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## John Hamer Sutcliffe:

"A great champion of ophthalmics" is the subtitle of an accolade to Sutcliffe by W.E. Hardy on pages 33-34 of the January 20, 1961, issue of The Optician, Vol. 141, No. 3642. According to Hardy, "Sutcliffe never practised ophthalmic optics in the formal way but he had most decided views on how it should be practised." His father took the initiative in forming the British Optical Association, shortly after which young John Hamer became the secretary. Though previously harboring strong interest in linguistics and music he soon "threw himself into the maelstrom of optical affairs." On the technical side he designed a one-position keratometer, a solid bifocal, a trial frame, and test charts, and also served as a technical consultant to a famous optical firm. He founded and edited the Dioptric Review and wrote many a column over the pen name of "Opticus." He also founded The Optical Society and served twice as its president and for 15 years as its Honorary Librarian. He served for years as a volunteer soldier, attaining the rank of Captain, and was later awarded the O.B.E. In 1929 he served as president of the International Optical League.

His approximate life span, derived from dates of these and many other activities described in the article, was ca. 1870-ca. 1940. Included also is a photograph.

## Reports from 1932 and 1962:

Seemingly unique is the governmental status of ophthalmic services in Great Britain. Recently Dorothy Leason, Secretary to the International Optometric and Optical League, sent me two documents, one of which describes ophthalmic services insurance in Great Britain in the Great Depression year of 1932 and the other in 1962.

The first was a paper entitled "Optical Insurance in Great Britain" read by R.J. Meller at the opening session of the International Optical League conference in Jena, Germany, on Friday, June 10, 1932, and printed in both English and German. The English version was published in the June 24, 1932, issue of The Optician and Scientific Instrument Maker, pp. 303-305.

The author was not an optician but a member of parliament very familiar with the National Health Insurance Scheme in which ophthalmic care was not included as a statutory benefit. However, he reported, "So claimant was the demand of the insured people for this urgent and necessary provision that at the first opportunity many (insurance) Societies included ophthalmic treatment in their list of additional treatment benefits."

The scheme required health insurance for all wage-earners over 16-years-old, except those in nonmanual occupations earning more than £250 a year, with funds derived from three sources, the insured persons, their employers, and the State. Another category of insurees known as "voluntary contributors" paid both the employees' and employers' share. These sickness, disablement, maternity, and medical benefits were known as "Statutory Benefits." The system was implemented by "Approved Societies" operating under government surveillance. In instances where Societies showed a net profit they were entitled to provide Additional Benefits which might include payments toward dental, ophthalmic, and other costs. Of the £21 million in Additional Benefits extended over a 10-year period by the Approved Societies, approximately 73% was dental and 12% ophthalmic optical.

The author, the manager of an Approved Society that served a fourth of the British insured population, made a strong case for the total inclusion of the opticians in the Statutory Benefits category.

The title of the second paper is "The Development of the Ophthalmic Service" by George H. Giles, an optometrist, a barrister-at-law, and, among his other offices, the president of the International Optical League. It appeared in the Royal Society of Health Journal, vol. 82, no. 4, July-August, 1962, pp. 217-222. He points out that the first National Health Insurance Acts (as described above by Meller) were enacted in 1911 and prevailed accordingly until 5 July 1948 at which time the National Health Service Act of 1946 was put into effect. Under this new statute any patient was eligible to "have his eyes tested and be supplied with glasses where necessary through the Supplementary Ophthalmic Services. Patients requiring further investigation or treatment outside the scope of the supplementary service are referred to the hospital eye service."

The Supplementary Ophthalmic Services were those provided by medical refractionists (ca. 1,000), optometrists (ca. 7,000), and dispensing opticians (ca. 1,000). Each person wishing to make use of the service had, on his or her first occasion only, to obtain a recommendation from a general medical practitioner. Payment for the eye examination and the glasses was made by the Executive Council for the Supplementary Ophthalmic Services.

The Hospital Eye Service was administered through Regional Hospital Boards and Boards of Governors and deal with diagnosis and treatment of ocular disease together with incidental refraction work. It was staffed by medical, optometric, and dispensing personnel.

