered, in fact given, a substantial cheque from a powerful 'vested interest'. He returned the cheque. Then he was asked by the Local Option Group to press for local option regarding alcohol. He could have pressed for this without a qualm, as the local option question had been adroitly scuttled by Parliament before the referendum in 1929. He refused. They placed him last in the preferences. He was invited to address the civic leaders of Caulfield. It was a time of depression in business and to this group the real issue was wage reduction. Stan refused to speak in favour of 'the dole' or any reduction at the expense of the horny-handed worker. Yet the Labor Party placed him last, though he lost the votes of the civic leaders because they considered he was too near Labor thinking.

<sup>1</sup> Slightly modified for publication.

With Syd Birrell as organizer, and using army jargon and methods, they had a lot of fun out of the campaign, in which Stan was close behind the elected member and a long way ahead of the rest. He probably realized that he had had a lucky escape, and, although asked to stand for Parliament again later, he declined the honour.

In 1932 he was libelled by two Adelaide papers. A book by a Turkish General<sup>1</sup> stated that some British officers of Dunsterforce, on leaving Persia with their 'brides' travelling, according to Eastern custom, in a rear car, had unhooked the coupling, leaving their 'brides' sitting disconsolate in the stationary carriage. 'Tommy-rot,' said Dunsterville, as well he might, seeing that his troops had left the country before the alleged incident, and had left not by train but by ship. As for Captain Savage, he had been evacuated to hospital in Bombay earlier still. The two Adelaide papers, because of Savage's service in the area, foolishly named him in such a way as to constitute a libel. Legally-minded people and bush-lawyers will be interested to know that Villeneuve Smith, K.C., made thirty-one 'innuendos' out of the libel. Lieutenant-Colonel W.H. (Jimmy) Downing handled the case at the Melbourne end, Brigadier Blackburn, V.C., in Adelaide. Mr. Justice Angas Parsons awarded Stan £825 damages. His friends had a grand celebration, suitably illuminated by Pat Hanna in verse, song and cartoon.

His Honour Mr. Justice Angas Parsons stated, 'The slightest enquiry would have shown that the plaintiff is a gallant officer who has served his country with distinction in the Great War and that he has earned a responsible place in the business world, and is a gentleman of high and unblemished character.'

His social service was not confined to Legacy. In 1930 and 1934 he was President of the 24th Battalion A.I.F. Association, from 1932 Patron and Trustee of the Temporarily and Permanently Disabled Soldiers' Association, and from 1931-1934 on the Executive of the Charities Organisations' Society. After World War II he gave honorary service in many other organizations.

<sup>1</sup> Essad Bey - *Blood and Oil in the Orient*.



He was extremely generous and warm-hearted. When his sister, Hilda, died, he adopted two of her children, Stan and Bill Tyquin, who he brought up as his own. Not that he was any more successful than most fathers in bringing up boys to his own ideas, but he was most generous to them and did his best to give them a good start in life, and they grew into fine young men. The boys went to Carey Baptist Grammer School and Gwen to the Methodist Ladies' College – an interesting reflection of the religious denominations in his own home in youth. The Reverend Leonard Tranter, who had officiated at his wedding, was one of the founders of Carey Baptist Grammer School, and Stan gave him moral and financial support.

During the depression, he gave without question to his friends in difficulty. Meeting one former friend<sup>1</sup> in the street, he asked the usual question, 'How are things going with you?' On being told of the usual difficulties, he said, 'Would two hundred<sup>2</sup> be any good to you?' and wrote out a cheque for £200 on the spot. He also gave free office space during the depression to friends who needed it.

His duties in the Militia imposed a continuous burden on him, and robbed his family of his time and attention. In 1925, he was appointed to command the 37th Battalion with the rank of Major, and in 1928 he was given command of the 24th Battalion (Kooyong Regiment). The year 1935 saw his appointment as Commander of the 10th Brigade (Ringwood to Bairnsdale). This side of his life will be dealt with in the next chapter.

(3)

In the early 1930s Australia was in the grip of the great world-wide economic depression. Panic and ineptitude at government level resulted in the worst humiliation Australia has yet suffered. In a land overflowing with wool, hides, wheat and dairy produce, men in threadbare clothes, with the soles out of their shoes, were forced to depend on soup-kitchens, old-clothes, cupboards, and a dole of eight shillings a week, and they longed for work while their country lay undeveloped.

<sup>1</sup> Told by his friend to the author.

<sup>2</sup> Equal to nearly £1,000 in 1959 currency.

Legacy had found its feet just in time. To describe the measures taken in all states cannot be attempted, but in Melbourne, since the Carry-On Club had not yet been formed, Legacy was faced with the problems of needy ex-servicemen as well as its major responsibility of dependants of deceased soldiers.

In the first six months of 1928, there were already 246 applications for relief. In the following year 650 cases were handled by the Distress and Problems Committee, and the Unemployment Committee had placed 376 in jobs. In May of the same year, the matter of widows' pensions was also pushed forward by Legacy, and after two years of combined effort Legacy and the Returned Soldiers' League achieved some measure of success.

With Keith Mitchell as Chairman of Distress and Problems Committee<sup>1</sup> and Ray Hall As Chairman of Unemployment, these two committees were tireless in facing their insuperable problems. At this time liaison with the Charity Organizations Society streamlined methods of dealing with distress and unemployment. Some time later, the Charity Organizations Society invited Legacy to nominate a member to its executive, and Legatee Stan Savige was appointed as representative on 13th July, 1931.

Legatee High Brain, who joined the Club in 1930, quickly gathered the Savige touch regarding faith over economics, and applied it to his great problem of unemployment. Among many inspiring articles for the Bulletin,<sup>2</sup> he wrote in 1931: 'One can, perhaps, be too logical in this queer world of today. If one based one's Legacy work on cold logic, it wouldn't get very far. The "Nelson Touch" is a prime requisite – a temperament which sees the need and, heeding the call for help, does not allow the odds against success to enter into the practical calculation.'

