



THE STORY OF RENE CAISSE AND ESSIAC

The story of Essiac (Caisse spelled backwards) began way back in 1922, when Caisse was working as Head Nurse at the Sisters of Providence in Ontario, Canada. She noticed a patient with an unusually gnarled and scarred breast and asked what had happened. The patient told her that she had developed a growth in the breast while she and her husband were camping. They had befriended an 'Old Indian Medicine Man' from the Ojiva Indian tribe and he offered to heal it for her. However, being both conventional and sceptical they instead went to Toronto where the doctors diagnosed breast cancer and advised a Mastectomy. Since they had no money to pay for a hospital stay, they returned to the camp and decided to try the old Indian's remedy. She was instructed to drink a pleasant tasting herbal tea twice a day until her body was back in 'harmony with Great Spirit'. The medicine man also taught her how to gather the herbs and how to make her own herbal tea.

When Rene Caisse came across this woman more than 20 years later, her breast was scarred, but certainly not cancerous. Rene asked the woman for the herbal recipe: 'I was very interested and wrote down the names of the herbs she had used. Knowing that at that time doctors threw up their hands when cancer was discovered in a patient, my thought was that if I should ever develop cancer, I would use it'.

Two years later, in 1924, she had occasion to use the recipe. Her favourite aunt was diagnosed as having terminal cancer of the stomach and liver. She remembered the herbal remedy and asked the doctor if she could try it. He agreed. To cut a long story short, her aunt got better - a lot better. She lived for another 20 years.

From then on Rene began to treat people with terminal cancer, with good results. There are many well-documented cases, although a few years later federal health officials destroyed her records. Over the next two decades, Rene Caisse treated many cancer patients in an old hotel she used as a clinic. She did not charge for the treatment. A steady stream of doctors visited her, observing and examining case files, talking to patients and leaving testimonials. The authorities demanded clinical tests, but she stubbornly refused to divulge her formula unless they gave official assurance that Essiac would not be lost to the people who needed it. But the authorities could not give her that assurance. She was offered huge sums of money to commercialise Essiac, but she refused. Even the world's largest cancer research centre, Memorial Sloan-Kettering, in New York, could not wrestle the formula from Rene Caisse despite constant pressing and pursuing.

Finally, fearing prosecution, Rene closed the clinic in 1942 and went into seclusion. But not before 55,000 North Americans, including many doctors, signed a petition supporting a private member's bill to allow Rene Caisse to practice medicine in Ontario in the treatment of cancer. The bill missed being passed by three votes. Instead, a commission to investigate cancer remedies was created to pass Judgement on Essiac. 387 of her patients showed up to speak on her behalf.

Rene Caisse died in 1978 at the age of 90, but before she died she signed over the rights of Essiac formula to the Respinin Corporation of Toronto, to test, manufacture and distribute it. Dr Charles Brusch, former personal physician to President John F Kennedy was also reputedly given the formula. Brusch himself had cancer of the lower bowel, which completely disappeared after Essiac treatments. Later Brusch teamed up with Elaine Alexander, who after Brusch's death formed a company, which produces and sells Essiac with other added herbs under the name of Flor-Essence. Neither company makes any claim about curing cancer, but simply state that it is an herbal detoxifying tea. The old Indian had called the original remedy 'a holy drink that purifies the body'.

So what's in Essiac?

It contains Sheep Sorrel, Burdock Root, Slippery Elm Bark and Rhubarb Root.

SHEEP SORREL:

Effective in attacking and breaking down tumours. Alleviates many chronic conditions and degenerative diseases. Can relieve internal ulcers and virtually all skin diseases. Acts as a tonic for the urinary tract. Contains high amounts of vitamins A,B Complex, silicon, sodium, sulphur, and trace amounts of copper, iodine, manganese and zinc. Also contains carotenoids and chlorophyll.

BURDOCK ROOT:

Powerful blood purifier. May clear congestion in circulatory, lymphatic, respiratory and urinary systems. Can help eliminate excess fluids in the body and stimulate the elimination of toxic waste materials, which will relieve liver disorders and improve digestion. Can cleanse the body of bile; detoxify the kidneys and gall bladder. Can increase perspiration, which in turn carries off excess toxins. The root is composed mostly of carbohydrates, largely insulin (not insulin). Insulin is reportedly a powerful immune modulator because it is said to hook onto the surface of white blood cells and make them work better. Burdock Root is rich in Vitamin B Complex, E and P. It contains, in high amounts, chromium, cobalt, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, silicon, zinc, sodium and potassium.

SLIPPERY ELM BARK:

Principal component is mucilage, similar to that found in flaxseed. It is one of nature's miracle cleansers. Its sticky substance dissolves mucus that has been deposited in organ tissue, lymph glands and nerve channels. Its lubricating action protects and softens all the membrane linings in the body, especially damaged and inflamed areas. It buffers the effects of increased discharge of urine through the urinary tract. Slippery Elm Bark's sticky adhesive quality also lubricates the bones and joints, gathers up and dissolves toxic wastes from all areas of the body including bowel and then helps discharge them. As the mucilaginous material passes through the alimentary canal, it coats the organs over which it flows with a sticky film. The action reduces irritation, reduces sensitivity to acids and bitters and most importantly slows down the entry of harmful chemicals. Slippery Elm Bark can help reduce the pain of ulcers and eventually heal them by restoring normal mucous coating to irritated tissues.

RHUBARB ROOT:

Purges the body of bile, parasites and stagnating food residues by stimulating the gall duct to expel toxic waste matter. It has been shown to alleviate chronic liver problems by cleansing the liver. Improves digestion and the appetite. Helps heal ulcers, alleviates disorders of the spleen and colon, relieves constipation, helps heal haemorrhoids and bleeding in the upper digestive tract. Contains antibiotic, antimicrobial and antitumour properties. Also contains a remarkable substance called rhein. Rhein inhibits the growth of pathogenic bacteria in the intestines, and can also be effective against Candida Albicans, fever, inflammation and pain.

However, it is not the individual healing properties of these herbs that produce such beneficial results, but as the Ojibwa Indians believed, the most important aspect of the herbal healing medication is the relationship and interaction between the different plants used within this medication. They have to be in balance, in harmony, to act as one unified healing spirit.

It is available in three forms:

- a) Already made up into liquid
- b) As the dried herb mixture
- c) Capsules (suitable for short doses, such as holidays)

All available from Argyll Herbs Direct.

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Unit 2 Quantock Parade, North Petherton, Somerset. TA6 6TN
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Read: "Essiac Essentials" by Sheila Snow and Mali Klein