

Essiac: Nature's cure for cancer

An Interview With DR. GARY L. GLUM

This article was written by Elizabeth Robinson, and published initially in the Irish journal "The Telling Voice" in 1993.

By Elisabeth Robinson

Introduction

Rene Caisse was a nurse living in Canada who for a period of almost sixty years treated hundreds of people with a herbal remedy she called Essiac. She discovered this natural remedy through a patient in the hospital where she worked who had been cured of cancer. The patient had used a herbal remedy given to her by an ojibwa herbalist.

Rene left the hospital in 1922 at the age of 33, and went to Bracebridge, Ontario, Canada where she began administering Essiac to all who came to her. The majority of those whom she treated came on referral with letters from their physicians certifying they had incurable or terminal forms of cancer and that they had been given up by the medical profession as untreatable.

Rene began gathering the plants and preparing the herbal remedy herself in her own kitchen, in a building lent to her for her patients. She administered Essiac both orally and by injection. In cases where there was severe damage to life support organs, her patients died but they lived far longer than the medical profession had predicted, and, more significantly, they lived free of pain. Still others, listed as hopeless and terminal, but without severe damage to life support organs, were cured and lived 35, 45 years (many are still living).

So startling was the effectiveness of this simple herbal remedy, that it could not be ignored, and the Canadian Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Parliament became involved. Friends, former patients, and grateful families petitioned Canadian officialdom for Rene Caisse's right to administer the remedy to anyone who asked for it without the threat of interference from the authorities. Fifty five thousand signatures were collected on the petition. In 1938, Essiac came within three votes of being legalized by the Ontario government as a natural remedy for terminal cancer patients. The story of Rene Caisse, her life, her work, and the effectiveness of the remedy she named Essiac, is told in a book "Calling of an Angel" by Dr. Gary Glum of Los Angeles.

After reading the book and finding it to be informative, well documented and moving, I decided to interview Dr. Glum I verified the basic information in his book through Canadian sources, one an herbalist who knows Rene Caisse and her work, and who has personally made, and successfully used, Essiac.

Dr. Gary L. Glum, until two years ago, was a Chiropractor with offices in Los Angeles, California. His clients included well known professional athletic teams and Olympic teams. In 1988 Dr. Glum published "Calling of an Angel", the story

of Rene Caisse and Essiac. Two years ago he closed his practice and now devotes his time to investigative writing. As I completed my second conversation with Dr. Glum, he said, "You're opening a Pandora's Box here, publishing this interview about Essiac". I disagree, but began thinking about "Pandora's box".

In the story of Pandora most well known today, she is sent by the gods to curse humanity for offending them. Pandora is given a "box" or container with instructions not to open it, which the gods know she will disobey. When Pandora does open the box, famine, war, plague, disease, pestilence, all the ills of humankind are released. Then at the last comes hope, as antidote to despair. But according to Barbara Walker's Encyclopedia, Pandora whose name means "all giving" was originally an image for Mother Earth. She had, not a box, but a honey vase like the cornucopia from which flowed all life and creativity, as well as death and rebirth. Earth's gift to her children. Because we are natural beings in a natural world, it seems appropriate that a simple remedy composed of four common herbs, gifts of Earth, would suggest so much promise for us today.

INTERVIEW WITH DR. GLUM

Elisabeth Robinson :

To begin with Dr. Glum, can you tell us a little about how you became interested in the story you tell in "Calling of an Angel", and how you learned about Rene Caisse and her work?

Dr. Gary Glum :

A personal friend of mine knew this woman, whose name I have promised not to reveal, who was living in Detroit, Michigan. Twenty years ago she had been diagnosed with cervical cancer in a Detroit hospital where she was eventually given up as incurable and terminal. She was given about ten days to live. She convinced her husband to make a trip to Bracebridge Canada, where she went to see Rene Caisse. She was treated with a herbal remedy developed by Rene-Essiac- and in a short time she didn't have a cancer cell in her body. So, after that time, this woman began dedicating her life to disseminating information about Essiac in the United States. When I met her, she was the only person in possession of the original herbal formula who would relinquish it. I've got the formula for Essiac from her. That's how it began.

When I started, all I had was a piece of paper. I thought: "What am I going to do with this?" I decided the best way to go, would be to find the information behind Essiac and put it in book form to bring it to the world. I learned about Rene Caisse from Mary McPherson who was a very close friend of Rene's (not only a friend but also a patient). Mary's mother and her husband were also patients. They were all treated for cancer and cured by Rene. Mary worked with Rene beginning in the 1930s and she had in her possession all these documents that had to do with Essiac for over 40 years. Rene administered it. All the documents Rene had were destroyed by the Canadian Ministry of Health & Welfare at the

time of her death in 1978. They burned all that information in fifty five gallon drums behind her home.