Legatee Stan Savige became President of Legacy in the year 1929-30, as the nation settled deeper into the world-wide depression. He took over from Legatee Serman, and handed on to Legatee Cyril Smith.

<sup>1</sup> Formed in January, 1928, with Legatee Rupert Heley as its first Chairman.

<sup>2</sup> The weekly news-sheet of Melbourne legacy.

They were grim years for the unemployed, and grim years for the widow and the orphan. And they burnt into the early Legatees the importance of their self-appointed task.

In the course of his election speech in July, 1930, Stan Savige said:

'I hate the word unemployment, and the unemployment problem. I believe it to be our duty to seek means to create employment for the unemployed. This is an urgent question. Suffering and hardship are in our midst. The unfortunate man, forced through unemployment, to see want and hunger in his home, is not in the right atmosphere to think clearly along national lines. His immediate and pressing problem is food and clothes.

'Doles or sustenance will not ease the position. The unemployed want work, and work should be created by using this fund (a levy) on work of a reproductive nature only.'

The depression gave special purpose to the camps as the only hope of a holiday for many of the Junior Legatees.

The camps at Somers gained even greater importance in the depression years, although they were always a source of deep satisfaction to Stan Savige. On a larger scale, and with additional motivation, they were the fruition of his pre-war camps with the South Yarra Baptist Boy Scouts. There is a remarkable similarity, too, in the reports which he submitted to South Yarra Headquarters and to the Chairman of the Junior Legacy Club.

The first camps were, of course, quite primitive, though not to quite the same degree as his pre-war camps on the Dandenong Creek in the old Police Paddock. Here at Somers they had palliasses, to wit seventy-five chaff bags<sup>1</sup>, which he borrowed, and there was his beach house next door for emergencies. (Many a small boy with tummyache, a toothache or a heart-ache was glad to crawl into bed with a member of the Savige family.)

For these camps, as in pre-war days, he made the same collection of jam, bread, vegetables, groceries, etc., to ease the strain on actual cash donations. There was the same close

<sup>1</sup> In 1929 a Melbourne clothing factory donated palliasses.

relationship between 'the Colonel' and the Legacy boys as between the young Scoutmaster and the South Yarra boys. Pioneer Legatees say that one of their most vivid memories is of Stan Savige, as a Colonel and even as a Brigadier, with apron on, acting as cook or mess-orderly when required, proving to the boys by personal example the dignity of the lowliest<sup>1</sup> service when given in the right spirit.

His rules were simple – smoking by Juniors and gambling were not permitted, and obedience to leaders was expected. To quote from his Camp Circular:

'The camp is always run without rules or punishment. We go to camp to have a happy time and carry out the essential jobs expected of us without grousing. The greatest pleasure one gets is to be cheerful and willing and to think of the other fellow.'

His note about food is characteristic:

'Food as usual will be the best, and the issue will be according to what each boy can hold.'

In 1929, a substantial camp club-house was erected at a cost of about £400 – planned as a five-roomed house with most of the partitions removed. It was equipped with a petroleum gas plant,<sup>2</sup> and was such a success that a bunk-house containing forty-eight beds was erected in the following year.

It was paid for by the Victorian Postal Institute Dramatic Society, which produced 'Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure' for four nights in the King's Theatre. Donovan Joynt, who was Chairman of the organizing committee, also played a small part in the performances – Rock Hudson type!

Blatchford<sup>3</sup> wrote about the camp as follows:

'It was the inspiration of the efforts of Legatee S.G. Savige, and his courageous conception of the possibilities of the camp, which had influenced the Club to undertake the erection of the permanent camp buildings. Legatee Savige continued to undertake the considerable organization required, year by year.'

<sup>1</sup> One of the finest purifiers of the sould of an infantry Lieutenant is the regular inspection of what goes on between the toes of the men in his platoon.

<sup>2</sup> Donated by a Legatee.

<sup>3</sup> Blatchford, p. 175.

In 1933, five additional huts were erected at a cost of £30 each, each accommodating eight to twelve boys. By 1933 the camp consisted of the main building, six sleeping huts, ablution-house and latrines; furniture, tables, forms, beds and bedding (for camp hospital), 150 hessian palliasses, full kitchen and cooking equipment, two stoves, baker's oven, two coppers, two incinerators, plates, cups, lamps, tools, dishes, concrete cricket pitch, sporting material, etc., all supplied, thanks to the generosity of Legatees and others, for about £1,000. The main building, being leased during the school year to the Education Department for £20 per annum, paid for rates and minor repairs.

By 1935, Junior Legatees were coming to the camp at Somers from areas as far apart as Ararat, Mildura and Canberra. For nearly ten years, until he handed over to Legatee Cremor<sup>1</sup>, Legatee Savige was camp controller. When he left for active service, the camps were taken over by Legatees Mitchell, Carleton and Birrell, and the Intermediate Legacy Club<sup>2</sup> played an important part in their functioning; but in 1942 they had to be abandoned for the duration. In 1945, although still on the active list as a Lieutenant-General, he resumed the organization. But in 1944, and again in 1947 while he was in England, a threat to the camp at Somers developed, cutting him to the quick, although his protests were in subdued tones (for him). A proposal was set on foot to transfer the camp to Mt. Martha or some other seaside or hill resort. Finally, on 10th July, 1951, the fateful edict was issued: 'That the Camp Committee be instructed that the Board does not desire a series of camps to be run by the Melbourne Club; but is of the opinion that arrangements should be made through country clubs for a number of our children to attend their camps, and through country groups for children to spend holidays in country homes; and that the Camp Committee also consider the question of how Melbourne can give a holiday to the children of country clubs and groups.'

<sup>1</sup> Later Brigadier W.E. Cremor, C.B.E., C.O. 2/2nd Field Regiment, C.R.A. 3rd Division, and C.C.R.A. I Corps, II Corps.

<sup>2</sup> Bill Rawlings and Cec Waters ran the 1939 camp.

