Henry Poole & Co’s founder was Shropshire lad James Poole, who began his professional life in London in 1806 as a linen draper. With the help of his wife Mary, James earned his stripes as a tailor by stitching military tunics during the Napoleonic wars. By the time of Waterloo Poole had become London’s pre-eminent military tailor.

In 1846 James’s son Henry inherited the family business. Capitalising on his undeniable charisma and passion for the aristocratic world of equestrian and field sports, Henry Poole became what today would be called a ‘celebrity’ tailor.

In an extraordinary example of Victorian social mobility, Henry would go on not only to serve the future Emperor Napoleon III but also to shape his future. Poole’s friend and stellar customer conferred the first of the firm’s Royal Warrants in 1858. Napoleon III’s reign was glittering but brief; Queen Victoria proved to be a more reliable and prestigious customer.

The Queen’s Royal Warrant as Court Tailor (and later Livery Tailor) to the sovereign was conferred in 1869 and still endures to this day. However it was to Victoria’s son King Edward VII that Henry Poole owed his reputation as a leader of fashion, and his Mayfair premises became a social hub for the swells who surrounded Prince Bertie. With an interior more suited to White’s Club or Marlborough House, ‘Old Pooley’s’ was the only place for gentlemen of quality to be seen partaking of the great man’s claret and cigars at 3:30pm.
HENRY POOLE & CO
FOUNDER OF SAVILE ROW

Arguably the most famous Savile Row tailor is Henry Poole & Co

Savile Row, the golden mile of bespoke tailors at the heart of Mayfair, is the last street in London dedicated largely to one exclusive craft: the definitive expression of male elegance rendered in cloth. For over 150 years bespoke tailoring has dominated the street affectionately known as ‘The Row’ and continues to do so in the 21st century.

No matter how many times pretenders threaten the exclusivity and excellence of Savile Row bespoke, the great houses endure and those who truly belong on the Row remain there. Arguably the most famous Savile Row tailor is Henry Poole & Co, as the first tailor in Savile Row and hence the founder.

Henry Poole & Co has resisted all calls to sell ready-to-wear or made-to-measure suits from its Savile Row flagship. A Henry Poole & Co suit is pure bespoke: measured, cut, fitted, sewn and finished entirely by hand in a process that involves three fittings and over 60 hours of man and increasingly woman power. Every suit is made in the workshops below No 15 and 16 Savile Row whether it be a livery for Buckingham Palace or The Royal Mews, a Churchill pinstripe three-piece destined for the boardroom or a tailcoat cut for a Mansion House banquet.
THE STORY OF THE TUXEDO

Henry Poole & Co dinner jacket became known as a Tuxedo in America

THE HISTORY
In 1865, the Prince of Wales and future King Edward VII – known to his family and intimates as Bertie – asked his tailor and friend Henry Poole to cut a short celestial blue evening coat to be worn at informal dinners at Sandringham. No similar garment has been detected in the Henry Poole & Co ledgers dating back to 1846. This evening coat was the blueprint for what we now know in England as the dinner jacket.

THE TUXEDO CLUB
The Americans christened the British DJ a Tuxedo. The story from the Tuxedo Park Club in New York suggests that that a James Brown Potter met the Prince of Wales in 1886. The Prince had a notorious wandering eye and it fell upon Brown’s devastatingly gorgeous wife Cora. This frisson of royal lust led to an invitation to dine and sleep at Sandringham. Potter, not knowing the form for a royal informal evening, asked his tailor Henry Poole what he should wear. Poole answered with no little confidence that a short celestial blue evening coat was appropriate.

The story goes that Potter ordered the short evening coat from Poole’s and returned to New York introducing the dinner jacket to the Tuxedo Club – and New York’s fashionable society scene – in the late 1880s. Due to damage and loss, any record of an American James Potter has disappeared from Henry Poole’s historic ledgers. However, the founding fathers of the Tuxedo Club Messrs William Waldorf Astor, Robert Goelet, Ogden Mills and Pierre Lorillard are all well documented as customers in the 1860s when Bertie first ordered his prototype dinner jacket. Thus it is more than likely that these social peacocks copied the Prince of Wales and introduced the dinner jacket to New York society (and subsequently the Tuxedo Club) a full twenty years before the apocryphal Potter incident.