ER: Why?

GG: Because they don't want this information in the hands of the public or the press or anybody else. They indeed found out what Essiac was in 1937. The Royal Cancer Commission hearings then, had come to the same conclusions that Rene had, that Essiac was a cure for cancer.

ER: What is Essiac exactly?

GG: Essiac is a non toxic herbal cure for cancer that's been with us since 1922. It's a formula made from four very common herbs.

ER: I would guess that virtually every person in the US today has been touched by cancer, either personally or through a loved one. If this information is true, and the effectiveness of this remedy is actually medically documented, many lives could be saved. Why do you think the information on Essiac is not more widely known?

GG: The information is withheld because cancer is the second largest revenue-producing business in the world, next to the petrochemical business. Money and power suppress this truth. No one has ever sought to cure cancer only to control it. I mean the research institutes, federal governments, pharmaceutical companies, anybody that has a vested interest in the health care of cancer, including the American Cancer Society, Canadian Cancer Society, any of these so called benefactors to those who have contracted this disease all of these institutions are involved in the money and power around cancer. These institutions have influence over Government and regulatory agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA recommends only allopathic treatments for cancer and other life threatening diseases. It does not approve nor make legal, alternative treatments of any kind.

ER: You're saying that Essiac is in a position similar to, for example, laetrile.

GG: Yes, the only reason laetrile was stopped (and it couldn't be stopped any other way) was through the insurance companies. The insurance companies sent down a directive to all allopathic physicians stating that they could not cover them in any malpractice suit in the event they were treating people with any substance not approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

ER: In your book you mention that Bruschi Clinic in Massachusetts worked with Rene Caisse and Essiac, during the early 1960s. Is this clinic still doing research with Essiac?

GG: Dr. Charles A. Bruschi is not practicing this time. He was a personal physician to the late President John F. Kennedy. Dr. Bruschi worked with Rene Caisse from 1959 to 1962. He worked with thousands of cancer patients. He also worked with the Presidential Cancer Commission, with others like Dr. Armand Hammer, the American Cancer Society, and the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Bruschi presented his findings after ten years of research. He had come to the conclusion that, in his own words, "Essiac is a cure for cancer, period, all studies done at laboratories in the United States and Canada support this conclusion." Whereupon the federal government issued a gag order and said "you've got one of two choices, either you keep quiet about this or we'll haul you off to military prison and you'll never be heard of again". So we never heard another word out of him.

Bruschi's Essiac patients included Ted Kennedy's son who had a sarcoma in his leg. And who had his leg amputated. He was being treated at the time by the Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Farber didn't know how to save him, because no one had ever lived with this type of sarcoma. So what he did was go to Dr. Bruschi and say, how are we going to save Ted Kennedy's son? And Dr. Bruschi made the suggestion to put him on Essiac, and after they did, he didn't have a cancer cell in his body. But all this information has been hidden from the general public.

ER: Why?

GG: As I said money and power.

ER: Do you know whether the remedy is being used or tested anywhere today in the US or Canada?

GG: Right now Essiac is being used in every state in the United States, it's throughout Canada, into Mexico, it's in Austria, Europe, Asia and recently also in Africa. So the message of Essiac is beginning to make its way world wide. But it's still known only on a limited basis. Of course now you also have the problem of herbal distribution companies throughout the world that are substituting yellow dock and curly dock for sheep's sorrel, which is one of the critical ingredients in Essiac. The sheep sorrel is the herbal ingredient in Essiac that was found to be responsible for the destruction of cancer cells in the body, or their amalgamation where metastasized cancer cells actually return to the original tumor site.

That research was done by Dr. Chester Stock at Sloan Kettering in New York for over a three year period yet they gave it to the Canadian Ministry of Health & Welfare. The Canadian Government then immediately banned that herb for sale and distribution.

ER: Banned a common weed like sheep's sorrel?

GG: Yes, sheep's sorrel is just a common weed that grows in abundance throughout North America and into Canada. Just a common weed. Note: After this interview was completed, Wildfire learned from an herbalist in Canada that the Canadian government has recently banned St. John's Wort, also a common weed frequently used by herbalists.

ER: Well, it seems that banning sheep's sorrel would not be very effective if you could identify it for yourself.