Arrangements were made for the Somers Camp to be wound up. The camps were replaced by holidays under a scheme whereby Melbourne sent more than five hundred boys for a holiday to the country. It proved very successful, meeting one of the purposes of Stan Savige's camp, and having other advantages. The camps, of course, provided much more; but it would probably require another Stan Savige to re-establish and run the camps. The experience of Western Australia Legacy may yet be a pointer to the future, or, better still, the two schemes may be maintained. At the Annual Conference in Adelaide in 1957, Perth reported<sup>1</sup> that it had established a seaside camp south of the city. Prior to that there had been holidays in country houses; but, since the camp had been established, there had been no application for these.

'We find this is the particular holiday which our wards like most. In fact they will have no other.' – surely a striking vindication of the beliefs about camps held by Legatee Savige!

Another important development in Legacy which was accelerated by the depression was the appointment of family advisers. This grew out of the 'Big Brother' movement, under which Legatees and others had sponsored the migration of children from Britain. Legatee Ray Hall, in August, 1930, put forward proposals for allotting Big Brothers to Junior Legatees who appeared to need them. The term 'Big Brother' was dropped, and the Big Brothering Committee became the Children's Welfare Committee. Gradually the importance of this work was realized, until it became one of the first essentials. The Melbourne plan was adopted by Sydney in its entirety in 1933-34.<sup>2</sup> The emphasis shifted from the idea of Big Brothering the children to advising and helping the mother and, through her, the children.

Legatee Hilmer Smith summed up the importance of caring for the mother as follows:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of the Annual Conference at Adelaide, 1957, pp. 33-37

<sup>2</sup> The Legacy Club of Sydney, Vol. I, p. 176

<sup>3</sup> The Legacy Club of Sydney, Vol. II, p. 332 (1950).

'Without something approaching normal conditions in the home, success in the training of children, both morally and physically, at the Legacy Rooms, was considerably hampered. Mothers harassed by financial and domestic problems were unable to create that atmosphere of happiness and contentment in the home which plays such an important part in the lives of young children. For this reason every endeavour was made to contact as many families as possible in their homes...'

In the words of Legatee Savige it meant 'a cup of tea with Mum in the kitchen'.

The early 'thirties were years of both expansion and consolidation. Eight new clubs were formed between 1930 and 1933. The Charter of Legacy, drawn up by Legatee Cyril Smith, was adopted by the Annual Conference at Canberra in 1930, and the symbolism of the Badge in 1931:

'The Badge of Legacy symbolises in its Torch the undying flame of service and sacrifice handed to us by our comrades of the Great War' who passed on. In its wreath of laurel, with its points inverted in remembrance, is the guerdon of honour that is the meed of those who gave their lives for their country.'

The Badge itself was designed by Legatee Blackett in 1926.



### THE CHARTER OF LEGACY

*The Spirit of Legacy is Service*

The care of dependents of comrades who served in the Great War and who gave their lives, or health, affords a field of service.

Safeguarding the interests of children is a service worth rendering, and their interests include their mental, moral, vocational and physical welfare.

Personal effort is the main essential.

INASMUCH as these are the activities of Legacy, it is your privilege to accept 'The Legacy of Fallen Comrades'.

<sup>1</sup> World War II and subsequent campaigns were added later to both the Charter and the meaning of the Badge

The poems *In Flanders Fields* and *The Answer* has been adopted in early years. In 1927, the Melbourne Board of Management instructed Legatee Peters to investigate possible alternatives, but he could find none better or more suitable.

#### IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

*Lt.-Col. John McCrae (1872-1918).*

*Died on service, as a Doctor, in France.*

#### THE ANSWER

Fear not that you have died for naught,  
The torch you threw to us we caught!  
And now our hands shall hold it high,  
Its glorious light will never die,  
We'll not break faith with you who lie  
On many a field.

Among the major problems of this second period of Legacy were those of conciliation and co-ordination. Stan Savige was a firm believer in conferences. The first inter-club conference was held in his office on 4th May, 1926, when representatives of Melbourne, Geelong and Ballarat attended. It was by his motion at the Fourth Interstate Conference at Canberra in 1930 that the Central Liaison Committee was formed. His share in establishing the Co-ordinating Council will be described later.

Those who knew Stan Savige only in his later years will perhaps not expect to find him starring in the role of a conciliator. Yet this was one of his greatest contributions to the development of Legacy in the settling-down period between the two world wars. Considering what little regard he had for conciliation where his own individual welfare was concerned, his achievements for Legacy in conciliation are all the more praiseworthy.

First, there was the R.S.L. It can fairly be said that the R.S.L. suffered considerable teething troubles during the early 1920's, and there was a distinct chance that, through the fault of either organization, or both, there could have been antagonism, or at least lack of co-operation, between the two bodies. Legatee Savige went to great pains to guard against this. He urged Legatees to be good R.S.L. members, as he was himself, and he approached the problem from the other side also, with the result that several top men in the R.S.L. joined Legacy, paving the way for the complete co-operation which has existed ever since.

There were also some anxious moments when the Carry-On Club was first mooted. Some Legatees feared that it might divide and weaken public support; but Legatee Savige, as well as most others, saw that only good could come of it, provided there was co-operation. As a result, his opinions have been richly vindicated.

The famous Kemsley-Savige team – famous not only for its achievements but also for the sparks which often flew as each supported his convictions – was largely responsible for the sound basis of co-operation.

The respective roles of the two great movements were set out in a joint circular in 1935, following the first of a series of annual conferences.

General rule 1. Legacy's main effort is directed towards the care of widows and children of deceased servicemen in all phases of Welfare, Relief, Education, Assistance and Employment.

Carry-On is concerned with *living* servicemen and their dependants in the several phases mentioned above.

A very happy blending of the two spheres was made when Intermediate Legacy in Melbourne undertook the care of

children of Disabled Servicemen, forming the 'Don Esses' Club with Carry-On support.

Legatee Savige was also able to help in solving a membership issue with Western Australia at a time when the whole State of Western Australia, not without reason, was by no means well-disposed towards the Eastern States.