James Sherwood, Henry Poole Archivist, Author and Journalist
CELEBRATED CUSTOMERS

Poole’s is unique on Savile Row for preserving its customer ledgers from 1846

By 1900 Henry Poole & Co was the largest bespoke tailor in the world employing 300 tailors and cutters. Poole’s is unique on Savile Row for preserving its customer ledgers from 1846 to the present day and it was once remarked ‘Go through the pages of the Almanack de Gotha from 1850 to the end of civilization in 1914 and we could match page for page from our old ledgers’. European Royals were only the tip of the iceberg. Famous customers include Charles Dickens, Dr Livingstone, Tsar Alexander II of Russia, Prince von Bismark, Buffalo Bill, Sir Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, J.P. Morgan, William Randolph Hearst, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and Emperor Hirohito of Japan. Henry Poole & Co’s reputation remained undimmed as Old Pooley’s cousin Samuel Cundey took over in 1876. The firm was briefly forced from Savile Row with the tragic demolition of the original Henry Poole & Co townhouse in 1961 but returned thanks to Samuel Cundey’s great grandson and current Chairman Angus.
AN APPOINTMENT AT POOLE’S

Bespoke customers expect service as immaculate as their suits

Savile Row is not old fashioned or nostalgic. It merely recognises that bespoke clients expect service as immaculate as their suits. The Henry Poole & Co showroom walls are lined with over 40 of the house’s prestigious international Royal Warrants; a gentle reminder to customers in the worlds of statesmanship, finance, law and the media that they are walking in the footsteps of giants. One of the enduring myths surrounding Savile Row is that the historic tailoring houses are intimidating or somehow aloof. However, Henry Poole & Co prides itself on giving a warm welcome to all its customers. Cutters on the Row may be as highly prized as surgeons but it is the customer’s requirement that always takes precedence. The beauty of bespoke tailoring is that everything is possible and any request can be met. Customers do, however, tend to heed the expert advice their tailor is trained for a lifetime to proffer.
THE BIOGRAPHY OF A HENRY POOLE & CO SUIT

*In tailoring terms, a bespoke garment means one designed from a blank canvas*

In tailoring terms, a bespoke garment means one designed from a blank canvas, the client adding his own individual choices of styling to those of the cutter. The cutter will work with the client's waistcoat maker, coat maker and trouser maker adjusting the pattern at the various stages of making thus creating the perfect paper pattern.

*image right:*
Second fitting single breasted jacket
BESPOKE PROCESS

The client selects the cloth from our range of over 6000 luxurious samples

1) PATTERN CUTTING
The client, with the help of the cutter, selects the cloth for his suit from our range of over 6000 luxurious samples. After choosing the fabric, the particular style is discussed with the cutter who will then take the client’s measurements. A unique paper pattern is cut incorporating his measurements and choice of style.

2) CLOTH CUTTING
The paper pattern is laid out on the cloth and chalked around. The cloth is then cut out by hand, leaving extra cloth at certain seams (inlays) to allow for the suit to be altered at a later date if the client’s weight changes.

3) TRIMMING
Particular materials are then added to the suit i.e. natural wool canvasses and linen (trimmings). These are used in the construction of the garment to give the suit its classic Henry Poole & Co silhouette.

image right: Individual client patterns being drafted
The cutter then starts to alter the suit to the client’s posture.

4) PUTTING TOGETHER
The garment is then assigned to a particular highly skilled tailor where it is canvassed by hand and readied for the first fitting. The selected tailor will then stay with the client during their time as a customer at Henry Poole & Co thus giving consistency to the look and feel of all the client’s future garments.

5) FIRST FITTING - BASTE
During the first fitting, the garment is fitted by the highly trained cutter, who then starts to alter the suit to the client’s posture.

6) MARKING
After the first fitting the garment is completely taken apart, re-cut and given back to the tailor to be prepared for the next fitting.
Each suit is numbered and logged with Henry Poole & Co

7) SECOND FITTING
At the next fitting, previous alterations and amendments are refined, giving the suit its exceptional fit and comfort. The suit is checked over for break over shoe, seat of trouser and drape.

8) BUTTON HOLE
After the final alterations have been made, a tailoress will hand make the buttonholes and hand finish the suit inside and out using fine hand silks, thus giving the suit pure natural fibres and a lasting finish.

