

Savile Row Bespoke, London, UK

I am once again most grateful to you all for listening to me with our plea for protection of probably the most famous location in the world for bespoke tailoring. No doubt due to the fame of Savile Row, a small street off London's Regent Street, it is sadly being used by rogue companies across the world to upgrade their inferior products.

Up until 1846, Savile Row had been a residential street, housing many doctors and surgeons. In 1846 my tailoring firm of Henry Poole made a large showroom in the street and subsequently several tailoring companies and cloth merchants followed. The doctors moved out and went to Harley Street. Pooles became known world-wide with branches in Berlin, Vienna and Paris. Americans would undertake an European Tour, ordering suits from Savile Row whilst in London.

Our cutters would visit Moscow and St. Petersburg making clothes for Czars Alexander II and Alexander III. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward 7th became a valued client, in fact in 1865 we made a silk jacket, vest and trousers which became the first dining suit – black tie and subsequently was worn by our American clients at a banquet in Tuxedo Park, hence the name Tuxedo in the USA.

Savile Row has also dressed Emperor Napoleon 3rd, King Umberto of Italy, Buffalo Bill, Bismarck of Germany, many Hollywood film stars, General de Gaule and currently the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles and State Liveries for HM The Queen.

Our trade association, Savile Row Bespoke was formed in 2004 and represents 14 tailoring companies in and around Savile Row. In addition to being represented at local council meetings, the association has tackled training and protection of the Savile Row name. I am pleased to report that training has proved an enormous success with 55 young apprentices now qualified tailors and working within the 500 expert workforce.

Sadly however, the protection of the Savile Row label is proving a great problem, hence my being here today. Currently there is a firm in Frankfurt, Germany intending to register Sons of Savile Row, Saville Row with two Ls is registered in Taiwan coupled with Savile Row correctly spelt in China, thankfully recently we managed to stop The Savile Row Society in New York. Probably to date the worst example is a company in Hong Kong naming itself Savile Row Bespoke Ltd with the website Savile Row Online.

Our sincere hope is that a location can be treated with the same legal protection as food and drink, thus giving a future safeguard to many famous firms abusing their hard won reputations.

As I said before, I know Savile Row and Champagne will sit well together.

Henry Poole & Co (Savile Row) Ltd
15 Savile Row
London W1S 3PJ
www.henrypoole.com