The most important problem of all, however, was the question of co-ordination without domination. By birth and history Australians have always been suspicious of regimentation and domination. In addition, there are problems arising from interstate jealousies and prejudices, particularly between Sydney and Melbourne – and Legatees make no pretence of being angels. In fact most of them, including Stan Savige, are by instinct 'rugged individualists', though capable of sublime unity, given sufficient good cause. When Sydney did not favour a Federal Council at its first meeting, the proposal was withdrawn, and allowed to rest for several years. Throughout all the negotiations which led to the formation of the Central Liaison Committee and later the Co-ordinating Council, Legatee Savige was a great advocate of conciliation. The fact that he and Legatee Kemsley were locked up in a room until they could hammer out a solution to the problem of a constitution for the Co-ordinating Council is not at variance with this; for Legatees reserve the right (and use it) to hammer each other with the utmost vigour in what they believe to be the interests of Legacy. As a result of his attitude, relations between Melbourne and Sydney Legacy Clubs, in spite of differences in problems and methods, have been astonishingly good. The smaller clubs, of course, look on both Sydney and Melbourne with kindly tolerance.

The establishment of the Co-ordinating Council was an essential step in the progress and development of the Legacy Movement. The last President of its predecessor the Central Liaison Committee, Legatee A.M. Sullivan, wrote as follows:

'It is generally felt that the creation of the new Council is an outstanding event in the history of Legacy, and that by reason of its formation and constitution it will be much more truly representative of the Movement throughout Australia than the former Central Liaison Committee. And

certainly it would not have been possible to make a happier or more appropriate choice for the first Chairman of the Council than Legatee Savige, to whose initiative and careful thought its creation is due; and in Legatee Meldrum, a tried and staunch member of Melbourne Legacy for many years, he will have a worthy collaborator.'

The importance of co-ordination has been well set out by Hilmer Smith<sup>1</sup>:

'With the expansion of Legacy, a serious problem had emerged by 1934. This problem lay in the fact that the Liaison Committee had no authority and no tenure of office such as would enable it to place the views of Legacy as a whole before the Commonwealth Government.

'Even such a simple matter as the Commonwealth copyright of the Legacy name and badge, referred to in an earlier chapter, caused considerable difficulty in enforcement.

'Although it would have been an easy matter to set up a Federal body with full powers and ample authority, a serious obstacle to the creation of such a body lay in the very proper reluctance of individual clubs to relinquish their independence of thought and action to any controlling body.

'Legatee Savige and other Legatees journeyed far and wide, hearing and correlating all possible shades of opinion as to what would be the best for Legacy as a whole. Before the Bendigo Conference the main principle governing the solution of the problem had been found. This was by simply changing the word "control" for "service", a note which it will be seen formed the theme of Legatee Savige's address in opening the Bendigo Conference<sup>2</sup>.'

Legatee Savige visited most of the Clubs, explaining the implications of the decisions, the Legatee Herbert Sinclair of Sydney did much to convince Adelaide and Brisbane.

The exposition of Legatee Savige of the Melbourne viewpoint, as thrashed out by Legatee Kemsley and himself,

<sup>1</sup> History of the Legacy Club of Sydney, Vol.11, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> In 1937.

was perhaps his most important speech at a Legacy conference, and one of his greatest. Legatee Zade Lazarus (Queanbeyan) stated that he had 'never listened to anything so brilliant or more tolerant than Legatee Savige's explanation.' Legatee Herbert Sinclair, President-Elect of Sydney, declared that it would be 'difficult and almost unbecoming for anyone after that brilliant and informative speech to attempt to get up and endeavour to put his views...'

Legatee Cosh (Launceston) referred to it as 'not only illuminating, but inspiring; and said that 'to come all the way from wherever we have come to hear Legatee Savige's address has been worthwhile.'<sup>1</sup>

These comments are printed because post-war Legatees have never had the opportunity of hearing the founder in his prime. In the following year, when officially opening the Tenth Annual Conference at Sydney, he gave another brilliant address which Legatee Hilmer Smith considered worthy of being printed in full in his history of Sydney Legacy.

One paragraph stresses the Christian basis of Legacy:

'I have heard Legatees say that Legacy is their religion. In Legacy they have found a motive for service, which, beating on the chords of the inner soul, as it does, causes a response in selfless action. I cannot presume to give Legacy the standing of a religion, but I am certain that service in Legacy is a realization of the Beatitudes, and the practical expression of Christianity...'<sup>1</sup>

It must not be thought that he had become ineffective as a speaker after World War II. The following tribute was paid to him by an observer at the Sydney conference in 1945, soon after the war:

'Legatee Savige came to light most effectively several times. Man of two wars, outstanding leader, he was listened to with utmost interest, and we realized him as the perfect bridge between the old and the new problems, the men of 1918 and the boys of 1945, the wise guardian of our principles, devoted to the basic axioms of the founders of

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the 10th Annual Conference, pp. 30-33.

Legacy, but equipped with imagination to adjust to the changing necessities of today.<sup>1</sup>

He also played an important part in the acceptance of second-war men into Legacy and the smooth change-over of duties and responsibilities.

As the war drew near to an end, he wrote to Legatee Perrin:

'Ever since my return from the Middle East I have been really concerned about the necessity to admit members who served in this war...

'The future of Legacy is dependent upon the enrolment of the same sterling type of fellow from this war as was obtained from the last war.'

He had talked with many excellent men in his various commands, skillfully defining the roles of Legacy and the unit associations to avoid friction or duplication.

The position of Tasmania was one of special difficulty, because Hobart Remembrance could well look upon Melbourne as a 'cuckoo in the nest' which had grown much too fast and had developed strange features. Gellibrand and Savige tried to smooth the path to union unofficially in 1936.

