



James was crowned king, in Westminster Abbey, on St George's Day 1685, depicted in this 1697 colour engraving by William Sherwin. Temporary wooden galleries were built in the nave, in order to accommodate the enormous number of noble spectators who jostled for a glimpse of their new sovereign, and an enormous fireworks display lit up the Thames in celebration that night.

Francis Sandford, one of James's heralds, illustrated every aspect of the coronation ceremony. In this 1687 illustration, amid clouds of wafted incense, the musicians and choristers of the Chapel Royal join the procession to the Abbey.

Jacobus Rex

THE NEW KING

Contrary to the fears of the Privy Council, James's succession in April 1685 was welcomed across the country with genuine celebration, unclouded by popular disturbances or by anything more serious than murmured dissent. The new King worked hard to reassure the Anglican elites that he would not tamper with the existing relationship between Church and State. He also promised that he would not seek to extend religious toleration to the non-conformist Protestant sects. Save for promoting his brother-in-law, Lord Rochester – a strong defender of both the Church of England and the Crown – to be his Lord Treasurer, he introduced few changes in his brother's ministerial team and showed little inclination to reopen the old wounds created by the Exclusion crisis.

Many of the Crown's most valuable sinecures had been granted only for the lifetime of Charles II and lapsed upon his death, but a financial and political crisis was averted by the calling of a fresh Parliament and by the energies of the King's election agents, who ensured that a large majority of loyal candidates were returned. Overwhelmingly dominated by the Tories and espousing the