The establishment of these services and reimbursement provisions necessitated the formation of committees to ascertain the qualifications of providers of the various ophthalmic services. These are described in detail by Giles as leading to the Opticians Act of 1958 primarily for registration of qualified personnel, a procedure which became effective in June 1961. Such registration became the sole criterion for practice at all. The Act created the

General Optical Council with majority representation by optometrists and dispensing opticians, plus ophthalmologists, other medical persons, educationists, and lay persons, to take over the control of opticians. A 1958 act to authorize the General Optical Council to register optometrists and dispensing opticians formally became operative in June 1961.

Giles describes some of the anomalies and administration difficulties as perceived at the time of his report (1962).

H.W H.

### The Jena influence:

On the Friday evening of June 10, 1932, the opening speeches of the three-day congress of the International Optical League at Jena, Thuringia, Germany, included, besides a keynote address, the welcoming remarks of Government Counsellor Stier of the Thuringian Ministry at Weimar; Dr. Elsner, Lord Mayor of Jena; Professor Dr. Esau, Rector of the University of Jena; and Director Henrichs of the Carl Zeiss firms. The comments of Counsellor Stier provide significant documentation of the purposeful philosophy and mission of the optometry school at Jena, as follows: (From the July-August, 1932, issue of The Dioptric Review, p. 172)

In the name of the Government Ministry for Education, I bid you welcome here in Jena, the town with the biggest optical industry in the whole of Germany.

The firm of Carl Zeiss, who controls these Works, comes within the purview of our administration. At the wish of one of the founders of the firm, Professor Ernest Abbé, we have also concerned ourselves with the improvement of the status of the optician.

According to his opinion, the provision of optical aids to the community is a matter of very great importance, and requires nowadays a good groundwork of scientific knowledge. We cannot refuse the demand for the acquiring of this requisite knowledge, because there are as yet no restrictions on industry in Germany, including the profession of the optician, and anyone can sell spectacles and all kinds of optical and meteorological instruments. If, therefore, well educated opticians obtain this necessary scientific knowledge for the practice of their profession, there is no need to enforce any legal restraint upon their trade.

We, therefore, in Thuringia, established fourteen years ago the first optical educational centre in Germany, the Technical High School of Opticians. Its doors are equally open to German students and foreign. We are glad of the attendance of foreign students, because, whilst we teach German methods, German scientific knowledge and research, we also give them a good deal of information concerning the scientific productions of our country and our own optical industry.

We are glad, therefore, that you, as official representatives of the English optical profession and representatives also of the International Optical League,

have this year chosen Jena as your meeting place. We regard your decision as an acknowledgment that in Jena, in its factories and its school, some contribution is made to optical knowledge and research.

We wish your Congress every success and hope that your impressions of us will be the very best. With these words, I bid you the heartiest of welcomes.

### The evil eye:

This is the name of a 1992 book by Alan Dundes (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison) which is excellently reviewed by OHS member Bill Lyle in the August 1992 issue of Optometry and Vision Science, page 664, of which prestigious journal he is editor. With typical Lyle thoroughness, after pointing up dozens of fascinating (derived from Latin fascinum for evil eye) details of "man's oldest superstition," he closes his review with what may disappointedly be correct, "This book will not be of great interest to most optometrists."

Truly there is a challenge here. A prompt visit into the stacks of the university library not only revealed this book and its almost identical 1981 edition, but also two adjacently stacked books of earlier date with the same title by other authors. The earlier one is edited by Clarence Maloney and published by Columbia University Press, New York, in 1976. The later one is authored by Lawrence Distasi under the tripartite title of "Mal Occhio, [evil eye], The Underside of Vision" and published by North Point Press, San Francisco, 1981.

Maloney's book consists of chapters entirely by anthropologists, a collection that grew out of a symposium on the evil eye belief held at the 1972 meeting of the American Anthropological Association. The common features in the descriptions of the belief in twelve world regions or ethnic groups include the following: "(1) power emanates from the eye (or mouth) and strikes some object or person; (2) the stricken object is of value, and its destruction or injury is sudden; (3) the one casting the evil eye may not know he has the power; (4) the one affected may not be able to identify the source of the power; (5) the evil eye can be deflected or its effects modified or cured by particular devices, rituals, and symbols; (6) the belief helps to explain or rationalize sickness, misfortune, or loss of possessions such as animals or crops; and (7) in at least some functioning of the belief everywhere, envy is a factor."

