



GLEND A JACKSON

Elizabeth R

After the great public and critical success of *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1970), the BBC turned hopefully to the turbulent life of the King's daughter, Elizabeth. The approach was essentially the same – six 90-minute plays covering the life of the monarch from youth to old age – and proved to be even more popular.

A sense of continuity was ensured with several actors reprising their roles, including Rosalie Crutchley and John Ronane as Catherine Parr and Thomas Seymour and Bernard Hepton and Basil Dignam as the Archbishops Cranmer and Gardiner respectively, while writers John Prebble and Rosemary Anne Sissons also returned. As before, the success of the project would rest mainly on the shoulders of the central actor, and for Glenda Jackson it proved to be the role of a lifetime, eclipsing even her Oscar-winning performances in *Women in Love* (1969) and *A Touch of Class* (1973). She maintains a steely authority and powerful sense of femininity throughout, even in the conclusion, when her face is grotesquely covered in thick white make-up.

John Hale's opening play, 'The Lion's Cub', makes few concessions to viewers not steeped in late-Tudor history, hurtling through a decade of complex events taking in the execution of Thomas Seymour, Elizabeth's guardian, for attempting to topple the sickly King Edward VI, and the crowning of Mary I, before concluding with Elizabeth's coronation in 1558. Internecine plots predominate at court and make for engrossing, if occasionally bewildering viewing, whether dealing with foreign affairs, religious conflicts or Elizabeth's marriage. The 'behind the scenes' approach is fascinatingly explored in Prebble's 'The Enterprise of England', depicting the war with Spain solely through Elizabeth and Philip II's thrust and parry with their respective advisors, omitting battle scenes altogether.

As befits a major BBC historical drama, the requisite splendours of costume and design are emphasised, but originality is also evident: filming the flashbacks to Elizabeth's youth with a subjective camera; building studio sets with ornate ceilings; and the challenging use of dark humour underlining Julian Mitchell's moving depiction of the Queen's marriage problems in 'Shadow in the Sun'.

There was no feature film version as there was for *Henry VIII*, although Jackson did play Elizabeth again in *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1972), written by *Elizabeth R* co-author John Hale.

Sergio Angelini, BFI Screenonline, screenonline.org.uk

ELIZABETH R

Directors: Claude Whatham, Herbert Wise,
Richard Martin, Rod Graham, Donald McWhinnie
Production Company: BBC
Producer: Rod Graham
Script Editor: Margaret Hare
Script: John Hale, Rosemary Anne Sisson, Julian Mitchell,
Hugh Whitemore, John Prebble, Ian Rodger
Lighting: Robert Wright
Film Cameraman: Nat Crosby
Film Editor: Dan Rae
Designers: Peter Seddon, Richard Henry
Costumes: Elizabeth Waller
Make-up: Dawn Alcock, Sandra Shepherd
Titles: Oliver Elmes
Music: David Munrow
Sound: Brian Hiles

Cast

Glenda Jackson (*Elizabeth I*)
Ronald Hines (*William Cecil, Lord Burghley*)
Daphne Slater (*Mary Tudor*)
Rachel Kempson (*Kat Ashley*)
Rosalie Crutchley (*Catherine Parr*)
Bernard Hepton (*Thomas Cranmer*)
Peter Jeffrey (*Philip of Spain*)
John Ronane (*Thomas Seymour*)
Philip Brack (*John Dudley*)
Ian Barritt (*Fowler*)
Jason Kemp (*Edward VI*)
Blake Butler (*Sir Thomas Parry*)
Stanley Lebor (*Sir Robert Tyrwhit*)
Nicolette Bernard (*Lady Tyrwhit*)
Robert Barry (*Guildford Dudley*)
Sarah Frampton (*Lady Jane Grey*)
Robert Garrett (*Sir Thomas Wyatt*)
Basil Dignam (*Gardiner*)
John Shrapnel (*Earl of Sussex*)
Alan Foss (*Sir Henry Bedingfield*)
Brendan Barry (*Renard*)
Julian Holloway (*de Noailles, French Ambassador*)
Kevin Brennan (*Bridges*)
Richard Parry (*guard*)
David Strong (*Duke of Norfolk*)
Robert Hardy (*Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester*)
Stacey Tendeter (*Amye Dudley*)
Caroline Harris (*Mary Sidney*)
Anthony Ainley (*Henry Sidney*)
Esmond Knight (*Bishop de Quadra*)
Leonard Sachs (*Count de Feria*)
Clare Austin (*Mrs Pinto*)
Denis Carey (*Dr Burcot*)
Angela Thorne (*Lettice Knollys*)
Vivian Pickles (*Mary, Queen of Scots*)
John Cairney (*Sir James Melville*)
Stephen Murray (*Walsingham*)
Michael Williams (*Duke of Alencon*)
Margaretta Scott (*Catherine de Medici*)
Bernard Horsfall (*Hatton*)
Jill Balcon (*Lady Cobham*)

John Hughes (*Fenelon*)
James Urquhart (*court official*)
James Laurenson (*Simier*)
Leslie Lawton (*Jacques*)
Kenton Moore (*preacher*)
Mary Patricia Finn (*dwarf 'Elizabeth'*)
Albert Horton (*dwarf 'Leicester'*)
David Collings (*Sir Anthony Babington*)
Hamilton Dyce (*Sir Amyas Paulet*)
Brian Wilde (*Richard Topcliffe*)
Malcolm Hayes (*Sir Edward Kelley*)
Raf De La Torre (*Dr John Dee*)
John Graham (*William Davison*)
Bernard Holley (*Gilbert Gifford*)
John Ruddock (*John Whitgift*)
David Nettheim (*Thomas Phelippes*)
David Garfield (*John Ballard*)
James Culliford (*John Savage*)
Robin Ellis (*Earl of Essex*)
Peter Howell (*Lord Howard*)
John Woodvine (*Sir Francis Drake*)
Michael Culver (*John Tregannon*)
Robert Sansom (*Speaker of the Commons*)
David Parfitt (*Philip's son*)
Christopher Hancock (*Juan de Idiaquez*)
Geoffrey Wincott (*Marquis of Santa Cruz*)
Paul Hardwick (*Fr. Robert Parsons*)
Gordon Gostelow (*Duke of Medina Sidonia*)
Bill Horsley (*Dutch envoy*)
Ian Ricketts (*Luis Cabrera de Cordoba*)
Malcolm Mcfee (*young soldier*)
Derek Hardwick (*old soldier*)
John Nettleton (*Francis Bacon*)
Nicholas Selby (*Sir Walter Raleigh*)
Patrick O'Connell (*O'Neill*)
Peter Egan (*Earl of Southampton*)
Judith South (*Lady Essex*)
Hugh Dickson (*Sir Robert Cecil*)
Sonia Fraser (*Elizabeth Vernon*)
Shirley Dixon (*Lady Rich*)
Haydn Jones (*Sir Christopher Blount*)
Clifford Rose (*Egerton*)
Kevin Flood (*horseman to O'Neill*)
Derek Martin (*horseman to Cecil*)
Wesley Murphy (*Conn*)
Harry Webster (*Lord Mayor of Dublin*)
Winefride Madigan (*Irish woman*)
Michael Beint (*gaoler*)
Philip Voss (*actor playing Richard III*)
David Hargreaves (*actor playing Bolingbroke*)
BBC2 tx 17.2 – 24.3.1971
6 x c90 mins + intervals

Part 1 (85min) + interval (20min) + part 2 (90min)
+ interval (30min) + part 3 (83min)

Part 4 (90min) + interval (20min) + part 5 (90min)
+ interval (30min) + part 6 (90min)

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