

Topic Page: [Hayes, Helen, 1900-1993](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/hayes_helen_1900_1993)

Summary Article: **Hayes, Helen**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

US film and theatre actor. Her long theatre career included the title role in *Victoria Regina* 1938–39. She won an Academy Award for her role as a stowaway passenger in the film *Airport* (1970).

Hayes was born in Washington, DC. The daughter of an actor, she played her first role in the theatre at the age of six, and became a Broadway star in *Dear Brutus* (1918). Over the next five decades, she consolidated a reputation as the ‘first lady’ of the US theatre, a regal association aptly underlined by her particular successes in the title roles of *Mary of Scotland* and *Victoria Regina* (both 1936). She appeared in several silent films and won an Academy Award for her first performance in a talkie, *The Sin of Madelon Claudet* (1931). Subsequently she made only a few sorties into the cinema, of which the best remembered is probably the role of the dowager empress in *Anastasia* (1956).

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