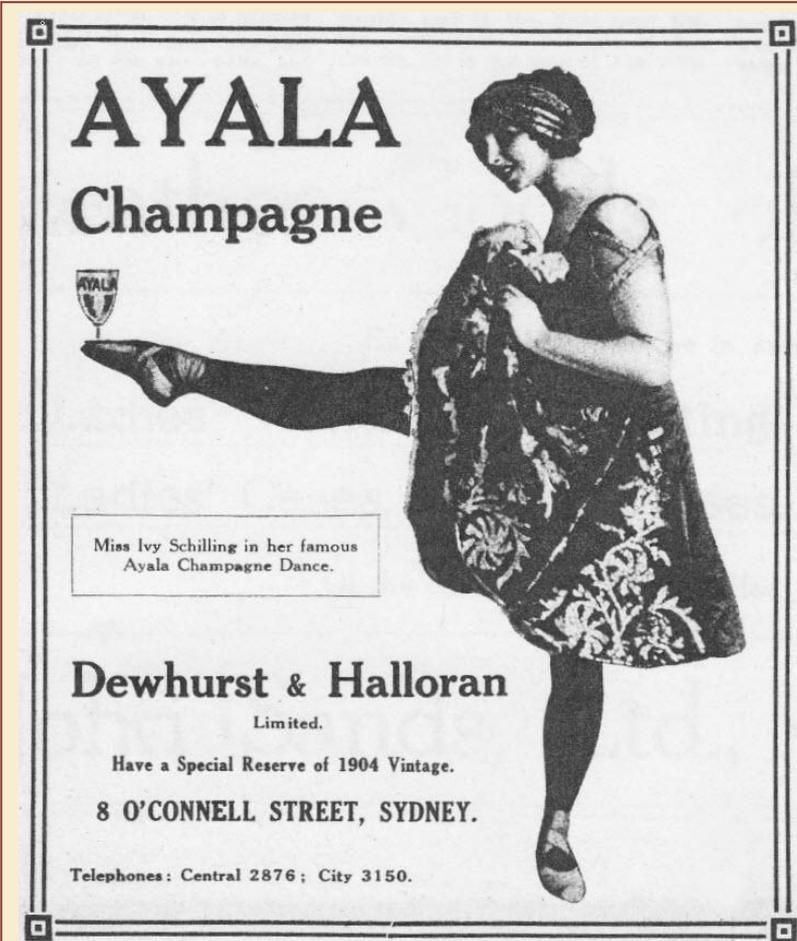


AYALA CHAMPAGNE

Incl. Dewhurst and Halloran Ltd

In 1912 the Sydney firm, Dewhurst and Halloran¹ imported 70 cases of 1904 vintage champagne from French winemaker, Ayala, and the following year both companies briefly aligned themselves with Australian variety theatre through a cross-promotion campaign featuring Ivy Schilling and her "Champagne Dance."

The "Danse de Champagne" was a feature of J.C. Williamson's Australian production of the *Quaker Girl*, a three-act Edwardian musical comedy by James T. Tanner (book), Adrian Ross and Percy Greenbank (lyrics) and Lionel Monkton (music). The show had become a hit after opening in London in 1910, and following its Australian debut in Sydney in January 1912 went on to tour Australasia for several years. The story follows Prudence, a young Quaker, who is thrown out of her house by her parents for drinking a glass of champagne. When she eventually makes her way to Paris her grey dress and bonnet become the latest fashion craze. Much of the story's comedy comes from contrasting the dour Quaker morality with Parisian high society. The original production and all later revivals featured a "Champagne Dance" in the final act. Schilling's version, performed in partnership with Leslie Holland (as Tony Chute), was specially created, however, by Hugh J. Ward. Although Vera Pearce performed it after replacing Schilling in mid-1913, the dance was largely identified with its originator in the minds of critics and the public for many years. Indeed, the October 1913 *Theatre Magazine* advertisement featuring Schilling and Ayala champagne, the first identified to date, appeared several months after she had already left the Australian production.



AYALA
Champagne

Miss Ivy Schilling in her famous
Ayala Champagne Dance.

Dewhurst & Halloran
Limited.

Have a Special Reserve of 1904 Vintage.

8 O'CONNELL STREET, SYDNEY.

Telephones: Central 2876; City 3150.

Theatre Magazine Oct. (1913), 32.