In 1937, Hobart Remembrance has passed a resolution that members of Remembrance who wanted to join Legacy would be permitted to form a Legacy Club. Later the Remembrance Club agreed to try out Legacy work and responsibilities for a period of six months. If the experiment proved unsatisfactory a Legacy Club would be formed separately in Hobart by mutual agreement. Fortunately, Hobart Remembrance found itself in full sympathy with Legacy ideals, and in 1940 the union took place. Stan Savige was Guest of Honour (by leave of the Army), and the gratification of Gellibrand, Savige and all Legatees may well be imagined.

But whereas he was a great conciliator between individuals and groups in the interests of Legacy, he gave no heed to conciliation where his own personal relations and welfare were concerned. Unfortunately, too, his hot temper often made him unduly vehement, or even abusive at times. And in

<sup>1</sup> History of the Legacy Club of Sydney, Vol. II, pp. 36 and 37

his latter years this cost him many friends. From this point of view he was at fault; but for his part in the storms which shook Legacy from time to time, and also created antagonism, he deserves credit whether he was right or wrong. For where Legacy was concerned his beliefs were so strong and sincere that when his cherished convictions were threatened he could not keep silent. Stan Savige was never one to shirk an issue, least of all where Legacy was concerned. The strength of his beliefs on Legacy matters was matched by his tremendous mental and physical energy. Few could stand up to his intensity even when his logic was at fault, so that throughout the formative period he and the wise, fair-minded Kemsley were the two predominant forces in Melbourne Legacy.

It must be remembered that clashes were inevitable in Legacy and, indeed, one source of its strength. Ideas and men both had to be licked into the best possible form; and, if either proved unable to take it, neither man nor idea was good enough for Legacy.

The beliefs<sup>1</sup> which underlay Stan Savige's attitude on all Legacy matters were principally these:

1. Legacy is greater than any of its members or any of its clubs.
2. Personal service is the main essential.
3. If a job is worthwhile doing the money will come. (His doctrine of faith over economics.)
4. All dependants of deceased servicemen regardless of time, place or manner of death are deserving of Legacy aid.
5. Co-ordination is necessary between clubs, but it must be co-ordination, not control; co-operation, not domination.
6. There must be no rewards in Legacy. No member should gain financially or socially from membership.
7. There is no room in Legacy for sectarianism, politics, social distinction or rank.
8. The only court of appeal is the unwritten law of cobbers in the field of battle.

<sup>1</sup> These were not stated by him as a creed, but have been deduced by the author from his actions and statements over the years.

His famous speech of 1939 contains the following forecast:

'There is one thing I am absolutely certain about – it has never failed us and it will never fail us in the future – my belief is that our work in regard to values is rather of a spiritual than material nature. When we... decide, after sincere examination, the type of work that should be done, the best thing to do is to forget the yarns of the accountants and economists, and get on with the job. That has been the history of the success of Legacy. I haven't the slightest doubt in the world that, if that spirit is departed from, on that day will be seen the beginning of the crash of Legacy.'

After war broke out, the Co-ordinating Council issued a statement<sup>1</sup> to cover Legacy work during the war.

It refused to lay down any rules, since there was equality between States in Legacy regardless of numbers, and because there was implicit mutual confidence between States and between Clubs.

The attitude of Legacy was summed up in this sentence:

'We are determined to carry on the job of Legacy without fuss or worry.'

In Melbourne, President Eric Russell said:

'Legacy was conceived in times of peace; it was born in peace, and it has grown in peace. It was our hope and perhaps our belief until recently that it would be able to finish its task in peace. That is not to be. It is not for me to attempt to analyse our feelings, but I can say this: "We, who have served in war, detest war; but even more do we detest oppression, double dealing and terrorism such as we have witnessed in the last few years..."'

'And what of Legacy? We have incurred obligations and we have accepted responsibilities. We must see that our work goes on.'

Actually there was no more to be said, for the principles of Legacy apply equally in peace and in war.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Board of Management Minutes, 5/10/1939.

During the war years, apart from occasional visits between campaigns, Legatee Savage had little direct contact with Legacy, although he kept in close touch with its problems and actions. He did, of course, attempt to influence its thought and methods by remote control, especially when one of his vital principles was threatened; but this probably did more harm than good. A number of Legatees felt that he was out of touch with the growing difficulties which faced them; and the later war years saw growing opposition, some of it justified, some based on lack of knowledge and a little of it, unconsciously, on human envy.

He still enjoyed widespread goodwill, the following letter from Perth Legacy in January, 1942, being typical of many letters received from all over Australia:

'Hearty congratulations from myself and all members of Perth Legacy on your promotion.

'We in Perth think of you, the founder of the Perth Club, as one of us, and we feel an almost personal satisfaction in this recognition of your services to your country. We will follow your future career with confidence and pride.'

But there were many who felt that Legacy had outgrown the simple faith of its founder – that new problems called for a new approach and new methods. Time may prove them right. In any case, the men who kept Legacy alive and vigorous during the war years, whether on his side or not, certainly upheld the highest traditions of service.

On 16th August, 1943, he received a heart-warming telegram from the Annual Conference of Legacy Clubs of Australia:

'Legatees representing all the Legacy Clubs of Australia assembled in conference in Melbourne send you warmest greetings and their hearty good wishes for the continued success of your operations against the enemy. On this the 20th Anniversary of the inauguration of Legacy we remember with grateful pride the outstanding service which you as its founder have at all times rendered, and we acknowledge your inspiring leadership throughout the whole history of Legacy.'



In October, 1944, he received a similar telegram on the twenty-first birthday of Legacy.

Legatee Cosh, in welcoming Sir Thomas Blamey to the conference, said:

'This is the twenty-first anniversary of the foundation of Legacy, which took place in this city on 25th September, 1923, in Phair's Hotel, when Stan Savige, now one of your able Lieutenants, brought together a small group.'

It was the climax to his Legacy life, as from 1944 onwards he was able to feel a rising tide of opposition which he could neither understand nor stem.

