

# History of Poles, 1923-1986

Written by: Sr. Elizabeth Philips FCJ

From a very early date a dwelling of some kind existed on this site. The property changed hands frequently. Finally in 1800 a Georgian house called Poles was leased to Sampson Hanbury, a key figure in the London brewery business Truman, Hanbury and Buxton. He bought Poles in 1820 and lived there until his death in 1835

After his widow Agatha's death, in 1847 the estate was inherited by their nephew, Robert Hanbury, who enlarged the house and extended the park. He built the Walled Garden and the greenhouses, which became famous for their orchids



Robert Hanbury was a Justice of the Peace for Hertfordshire and a Deputy Lieutenant, and was also High Sheriff of the county in 1854. When Robert died in 1884, his son having predeceased him, the Poles estate passed to his grandson Edmund Hanbury and his wife Amy

In 1890 Edmund and Amy decided to pull down the old house and build a larger one. The architects were Earnest George and Harold Peto. The house they designed and built in the Jacobean style is the mansion that exists today. It was completed on February 1<sup>st</sup> 1892 at the cost of £30,000, a huge sum of money in today's terms

The Hanbury's were very charitable. They built a new church in Thunbridge, a school and library and many small houses for the local people.

When Edmund Hanbury died in 1913 Amy learned that the family finances were in a very bad state. Poles would have to go. Broken hearted at the loss of her husband and of her home, Amy left Poles for the last time on August 9<sup>th</sup> 1913.

The next owner, Henry James King was a diamond merchant from South Africa . He built new stables for his racehorses and had a nine-hole golf course laid out in the park. The well-known golfer, Harry Vardon, designed it.

The Kings' eldest son was killed in the 1914 war. Henry King died in 1920. The family continued to live at Poles until 1921 when another tragedy occurred. One of the daughters, Muriel, was working with bees in the garden when her veil caught fire. A week later she died of her burns. Mrs King felt that she could no longer live at Poles and the house was put on the market. It remained empty for two years.

In 1923 it was bought by the Society of the Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus. In September of that year, a boarding school was opened with six pupils.

By 1928 there were fifty girls in the school. As numbers increased more accommodation was needed. In 1930 a beautiful new chapel was built and a large new building provided new dining rooms, a gymnasium, which doubled as a concert hall, additional bedrooms and classrooms.

In 1938 a Junior School was opened in Broadstairs. When war broke out the following year the juniors were evacuated to Poles where they remained for the duration of the war. Although Poles was in a 'safe area' some parents took their daughters away and sent them to Ireland or Canada for safety. Many remained at Poles.

During the holidays we gave hospitality to members of the Royal Air Force, men and women who came with their chaplains in search of spiritual refreshment and to enjoy the peace and beauty of their surroundings.

Poles always had a reputation for academic excellence and for the formation of young women able to take their place in the world in many careers and many walks of life.

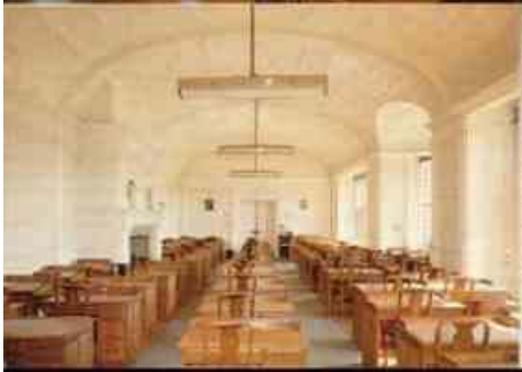
The school adopted the Hanbury's motto **'Nil Desperandum Christo Duce'**

Poles was closed in 1986. In 2005 it is a Marriott Hotel – Hanbury Manor - and past pupils still meet there from time to time.

*The library*



*The Chapel*



The Study

The Oak Hall

## Connection with Blessed Margaret Pole

In 1513 Margaret Countess of Salisbury owned the Manor of Ware. The land on which Poles was built is included in the Manor. There is no proof that Margaret Pole ever lived on the site but because of the connection, the school adopted her as its patroness.

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The Hole in the Wall



The Terrace



The Entrance Drive

The Yew Garden, leading to the Cemetery