

## BLANCHE MURRAY

A daughter of writer Archibald Murray, Blanche Murray was born in Sydney and during her brief career was largely associated with the Queen's Theatre, Victoria Theatre and Theatre Royal. At these venues she appeared in a wide range of theatrical entertainments, especially making her name as a dancer.

The first child of Archibald Murray and Henrietta Maria Murray (nee O'Brien), and elder sister to variety artists Flo and Ida Murray, Blanche Murray was born in Sydney at her parent's house in 1860. With her father well-known within the theatrical community she likely began appearing on the stage at an early age. Her first recorded appearance, however, was in *The White Cat*, a pantomime produced in December 1874 at the Victoria Theatre (Syd).

As a dancer Murray's specialties on the variety stage in the early to mid-1870s included traditional forms such as the Highland Fling and Irish Jig. During the remainder of the 1870s she was largely associated with the Queen's Theatre, Victoria Theatre and Theatre Royal, appearing in a range of entertainments, both dramatic (e.g. pantomime, opera bouffe and drama) and variety (including benefits and musical entertainments). In some of these she was also accompanied by her sister, Flo. Among the managers she worked for during this period were J. Leveson, B.N. Jones, Sam Lazar, F.M. Bates and Edmund Holloway.

In 1880 Murray was engaged by Frank Smith to perform at the Sir Joseph Banks Pavilion, Botany, and appeared there again on several occasions over the next couple of years. She also performed at such venues as the Guild Hall, Temperance Hall, Academy of Music, Opera House, and Victoria Theatre in a variety of productions.

Murray's last known appearance was in *Oliver Twist* in early 1884. Less than six months later, on 18 September, she died from heart disease and congestion of the lungs at her parent's home in Woolloomooloo. She was aged just 24.



Courtesy of Lloyd Pitcher

### SEE ALSO

- [Arch Murray](#)
- [Florence \(Flo\) Murray](#)

**B**OTANY. BOTANY. BOTANY.  
SIR JOSEPH BANKS HOTEL and PAVILION.  
THIS (NEW YEAR'S) DAY, JANUARY 1st, 1881.  
THE PLACE TO SPEND THE HOLIDAY.  
DANCING, DANCING, DANCING.  
The Largest and Best Floor in Australia.  
YOUNG AUSTRALIAN and PRINCE OF WALES BANDS.  
The MURRAYS, BLANCHE and FLORENCE,  
COTTIER, LE BRAE, and the PERMANS.  
THE OTHER LEON—GEORGE BELL,  
JOHNNY COWAN, JOHNNY COWAN.  
'BUSES WYNWARD-SQUARE EVERY MINUTE.  
DRINKS and REFRESHMENTS at SYDNEY PRICES.  
FREE. FREE. FREE.

*Sydney Morning Herald* 1 Jan. (1881), 2.

**This entry has been sourced from research undertaken by Lloyd Pitcher (great nephew).**

First published: 21/09/2012

**NB: The URL for this PDF will change each time it is updated. If you wish to cite or link to this record please use the following:**  
Australian Variety Theatre Archive • <http://ozvta.com/practitioners-m/>