In 1944, the second official Legacy history, Hilmer Smith's *History of the Legacy Club of Sydney, Volume 1*, was published. Hilmer<sup>1</sup> Smith had scaled the side of Plugge's Plateau with the 12th Battalion at the Landing and taken an active part in all phases of the initial battle. He had taken over command of the Battalion when his Commanding Officer, Colonel Clarke, was killed. He had later commanded the 11th Battalion in France in 1916. He may well be regarded as the Founder of Sydney Legacy, and as its 'Grand Old Man', for at the time of writing he is a vigorous octogenarian. His two volumes will always be an invaluable source book of Legacy history.

But his book, without any ill intention, brought more trouble to Stan Savige through one error of fact. He listed his native Hobart as the first Legacy Club, although if his book had been published only four years earlier it would not have been listed at all.

The first approach to Legacy had been made by Gellibrand to Savige in September, 1936, and Hobart Remembrance had undertaken the children's work of Legacy tentatively in 1937.<sup>2</sup> Affiliation in 1940 had been welcomed by Gellibrand, Savige and all Australian Legatees, because of Legacy's debt to Gellibrand and also because to know the Tasmanians is to love them.

<sup>1</sup> He had been distinguished by his second name, 'Hilmer', ever since Gallipoli, for the obvious reasons that there were many Smiths, but there was only one Hilmer Smith.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Minutes of Tenth Annual Conference of Legacy Clubs of Australia, Bengido, 1937, p. 8.

Unfortunately, controversy later arose as to which was the mother club of Australia, and who was the founder of Legacy.

Who founded Legacy, or where, is of no real significance (except that the search of truth<sup>1</sup> is always significant). The significant thing is Legacy itself, and the work being carried on day after day, year after year, by its faithful members.

But, unfortunately for Stan Savige, he, as the founder of Melbourne Legacy, became a shuttlecock between the contending ideas. And unfortunately at a time when he was least able to handle the protagonists.

It is one of the ironies of Legacy that Gellibrand and Savige – David and Jonathan – through whose combined efforts Legacy had been founded, should have been used to create a rift, however small, within clubs and in Legacy itself.

The question of the founding of Legacy is all in the point of view. If you believe that the man who first makes the suggestion is the founder of a movement, then Gellibrand founded Legacy. If you believe that the founder is the man who takes the first step in launching a movement, who sees it through the dangerous years to full development, and plays a vital part in establishing its activities and its traditions, then Stan Savige was the founder of Legacy.

The position is best summed up as follows:

Legacy was founded by Legatee Stan Savige at the suggestion of Sir John Gellibrand. It was given its name by Legatee Frank Selleck, and its special field of service at the suggestion of Legatee Frank Doolan.

The main thing is that there should be no rift in Legacy. Stan Savige took this view when in 1947 a faction undermined his position as President of the Co-ordinating Council while he was in England. (He was at the time establishing London Legacy – the first and only Legacy Club overseas.)

<sup>1</sup> How far the truth can be forgotten or obscured is shown by one review of Malcolm Ellis's book, *The Torch*. The review stated, 'Its founder was Major General Sir John Gellibrand of Tasmania,' and made no mention whatever of the name of Sir Stanley Savige.

He immediately cabled his resignation to his vice-president, stating, in good Legacy if not in good grammar, 'Legacy is greater than me.'

The crisis was averted by the efforts of Legatees Meldrum and Kemsley; but Legatee Savige resigned from the Coordinating Council in 1948 after having been President since its inception in 1937.

It was the proper course to take, for over the past six years he had suffered greatly and changed greatly. Often his jaded nerves could no longer control his hot temper, suspicion had marred his judgement, he had alienated some of his friends, his re-iteration of first principles irritated some members, and he had become accustomed to having his own way too often. The real Stan Savige was being obscured, and with the facts of the first twenty years now known only to a few, his tremendous contribution to Legacy could easily fall a prey to ignorance or doubt.

In 1948, he handed over the focal position in the Legacy Movement to Legatee Bill Perrin, who, like Legatee Tregent, had proved that blindness is only a challenge to the brave.

The resignation of the Founder moved the delegates deeply. Legatee Lascelles (Brisbane) said:<sup>1</sup>

'It is my privilege to move the following –

"That Conference record its deep appreciation of the service rendered by Legatee Stan Savige to Australian Legacy."

'Gentlemen, I rise with considerable emotion to speak of this. Surely twenty-six years of service such as Stan has given is a life's work? When one remembers his outstanding contribution to his country's cause, one pauses to think – what manner of man is this?

Most of us have cause to remember the ever-ready help and advice given by Stan throughout the years. I, personally have a file of letters in my possession received from Stan over the years, which are rich in Legacy insight, and which are invaluable in all matters pertaining to Legacy. It was Macaulay who said, "The Romans were like brothers, in the

<sup>1</sup> Legacy Conference Minutes, 1948, pp. 60-63.

brave days of old." I think Legacy can claim to be like the Romans. We are like brothers, and so much of that is due to the marvellous leadership given to us by the "Grand Old Man" of Legacy. It is a comforting thought to me, and to every other member of Legacy, I know, that Stan is there to help us....'

Legatee Sherwen (Melbourne), speaking to the motion, added:

'...And so our minds today do not rest on a year, or two years, or three years, but go right back to the history of Legacy, and realize that its founder has relinquished his post as President of the Council, and the leadership of Australian Legacy, but he will never lose interest. I want to say, on behalf of the Melbourne Club, at this juncture of Legacy history, that it owes much, and will continue to remember that it owes much, to Stan Savige....'

Legatee Green (Sydney) said:

'We can assure you, Legatee Savige, from this Conference, and not only from this Conference, but from every Legatee right throughout the whole of Australia, that you have the greatest respect and admiration – and I can say love – of not only the Legatees themselves, but of the thousands, the innumerable widows and children of ex-servicemen, who have been helped by your inspiration through your years of service, and coaching and teaching – a service which has rendered assistance to so many. I sincerely hope you will be spared for very many years to carry on the great work of Legacy.'