The reporting is essentially anecdotal in wordy detail with hundreds of reference citations, a small number of accompanying illustrations, subjective interpretations of the thought processes of persons affected, and the related folklore and traditions.

The Distasi monograph is a puzzling biographical account of the role of mal occhio in the author's one-household family of year 1913 immigrant Italian parents, a spinster aunt having mal occhio powers, and "children small and large, married and unmarried." Supplementing the accounts of the family's supernatural experiences

is a good deal of philosophical discussion of the related role and influence of Italian traditions and the interpretation of attributed phenomena in terms of mythological and psychological analogies. The author's academic or disciplinary qualifications are nowhere divulged, but the sophisticated quality of the text and his numerous reference citations suggest a well educated person brought up from childhood to be conscious of his minority culture and particularly sensitive to the nondiscussibility of the day-to-day influence of mal occhio. What the book makes almost excruciatingly clear is the ever-present seriousness of the superstition within an ordinary, apparently wholesome, family, a superstition which in another family might be regarded like Evil Eye Flugle with an amused smile.

The Dundes book, labeled as a casebook, is a compendium of selected essays on the evil eye which, except for one, have appeared during the current century in a variety of journals by authors in a wide range of disciplines, the earliest being 1889, the most recent 1976, and the median 1943. Most of the essays are anecdotal reportings though several are aimed more toward the theoretical interpretation of the available facts. Not included is any text by German ophthalmologist S. Seligmann, whose two-volume publication in 1910 is still the most comprehensive coverage of the related literature, a survey of 2,100 bibliographical sources.

In case you entertain the notion that the evil eye concept is by now merely a residual of the past please note that it still rests on the apex of the pyramid on the back side of the American one dollar bill. Or, if you suspect that someone is "glaring" at you, be aware that you are indulging in the basic evil eye hypothesis that rays of intensive hostility are being directed toward you. Even the common expression "casting one's eyes on something" implies the ocular emissions of radiant forces analogous to the visual beams theorized by top scientists of the 4th century. (See Optometry and Vision Science, vol. 69 no. 1, pp. 76-79, January 1992.)

In recent years even the National Science Foundation has provided study grants for cross-cultural surveys of the phenomenon. It may well be that the superstition continues to be formally entertained only by persons with very limited background in modern science, but are not they the great majority?

H.W H.

#### Optometric developments in Spain:

The following is a condensed chronology derived from the report of the Spanish delegation to the International Optometric and Optical League at the June 6-10, 1992, meeting in Granada, Spain.

#### Legislative Recognition

From early times in Spain the optician (optico) has functioned as today's optometrist but not until 29 September, 1934, did the

term "optometrist" appear in an official document, an order of the Ministry of Work, Justice, and Health, in which reference was made to "optician-optometrists." It was published in the Madrid Gazette on 4 October, 1934, but held in suspense by an official order of a ministry department on 29 October, 1934. The term was abolished later by order of the same ministry on 18 February, 1936, and so published in the Madrid Gazette on 20 February, 1936.

In the above-mentioned order of 1934 measurement of ocular refractive errors was forbidden to be done by anyone who did not have a medical license, but the 1936 order removed that restriction and merely forbade the advertising of refractive services, not the service itself, by nonmedical personnel.

On 19 July, 1947, the Official State Bulletin (the B.O.E.) published the Government Presidency Order of 8 July, 1947, which included some regulations of verification and tolerance of spectacle lenses without identifying that anyone without special qualifications could do the work.

A decree of 22 June, 1956, published in the 10 July, 1956, B.O.E. established the Spectacle Optician diploma, an academic and professional landmark, for with it was included a curriculum. Several years later Decree #1387/61 of 20 July, 1961, appeared in the B.O.E. of 7 August, 1961, as an order to regulate the opticians' professional practice. It provided that each optical establishment must have a qualified optician in charge whose functions and qualifications were described.

