A WET LANDING AT WOLLONGONG (1839):

My father had two friends in Sydney when he arrived, John Hubert Plunkett, the Attorney-General of New South Wales, and Frances Taaffe. Plunkett, who had just before sold an estate he owned in the Illawarra district, advised my father to settle near Wollongong, where one of the two small steamers then in Australia made weekly trips. My father took Plunkett's advice and within ten days after we had landed in Sydney we got ashore from the "Sophia Jane" at the town of Wollongong, within three miles of which place my father had purchased land without having seen it.

As our ship approached land our vessel anchored some distance out (there was then no wharf or jetty) so the passengers were taken from the ship to the shore in a boat. There was a heavy swell in the sea at the time, the waves breaking on the sandy beach in front of where the court house, lock-up and other government buildings then stood. When the boat touched the sand in the shallow water one of my sisters, then a young woman, took me in her arms and attempted to wade to dry land. A wave came up behind us and knocked my sister down, so we both got a thorough wetting. There was then a stockade erected on the point of land that stands alongside the old harbour works, where a large number of prisoners were confined. These men were placed to drill holes, which they exploded to shatter the rocks. I carefully observed the progress that was made in deepening this basin for about three years, and understand the depth of water obtained was only about fourteen feet, which was sufficient for the coasting shipping at that time.

[From 'Exploration and Settlement in Australia,' by James Gormly, M.L.C. (1921).]

FULL DAY EXCURSION, SUNDAY, 9th MAY.

There will be a full-day excursion on Sunday, 9th May. Further details will be announced at the April meeting.

WOLLONGONG DISTRICT RAINFALL, 1964:

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