It was not known at the time that his years were numbered, but his closest friends, were aware that he could no longer summon his great reserves of mental and physical energy and that his nerves were taut and grayed. In his office he could no longer dictate letters with his old sureness of touch. Often he sat with pen in hand appearing to write but remaining at the same word.

The great dynamo was running down. He consulted his physician Dr. (Brigadier) W.W.S. (Bill) Johnson and was warned that he must take things quietly or suffer a heart attack. Instead, after he had almost retired from Legacy work in 1949, he answered the call of Syd. Birrell,

Melbourne's President, for a further effort. And, like Samson's, his hair began to grow again.

The expansion of Legacy in 1949 under the onslaught of Legatees Savige and Birrell makes a grand story. But in 1950 Dr. Johnston had to tell him that his heart had begun to fail, and that his years were running out. Between them they kept it beating for four years.

In 1949, Birrell and Savige, with the support of the Melbourne Committee for Extension of Legacy, set out to fill up the gaps in Victorian Legacy.<sup>1</sup> The work probably saved Stan Savige. In 1948 he was a bitter and almost a broken man. He felt keenly the opposition of some of his friends, especially as he could neither understand nor deal with it effectively. He might well have said:

I am fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf,  
And that which should accompany old age  
As faith, love, honour, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have.

But 1949 proved to be in the nature of a triumphal procession. Whenever he appeared in a country town the word went around, 'The General's in town.' And men of the 17th Brigade, the 3rd Division and the 2nd Australian Corps came round to remember and be remembered.

Only ten years before he had visited many of these towns recruiting men for war – and war, however just, however necessary, must bring suffering. Now he was recruiting just as hard for the finest fruits of peace and goodwill, to bring some easing and comfort to the suffering.

Before the year was out they had laid the foundation for groups or sub-groups in Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, Orbost, Omeo, Morwell, Traralgon, Moe, Yallourn, Numurkah, Cobram, Nathalia, Sale, Maffra, Yarram, Warragul, Drouin, Lang Lang, Tooradin, Noojee, Korumburra and Foster, and had assisted in the founding of the Shepparton group.

'A survey of the area was made<sup>2</sup> and it was found that there were 33,622 square miles of territory uncovered, or only covered by a few contactors. The total adult

<sup>1</sup> Following much spade work by Legatee Con Fahle.

<sup>2</sup> The full account is given in a paper delivered at Federal Conference, Geelong, October, 1955.

population of this area was 244,306. It was decided to form groups of Legatees in areas of suitable size to make the project workable. A complete survey was made of this area, and at present there are eleven groups. There are 164 Legatees in the groups, while in the area 577 families are already recorded, with a total of 790 children under the age of sixteen. Distance is a factor which has to be considered with these groups. If we take, for instance, a sparsely populated area such as the Bairnsdale area, where Bairnsdale in this case is the centre, and the group extends right to the border, 170 miles away, and in the almost opposite direction for 120 miles, Legatees are spread all over this area, and the monthly meetings are taken in turn from Bairnsdale to Orbost, sixty miles away, to Swan Reach, forty miles away, to Ensay, which is just on sixty miles away. It is interesting to note here that no matter where the meeting is, there is always a very good attendance. Of twenty-two, there are almost always eighteen present, and one member, a first war fellow, travels in 104 miles and 104 miles home – and thinks nothing of it. Not only that but on their way in to the meeting, they carry out their Legacy work to the families along the route. That interest is general throughout the groups, and that is only mentioned not because it is any better than any other group, but just an example. In Horsham, one group which covers 1,600 square miles of territory was formed with eight members, and then had twenty-six families to care for. They increased their membership by appointing Legatees in outlying areas, and at the end of eleven months had found 144 families in that area.'

The years from 1940 to 1953 saw a renewal of expansion in Legacy to meet the needs created by World War II. In addition to groups and individual contractors, new clubs were formed as follows:

Hobart <sup>1</sup>	1940	London	1947
Gouldburn	1945	Hamilton (V)	1948
Horsham	1946	Townsville	1948

<sup>1</sup> The Remembrance Club of Hobart, established 1923, undertook Legacy duties in 1937 and became Hobart Legacy in 1940.

Rockhampton	1947	Mackay	1948
Toowoomba	1947	Tamworth	1948
Warrnambool	1947	Lismore	1948
Wollongong	1947	Armidale	1948
Orange	1948	Shepparton	1950
Maryborough (Q)	1948	Brisbane Water (NSW)	1951
Bundaberg	1948	Colac	1951
Southport	1949	Inverall	1952
Lachlan	1949	Grafton	1953
Hunter	1949	Taree	1953

An interesting offshoot of Legacy was 'Heritage' in New Zealand, founded by Dr. O.C. Mazengarb, K.C., brother of Legatee S.M. Mazengarb of Sydney. In May, 1941, he outlined the nature of the Legacy Movement to Wellington Junior Chamber of Commerce. The response took a different form from that of Legacy, in that the responsibility for the dependants of ex-servicemen was accepted by representatives of all sections of the community, and the members were not all ex-servicemen. The preliminary meeting was held on 25th August, 1941, and the inaugural meeting of 25th August, 1942, since when Heritage has gone from strength to strength.

London Legacy was a Legacy Club in the direct line, with full charter and acceptance of all the principles of Legacy. Legatee Eric Harding had almost succeeded in establishing the movement in London in 1946; but ill health of one of the prime movers, and a reluctance by another to give possible offence to the deservedly famous British Empire Service League had almost extinguished the small beginnings. Stan Savige in the following year built on the spade work of Eric Harding. It was no simple matter. It required every ounce of his tact and anticipation to choose the right men, inspire them with the Legacy ideal, and avoid giving offence or causing misunderstanding. Finally he was successful, and he had the privilege, as President of the Co-ordinating Council, of presenting the Charter to the only Legacy Club outside Australia.

The following account of its founding was supplied by London legacy in August, 1958:

'Preliminary meetings were held in Australia House on 10th September and 7th October, 1947. Seven prospective Legatees attended these meetings and, at the second such meeting Legatee Savige explained the work of Legacy in Australia.