GG: Yes, it's just a question of identifying the plant and then harvesting it correctly and drying it properly and then putting it together with the other herbs. Rene would harvest the sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* when it was four to six inches high. She cut it back and it would grow up again, and she'd cut it back again. She would do that about three times and then she would let it go to seed. It will grow to 14 or 18 inches. She would take the herb cuttings home and lay them out at room temperature to dry them. She'd let the cuttings sit there for three or four days before she'd begin turning the herbs. Then she'd turn them every two days until they were properly dry, which took about ten days to two weeks. It takes about a bushel of harvested sheep's sorrel to produce one pound of the dried powdered herb which is used in the formula.

ER: Do you have the formula? It's not in your book. You do mention a video in the book.

GG: Yes, I have it. Anyone can get it from me, free of charge. We don't sell the video anymore. We simply mail the formula to anyone who asks for it.

ER: Sun Bear told me that you had problems getting the book published and distributed. What kind of problems?

GG: There wasn't a publishing company that would publish it. No one wanted to run the risk of a wrongful death suit. So I published the book myself. And as soon as I did, the IRS came in and slapped about a half million dollars in tax liens against me and said "you know this has got nothing to do with taxes. It's all about cancer". They actually started hauling the pallets of books out of my medical practice offices and confiscated them. I also had thousands of books that were confiscated by the Canadian government at customs. I have never received any of those books back. The only ones I have now are hidden in storage facilities.

ER: That's incredible Why do you think they are so interested in keeping this book out of circulation?

GG: Money and power, as I have said. Cancer is the largest revenue producing business in the world next to the petrochemical basins. In Canada the book is

being held up by the Ministry of Health & Welfare because they say it is "advertising."

ER: Advertising what? The video you don't sell anymore.

GG: No, a cure for cancer.

ER: Can you explain what you mean by the publishers fearing a wrongful death suit?

GG: What you're dealing with is giving people a formula that they can make and use in the privacy of their own homes without the approval of the AMA or FDA or anybody else. If any attorney or any family member should decide, for whatever reason, that the reason someone expired was from the use of Essiac, then you are putting yourself up for a wrongful death suit. The contention is that if it isn't approved by the Food and Drug Administration, there's no legality in using it when you're dealing with a life threatening disease. When Rene Caisse set up her clinical trials in Canada to test Essiac, she was given government permission to treat terminally ill cancer patients who had been given up for hopeless by the medical profession. That was one criterion Secondly, this was all to be certified by a pathology report. And third, she could not charge anything for her services.

She agreed to all these criteria and proceeded to treat people with Essiac. Many she treated were still there 35 years later to bury her when she died at the age of 90. The best that anyone can do is just try to disseminate this information to the public and let people make their own choices. That's all you can do. And just say, look, if you feel that Essiac has value in your life and the lives of your loved ones, you have the right to make this remedy and use it in the privacy of your own home and without anyone's approval. You know, in 1937 Essiac came within three votes of being legalized as a treatment for cancer. People had gathered over fifty five thousand signatures on a petition to allow Rene to continue to use Essiac. The only reason the vote fell short, she found out years later, was that the College of Physicians and Surgeons met and said to Parliament, if you don't respond to the political pressure and legalize Essiac, then we'll take a sincere look and give this woman a fair hearing. So Parliament didn't legalize Essiac. However, following the Royal Cancer Commission hearings, Rene was allowed to continue her practice but only within the criteria I mentioned before, which allowed the Ministry of Health & Welfare to restrict people's access to Essiac treatments. I know this because I have a copy of the hearing transcripts which I got from Mary McPherson, which is part of the information that did not get burned when Rene died.

ER: You mentioned that earlier. What exactly was burned?

GG: All her research for that 40 year period of time. All the names, all her clinical data that she had collected. Her files and records.

ER: What about the records of the Bruschi Clinic? It seems these would be convincing evidence.

GG: As far as I know all that material has been destroyed also. I knew that Rene had worked with Dr. Bruschi from 1959 to 1962, so I went to Dr. Bruschi's home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, whereupon he delivered to me the only material he had left in his files on Essiac. One of those files was his own personal file where he had treated and cured his own cancer with Essiac. I have his personal records. All the information in my book is verified by a sheet of paper with a signature and a date on it, and those sheets and signatures are all originals. They are not copies.

ER: Have you had any personal experiences with Essiac?