A Trade Ministry Order of 4 April, 1962, published in the B.O.E. on the 14th established some "buying and selling" regulations for optics and in so doing identified it as a "free business activity." This in effect ratified the provisions of Decree #1387/61.

In 1964 Decree #356/64 of 12 February, published in the B.O.E. on the 18th, created the Colegio Nacional de Opticos-Optometristas (C.N.O.O.), a professional corporation with substantial administrative and judicial authority to represent the rights and legitimate interests of all qualified opticians under provisions of Article 572 of the Penal Code. The Colegio is governed by its members chaired by a Dean. Internal Regime Regulations were formulated in 1964 and adopted in 1965.

A law enacted on 13 February, 1974, involving professional colegios was complemented by Royal Decree #1303/77 on 10 June, 1977, to place the C.N.O.O. under the supervision of the General Health Ministry beginning in 1979. On 13 July, 1992, the Health Insurance Ministry published Royal Decree #2207, which approved the by-laws of the C.N.O.O. that had been adopted at the general meeting of the C.N.O.O. members on 9 April, 1984, and which are in force today.

### Educational Advancement

Decree #2842/72 of 15 September, 1972, created the University School of Optics at the Complutence University in Madrid. On 2 October, 1973, the curriculum was approved and published.

On 7 October, 1977, the Terrassa University School of Optics at the Barcelona Polytechnical University was established by order of the Education and Science Ministry. On 21 September, 1982, its curriculum was approved by the same ministry.

Royal Decree #1855/85 mandated the Alicante University School of Optics on 9 October, 1985. By action of the Universities Council on 1 February, 1988, its curriculum leading to the title Graduate in Optics was approved.

By Decree #108/89 of 22 May, 1989, a similar graduation certification title was approved for the Sciences Faculty of Granada University, and its curriculum was approved on 8 January, 1990.

By Royal Decree 1419/90 on 26 October, 1990, the combination title of Graduate in Optics and Optometry was established together with a prescribed curriculum to fulfill it.

In 1990 the Regional Government of Galacia announced the establishment of the Santiago de Compostela University School of Optics with a curriculum to meet the requirements of the new optician/optometrist professional title.

### Practice Rights

Throughout its existence Spanish opticianry has suffered legal attacks from other professionals. The first formal court case was in 1984, a complaint against an optician for usurping ophthalmological privileges. The optician won. In 1989 the Sociedad Espanole de Oftalmologia filed 30 complaints against 30 opticians throughout Spain. Every decision favored the opticians' right to perform the visual examination using the instruments they consider to be appropriate, with only the obligation to refer patients to ophthalmologists whenever anything pathological is detected during the examination.

At present ophthalmologists are forbidden to exercise business relationships with individual optical firms, but they are not complying with the law.

### Scarlett's spectacles:

In a full-page article entitled "Optical History" on page 10 of the March 1992 issue, No. 96, of Interoptics retired optometrist and Honorary Curator of the British Optical Association Foundation Museum Hugh Orr has extracted entries from early minutes of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers concerning Edward Scarlett, the name of at least two opticians, father and son. Apparently just prior to the turn of the 18th century the elder Edward

commenced his optical career at age 14 by apprenticing to Christopher Cock, a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Turners. The craft of a turner included making tubes for telescopes and other instrument parts. In July 1716 the elder Edward Scarlett apprenticed his own son of the same name under the registration of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers, of which the senior Scarlett was Master in 1720-1721.

It is recorded that in 1728 the senior Scarlett published a description of his newly invented spectacles to fasten behind the ears, but no trace of the booklet has been found. A pair of "spectacles with a looped side to grip the temples" is shown on his trade card now in the Science Museum Collections. Scarlett is also credited with marking the focal length in inches on spectacle frames.

Mr. Orr has in his collection a pair of brass round-eye spectacles with short straight sides "suitable to wear with a wig" both embossed "E.S." in scroll exactly the same as Scarlett's signature in the WCSM minutes when he was Master. The lenses are +3.00 spheres on one of which is etched "70," perhaps intended to be suitable for a 70-year-old.

In an advertisement in the Weekly Journal of 23 May, 1724, Mr. Scarlett is identified as "Optician to their Royal Highnesses."

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