'A further meeting was held on 4th November, 1947, which nine prospective Legatees attended, and Legatee Savige stated that he had received a charter for the London Legacy Club together with Legacy badges from the Co-ordinating Council. A president, secretary and treasurer were appointed at this meeting and it was reported that Lord Gowrie, former Governor-General of Australia, had consented to be our first Patron and to present the charter at an inaugural meeting to be held in Australia House on 2nd December, 1947.

'At the inaugural meeting, Legatee Savige was unanimously invited to occupy the Chair and, apart from nine prospective Legatees, the meeting was attended by Lord Gowrie and the High Commissioner for Australia, Mr. Jack Beasley. Legatee Savige called on Lord Gowrie to present the charter on behalf of the Co-ordinating Council, and he made a simple but moving speech drawing attention to the fine work that Legacy had done in Australia for the widows and children of deceased Australian ex-servicemen. Legatee Savige inducted the nine founder member and presented them with Legacy badges.'

The Foundation President was Legatee A. Lewis, and the Foundation Secretary Legatee P. Swan. Legatees everywhere pay sincere tribute to the sustained invaluable work of this small band, 13,000 miles across the sea from the mother club.

In June, 1945, Sir John Gellibrand died peacefully in his sleep. Almost the last words he breathed to Lady Gellibrand were, 'I pray to God that Stan may come safely out of all this.' His death was deeply mourned by Legatees everywhere, and by all soldiers who had served with him. To Stan Savige it

was a grievous personal loss at a time when he was greatly to need his old friend. A year later a most fitting memorial was established in the form of a memorial scholarship<sup>1</sup> entitling a Junior Legatee to a two-year post-graduate course overseas. Only one thought might have been happier: in 1954 to link the names of Gellibrand and Savige on one scholarship, to perpetuate their friendship and Legacy's debt to them as long as Legacy shall last. Especially fitting in another way, too, because the one had been the top academic brain of the Empire in the Military Colleges, and the other had left school at twelve years of age with no scholarship to help him in his arduous climb to greatness.

At the 26th Annual Conference of Legacy Clubs of Australia, at Canberra in October, 1954, Legatee Brian Armstrong delivered the wonderful tribute known as the Savige Memorial Oration.<sup>2</sup> After describing the early life and First-War record of Sir Stanley Savige, he said:

'Such was the man who, in August 1923, at the instance of his former Commander, Major General Sir John Gellibrand, gathered around him a handful of men who had fought and laughed with him over four well-remembers years...

'What has been achieved since then is known to you all. The Legacy ideal, unique in its conception, with no known counterpart elsewhere, is now accepted, welcomed and honoured throughout the Commonwealth and abroad. But in those early days, the achievements of the Founder of the first of the Legacy Clubs as we know them, in the face of all manner of difficulties and frustrations, are worthy of our lasting memory and thankfulness. As the source of every river lies in the hills, so must the inspiration from which stems a great conception of service to one's fellow men be lofty and above reproach. Savige was the embodiment of this new expression of comradeship, as he was the central figure and driving force of the little group that sponsored it. But for his zeal, his faith and determination, it is likely that the flame, newly kindled, might have flickered and died... There were no funds, no precedents to guide the new adventurers, only the clear bright flame of an ideal just

<sup>1</sup> Financed by a special levy on all members.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix to Record of Proceedings.

envisaged, and the conviction that the Cause was unassailable.... Down the years of Legacy there are many names deserving of honour, men from all States and of all stations of life; but no name stands out in such clear and bold relief as does the name of the man we now remember. By his work you shall know him. He was, in my belief, the Soul of Legacy....'

Today, Legacy cares for 25,200 widows and 18,900 children; in so doing it has incurred expenditure in the last year amounting of £454,000.<sup>1</sup>

The formation of Grafton and Taree Clubs a few months before the death of Legatee Savige brought the total to forty-five clubs. There has been no new club formed since his death.

No attempt has been made to describe the multifarious activities by which Legacy has won the confidence and devoted support of the nation. An account of Legacy is too important, in fact too sacred, to be attempted in one chapter.

Regardless of history or records, the work will go on. To the widows Legacy will continue to bring trusted assistance in family upbringing, in home finding and home maintenance, in time of distress or sickness; help with pensions or legal difficulties; companionship in rejoicing over successes and sharing of sorrows.

To the children Legacy will bring a new self-esteem and a sense of 'belonging' to society. It will bring the comradeship and benefits of classes in gymnastics and club activities, of picnics and camps, including such highlight as the Melbourne Christmas Party at Government House, or Sydney's Ceremonials and Legacy Ball. It will supervise and help with educational, medical and dental care, and provide hostels, convalescent homes, holiday homes. It will help in time of trouble. It will bring faith, hope and brotherly love, and the courage which stems from all of these.

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of Twenty-Ninth Annual conference of the Legacy Clubs of Australia (Adelaide, October, 1957), p.3.

Legatee Dal Cartledge, first President of Sydney Legacy from the World War II men, speaking at the 1954 Annual Conference in Canberra, referred to the greatest man in Legacy – the un-known Legatee:

'The Legacy contactor somewhere in the bush, with no expenditure budget but affection in his heart and voice, and a helping hand, is probably the one tonight who holds best the Torch of service and sees clearest the laurel wreath of remembrance.'

So let exception be made for one incident involving an unknown Legatee, unnamed in this paragraph in Melbourne Legacy *Bulletin* No. 1,211:

'In the last issue of the *Bulletin* Legatees will remember an S.O.S. sent out by Probation Committee for a thirty-niner to provide a home for one of our youngsters, thirteen years of age, who was in very serious trouble and up before the Children's Court (for the third occasion) and destined straight for Bayswater, thence Castlemaine.

'At very short notice a thirty-niner, with a magnificent wife, heard the plea, attended the Court, met the boy, and inside an hour he was safely dug into his new home....

'It only remains for young George to play cricket and he is right for life.'

00267