There is no indication that Ayala featured in the production of the *Quaker Girl* via a product placement strategy, and therefore Schilling likely consented to being aligned with the wine in return for payment. If there was such an arrangement with the producer, J. C. Williamson's, it could only have begun in late-1912, as the champagne did not clear customs until October that year. The brand had been available in Australia since at least 1883, when R. Phillips and Co imported an unknown quantity of cases of Ayala's 1878 White Label champagne. In the late-1880s Allt's Brewing and Wine and Spirit Co, Ltd was the Australian agent and importer of Ayala.²

Interest in the "Champagne Dance," and Ivy Schilling's performance in particular began in the immediate aftermath of the Sydney premiere on 13 January 1912. The following day the *Sunday Times* theatre critic drew attention to it: "In this locally-arranged dance, the effectiveness of which was heightened by ingenious electric lighting, Miss Ivy Schilling shared the encore honours with Mr Holland. The graceful ladies of the ballet in radiant dresses assisted."³ The *Queenslander* later noted:

This is a dance symbolic of the sparkling wine. It is executed by Miss Ivy Schilling, together with Mr Leslie Holland and a number of coryphées. It is a drama, silent and impressive, conveying a moral, and is said to be quite the most original and convincing specialty in the dance way that has been offered in Australia. It is the creation of Mr Hugh J. Ward.⁴

¹ See "Historical Notes and Corrections" below for details relating to Dewhurst and Halloran.

² See "Historical Notes and Corrections" below for further details relating to Ayala Champagne.

³ "[Her Majesty's: The Quaker Girl.](#)" *Sunday Times* (Sydney) 14 Jan. (1912), 2.

⁴ "[The Stage: The Quaker Girl.](#)" *Queenslander* (Brisbane) 4 May (1912), 3.

New Zealand's *Wairarapa Daily Times* reports in 1916 that Schilling performed her version of the dance at an Australian matinee in London. Her partner for the exhibition is unknown.⁵



The commencement and the finale of the "Champagne de Danse."
Mail (Adelaide) 25 May (1912), 12.

SEE ALSO

- [Ivy Schilling](#)

HISTORICAL NOTES AND CORRECTIONS

1. **Dewhurst and Halloran:** W. Dewhurst and C. R. "Jack" Halloran founded their importing business in Hunter Street, Sydney in 1903, initially specialising in station requirements. Their advertisements placed in publications like *Sydney Stock and Station Journal* indicate that the firm made "a special line of wheatbags, new and second hand harvesting machinery, wire netting and station supplies of all descriptions"⁶ Within a few years the company began expanding its line of imports to include general merchandise such as tea, tobacco, preserved fruits and wines and spirits. Dewhurst and Halloran also expanded their company on several occasions, acquiring, for example, the well-known and establish business of W. H. Armstrong and Co, Ltd in 1908. Following that acquisition they located their operations out of the former Armstrong headquarters at 8 O'Connell Street, Sydney.⁷ The firm is known to have still be active in the early 1940s.
2. **Champagne Ayala:** Edmond de Ayala, the son of a Spanish aristocrat went to France as the Consul of Colombia and was invited by the Viscount of Mareuil to learn the business, which he did from about 1855. In 1860 de Ayala married the Viscount's niece, Gabrielle d'Albrecht, and was given the Château of Aÿ and prime vineyards in Aÿ (located in the Montagne de Reims region) as a dowry. His brother, Fernand de Ayala, developed a commercial branch of the house in Great Britain, giving him access to the lucrative British market, and Ayala would eventually become the preferred champagne of King George VI. Ayala became one of the 18 founder members of the Syndicate of the Grandes Marques in 1822 and went on to supply the courts of Great Britain and Spain. The company was acquired by Bollinger in 2005.

⁵ *Wairarapa Daily Times* 12 Feb. 1916, 3

⁶ *Sydney Stock and Station Journal* 27 Oct. (1903), 7. Advertisement.

⁷ "[Dewhurst and Halloran: W. H. Armstrong and Co. Ltd.](#)" *Sydney Stock and Station Journal* 18 Dec. (1908), 12.

3. The 1912 Australian production of the *Quaker Girl* was directed by Wybert Stamford.
4. Vera Pearce joined J. C. Williamson's Royal Comic Opera Company in early 1912 and understudied Ivy Schilling before taking on the lead role in mid-1913. Leslie Holland continued in his role. He also performed the dance with Maggie Dickenson in the 1915 production.



Leslie Holland and Ivy Schilling

IN LA DANSE DE CHAMPAGNE—A FEATURE OF "THE QUAKER GIRL" AT HER MAJESTY'S, MELBOURNE.

Table Talk (Melbourne) 18 July (1912), 19.

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