

be the subject index which will provide access to collections from a variety of approaches. Already the work on this project has proved helpful to a researcher preparing a book on food consumption and production (many nineteenth-century women's diaries record the process for making butter and cheese and details of favourite recipes), and to researchers working on women's entries for the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*.

Taking stock of the collection in 1985, there are obvious gaps. While pioneer women are well represented by the diaries and letters of missionary women and the shipboard diaries of young immigrant women, and while there are significant collections of literary and artistic women, there is very little relating to Maori women, to women scientists or unionists, or to women in business and professions. There is little which deals with the working woman either in the paid workforce or in the home. This latter gap relates more to the paucity of available material than to the Library's failure to solicit it. Poorly educated and over-worked women in the nineteenth century had neither the skills nor the time to record their impressions of daily life, and in the twentieth century technology and a faster pace of life have seen a decline in letter writing and the keeping of diaries.

The difficulty in documenting the individual experience may be answered in part by the growing interest and activity in the field of oral history which is reflected in recent additions to the collection. In 1985 the New Zealand Nursing Education and Research Foundation's Oral History Collection was received.¹¹ The results of a project begun in 1982, it records on tape the reminiscences of 185 ex-nurses and ranges from the dramatic account of a nursing sister who survived the sinking of the troopship the *Marquette* in 1915 to the reminiscences of nurse probationers in the 1930s whose duties included sprinkling damp tea leaves in hospital wards to lay the dust. Material from the New Zealand Oral History Archive¹² deposited in the Manuscripts Collection includes interviews with elderly women residents of the small South Wairarapa town of Martinborough and the reminiscences of New Zealand State Dental Nurses.¹³ The recent appointment to the Manuscripts Section of a librarian to take responsibility for oral history collections will ensure that researchers are alerted to this valuable material.

And what of the future of women's studies in the Turnbull? The Library will continue to seek out material relating to women and make it accessible to researchers. Now that ten years have elapsed since the inauguration of the New Zealand Women's History Research Collection, the original list of individuals and organisations to be approached has grown and changed. There are still important collections on that list to follow up and new ones to