In the eighteen-eighties two members of Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Mrs. Varcoe and Mrs. Crisp (whose husband was Superintendent of the church) opened a home for neglected children in Drummond Street, Carlton. It was a large two-storied house; the institution was named Livingstone Home after David Livingstone, the African explorer. Later the next door house was added and was called Stanley House, after Henry Stanley who was also an African explorer. A women's organization, the Dorcas Society, connected with Wesley churchhelped to support the home. But those in charge of it doubtless felt that the children would have more chance of becoming better citizens if they were transferred to the country and in 1891 the church paid £2,317 for land on the Highway at Cheltenham, then a rural area. The present two-storey building was erected and opened free of debt on November 24th of that year. The name Livingstone was retained. A Mr. and Mrs. Trudgeon were the first people in charge of the home.

In the years that followed more of the adjoining land - twenty-seven and a half acres - was purchased at different times, a hospital ward, two cottages and another wing to the main building were added and in 1932 a farm was established. The home became the scene of an annual Methodist picnic - called "Scholars Day" - when sometimes as many as 2,000 people came by special and ordinary trains to see the home and spend the day in the grounds. There were organized games and picnic meals and the band of the G.P.O. and of the Cremorne Street, Richmond Sunday School provided music.

In 1953 the home was moved to Wattle Park, re-organized on a cottage basis and named "Orana". The Methodist Church sold the property to the Roman Catholic Church and it became the St. John of God Home for retarded boys.

A good deal of history has been recorded about the building on the property which for thirteen years has been called Marian Lodge. It is not known who built the house (its original slate roof was later replaced by tiles) but one of its earliest occupants was Dr. George Scantlebury; his son, Dr. Clifford Scantlebury, who was born there, thinks that his father rented it. Here the Scantleburys lived till their home was built in Charman Road. Not long afterwards it was bought by George Gulliver, the second son of a farmer in Holmby, Northamptonshire, England. As was usual at that time, his elder brother inherited the property and George became a chemist; at that occupation he worked until he was forty in several Victorian country towns. He then married a Miss Shanklin of Sale, bought the house and the thirty acres adjoining and named it Holmby Lodge after his native village. Mrs. Gulliver was very fond of gardening and made there a garden of English flowers - hollyhocks, lavender, larkspurs, sweet williams, canterbury bells and others - which became one of the show places of Cheltenham. There was a hawthorn walk,

(over)