9) FINAL PIECE
The Henry Poole & Co suit is then ready for the final fitting. Advice is given to the customer on how to best care for the suit and maintain shape, such as pressing and cleaning. Each suit is numbered and logged, enabling us to source materials to repair any damage that might occur during daily use.
A SEVENTH GENERATION TAKES POOLE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

Arguably the most famous Savile Row tailor is Henry Poole & Co

Henry Poole & Co has occupied its current HQ at No 15 Savile Row since 1982. The building previously housed the celebrated Savile Club whose members included Prime Minister Arthur Balfour, Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir Henry Irving. The firm is still guided by the Cundey family. Samuel Cundey took over the company after the death of Henry Poole in 1876. Samuel was succeeded by his son Howard who founded the tailoring trade’s charity (1891), established a pay structure for sewing tailors which still survives and opened branches of Pooles in Berlin, Paris and Vienna. Samuel H Cundey contended with the difficult times during the war years and the obligatory stay of the company in nearby Cork Street. Angus Cundey introduced trunk shows in Europe and in 1994 Simon Cundey did likewise across the United States of America.
TRADITIONAL METHODS
MODERN APPROACH

A 21st century bespoke suit is still constructed for a lifespan that will justify the cost

In 2006 Henry Poole & Co celebrated over two centuries in business with a major refit of the Savile Row flagship. In recognition that the ever evolving craft of bespoke tailoring is what draws future generations to Savile Row, the cutting boards at the back of the shop were moved to a more prominent position. Napoleon III’s imperial eagle and Royal Warrant watch over the new generation of cutters reminding all who visit Henry Poole & Co that a heritage as grand is something to take great pride in.

Just as Henry Poole was a great innovator and arbiter of male elegance in his time, so too the contemporary cutters accommodate the requirements of the modern man. A 21st century bespoke suit is still constructed for a lifespan that will justify the cost; but it must by necessity of modern life be built for elegance and increased comfort. While acknowledging fashion a bespoke suit must never be mastered by superfluous styling. The great beauty of a bespoke suit is that it complements a man’s life just as it does his physique.

As for the future, Henry Poole & Co pays particular attention to training young people as apprentice coat makers, trouser makers and waistcoat makers in our workrooms.

In the cutting room, we train our junior cutters to the highest standards, thereby ensuring the quality of Henry Poole & Co bespoke tailoring now and far into the future.

image right:
A small sample of Poole’s ledger books, detailing client orders, which started in 1846
A TRULY BRITISH BUSINESS

Each mill is steeped in history with the expertise and knowledge to produce the very best quality.

The majority of fabrics used in the construction of a Henry Poole & Co bespoke suit are the finest of British woolen cloths which we consider to be the best in the world. These include Huddersfield worsteds, mohair worsteds for summer and West of England flannels, cashmeres and tweeds from the lowlands of Scotland, Harris and Shetland tweeds from the Islands. Each mill is steeped in history with the expertise and knowledge to produce the very best quality cloths. It is not without irony that a mere twenty years ago critics were calling Savile Row old fashioned. Still today, a Savile Row suit is made entirely on one street from cloth woven in the British Isles and with natural canvassing and interlinings – a truly British business.
AN INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

In 1964 Henry Poole & Co was the first Savile Row tailor to enter the Japanese market

Henry Poole & Co has never been an insular firm. In 1921 Henry Poole’s cutters met the Crown Prince of Japan (the future Emperor Hirohito) in Gibraltar en route to the UK for an official visit, cabled his measurements back to Savile Row where full white tie and tails were completed for the Crown Prince to wear in attendance on Edward, Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace.

In 1964 Henry Poole & Co was the first Savile Row tailor to enter the Japanese market. Poole designed a complete range of premium made to measure and ready to wear garments for department stores across Japan. More recently, Henry Poole & Co have formed a partnership with Onward Kashiyama. In 2006 Henry Poole & Co opened a shop in Beijing, China, offering a made to measure service for the emerging market.

Henry Poole & Co are proud to have been awarded The Queen’s Award for Enterprise in International Trade on Her Majesty’s birthday in April 2012. This award is Britain’s highest accolade for business and is granted to Henry Poole & Co by the Queen, on the advice of the Prime Minister, for excellence in international trade. Poole was honoured to receive The Queen’s Award in the year of Her Majesty’s Diamond Jubilee. The firm’s first British Royal Warrant was granted by Queen Victoria in 1869; the only reigning monarch before Queen Elizabeth II to celebrate 60 years on the throne. It is a tribute to the enduring tradition of British bespoke tailoring that Henry Poole & Co served both monarchs in their Diamond Jubilee year.
CEREMONIAL TAILORING

The finest of ceremonial tailoring

Since the earliest days of its existence Henry Poole & Co prided itself on quality and brilliance of its ceremonial and livery tailoring. Indeed, long before Henry had taken charge of the company, his father, James Poole had built his reputation on his livery and military uniforms.

Whilst developing new markets within the aristocratic sporting set, Henry Poole nonetheless maintained and developed his father’s ceremonial trade which, by the later part of the 19th century, was so large that it required separate premises. Noted for his excellent ceremonial clothes, Pooles received the Royal Warrant in 1869 as court and latterly livery tailor to H.M Queen Victoria and the company has proudly held the same distinction with each successful monarch. This tradition is maintained today with highly complex court, ceremonial and livery uniforms still being made to a standard unsurpassed on Savile Row.

image right: Semi State livery uniforms being prepared for Her Majesty’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012. The garments which these replaced had been cut in Pooles livery department 137 years earlier
OUR WORKSHOPS

Traditional methods dating back hundreds of years

A Henry Poole suit is pure bespoke; every garment ordered is cut and made on our premises and clients can, if they choose, see their clothes being cut in our cutting room and crafted in our workshops beneath fifteen and sixteen Savile Row.

For two hundred years Henry Poole & Co has maintained its reputation for quality by training each successive generation of craftsmen to exacting standards. This tradition continues today under a carefully managed programme of teaching which ensures that the next generation of clients will be as impeccably dressed as the first, more than two centuries before.

image right:
The workshops at Henry Poole & Co
Since 1989, Henry Poole have been creating exclusive house cloths

In 1989 Henry Poole & Co registered a new House Check, inspired by some of the aristocratic estate checks of the early 19th century. Originally conceived as a district check, this material became immediately popular, being suitable for both casual wear and for the sporting field. Acknowledging the movement of fashion, the Henry Poole House Check has remained versatile enough to undergo reinvention and remains popular.

The success of the Henry Poole Check prompted further research within the company's archive, and discovery of names associated with some of the most enduring fabric designs ever used in tailoring, such as the Earl of Seafield, whose estate tweed became the original Prince of Wales Check, having been popularised by Edward VII, or the distinctive charcoal grey chalk striped flannel worn by Winston Churchill. Both of these designs have been faithfully reproduced as House fabrics and ongoing research in the company's ledgers has provided inspiration for further new materials.
**OUR WEBSITE**

*History, Hall of Fame, News, online store and much more all in one place*

The Henry Poole & Co website offers a window into our history and an insight into our ethos and quality of service. Since its inception, we have provided an ever-changing selection of accessories to compliment our clothes, along with a swatch ordering service to enable you to select materials from the comfort of home or office.

We undertake trunk shows throughout the year to both east and west coasts of the United States, and to Europe and the Far East. Details of this year’s itinerary are to be found at www.henrypoole.com.

Also to be found on our website are a selection of biographies of some of the more influential and colourful characters who have graced the pages of Poole’s order books. These constitute the “Hall of Fame” and are drawn from the pages of over a hundred and thirty historic ledgers, which form the greater part of the company’s archive.
## WARRANTS OF APPOINTMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HM Queen Elizabeth II</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIM Emperor Haile Selassie</td>
<td>1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM King George VI</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM The King of the Bulgarians</td>
<td>1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM King George V</td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Imperial Household of Japan</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRH The Prince of Wales</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM Queen Alexandra</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Khedive of Egypt</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIM The Shah of Persia</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH The Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRH Prince Albrecht of Prussia</td>
<td>1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HM King Edward VII</td>
<td>1902</td>
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<tr>
<td>HM The King of Denmark</td>
<td>1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIM The Shah of Persia</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRH Prince Emanuel of Savoie</td>
<td>1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HG The Duke of Aosta</td>
<td>1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HG Friedrich, Grossherzog of Baden</td>
<td>1891</td>
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<tr>
<td>HG The Duke of Genoa</td>
<td>1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIM Tsar Alexander III of Russia</td>
<td>1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIM Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Poole's records show that these Warrants were issued, but not the dates of issue.
FITTINGS UNDERTAKEN INTERNATIONALLY IN THE FOLLOWING CITIES

FRANCE:
Paris

GERMANY:
Frankfurt

JAPAN:
Tokyo

LUXEMBOURG:
Luxembourg

SWITZERLAND:
Zurich, Geneva

USA
Palm Beach, Pebble Beach, New York, Chicago,
Boston, Washington DC, Los Angeles, San Francisco,
Atlanta, New Orleans

YOUR PERSONAL CONSULTATION

To arrange your personal consultation, please contact us at the following;
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Accessories and swatch services are available to order online