GG: Yes, I can give you an example. He was a twelve year old boy named Toby Wood. He had acute lymphoblastic, which is one of the most virulent of all leukemias. He had been on chemotherapy for four years and radiation for three. His mother's only hope in life was to find a cure for him. She went everywhere. She tried every alternative treatment. Her last stop was Dr. Alvazado in Athens, Greece where her son's white cell count was 186,000. He had no red blood cells and no platelets. He was hemorrhaging to death. So they transfused Toby in Greece and put him on a plane to Alaska where he was given less than five days to live. I met his mother's sister in Los Angeles while I was putting the book together and she asked if there was any credibility here. We sat down and talked. She then borrowed the money for a flight to Anchorage, and delivered a bottle of Essiac. By the time she got there Toby was given three days to live. He was in a state of complete deterioration. He was given the Essiac and all the hemorrhaging stopped within 24 hours. Within three months all his blood tests were normal. I arrived in Alaska later that year and met him. Toby Wood did die, and we finally found a pathologist who would do an exhaustive autopsy. We knew that he didn't have leukemia any more. We wanted to find out what was the cause of death. It took four months to get the report back. The pathologist autopsied the brain, testicles, and all life support organs, including the bone marrow. No blast cells were found in any life support organ. No blast cells were found in the bone marrow. There were a few stray cells in the testicles and in the brain. Cause of death was damage to the myocardial sac of the heart, a result of the chemotherapy.

This was the first report anywhere in medical history of anyone surviving lymphoblastic leukemia. That information was taken to AP and UPI but they said it was not newsworthy. Our information on Essiac has been sent round the world twice through Publisher's Weekly magazine in a huge two page ad. We received no response at all from any publishing company world wide, no producers, directors, throughout the United States, no talk show programs, none of that. We can't access the media.

In fact we talked to Philip Scheffler, producer of 60 Minutes. He read the book and we called him to ask what he was going to do about it. He said, nothing. I

said, all the information in the book is verifiable. In other words it's the truth. I said, if you're 60 Minutes why don't you expose me and Essiac as a fraud? He said, nope, can't do it. We took it to Joe Donally who's the executive news producer for ABC in New York. We said why not give it to Peter Jennings, Geraldo Rivera, Ted Koppel, one of those. He said nope. We asked why not. He said because his phone lines would be invaded with 65,000 phone calls. We said, "how sympathetic do you think a parent whose child is dying of leukemia, would be to your 65,000 phone calls?" He went on to say he's got a mortgage on his house and is looking toward retirement. So that's the problem. No-one wants this information disseminated. And it's not just the media, either. It includes the herbal companies who now substituting the curly dock for sheep's sorrel. So people are getting the wrong ingredients for Essiac, not to mention the five or six other formulas that are circulating which are different from the one I sent out. These false formulas are being disseminated. There is a misinformation campaign going on here somehow.

ER: Has this misinformation campaign started just since your book has been out?

GG: Previous to my book, none of this information was available to the general public at all. The public had no information outside of a few assorted articles. Certainly the Essiac formula was not available to the general public at all. All that information was held by the Resperin Corporation in Toronto, Canada, which supposedly is a private institution. However, they worked hand in glove with the Canadian Ministry of Health & Welfare, who work directly with the American Food and Drug Administration and the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. The Essiac formula was never given to anyone by Resperin.

ER: Did the Resperin Corporation do any research on Essiac?

GG: They've done research since 1973 when the formula was relinquished to them by Rene for the purchase price of one dollar. As soon as they got the formula, they told Rene they had no further use of her. She had been under the distinct impression from the Ministry of Health & Welfare and the Resperin Corporation that she was to lead the research activities that they so desperately wanted to put together. But Rene had already done clinical trials. She had names and records. She thought that Resperin Corporation was politically powerful and had money enough to get Essiac into the private sector without compromising her values. Then she found out that the Corporation was working closely with the government and administration and the Ministry of Health & Welfare. So now people who were terminally ill and given up as hopeless had to go through a federal bureaucratic maze to get the remedy. By then, for the most of these people, it was too late. But even when people were cured, that information was not released to the public. Resperin ran research tests on Essiac. One test was conducted in Northern Canada and documents were falsified. For example, one man was listed as dead who a few months later knocked on Rene's door and said,

you know I want to thank you for the Essiac and being part of this experimental program. Yet he was listed as dead in the research project findings.

ER: It's beginning to seem amazing to me that any information at all about this remedy has survived the "conspiracy of silence" or outright destruction of records and so on.

GG: The only reason Essiac is known today is by word of mouth and because Essiac is what it is. What will keep Essiac known is its effectiveness. Rene said it years ago. She said, look, if Essiac doesn't have any merit, it will kill itself. Of course she knew full well that if people had the correct herbs, the remedy would stand on its own. And that is exactly what Essiac has done over this period of time that we've been disseminating the information. Rene also found that Essiac was a strong preventive. These findings were substantiated by Dr. Albert Schatz at Temple University who discovered the cure for tuberculosis., Rene also found that Essiac would normalize the thyroid gland. My wife was on grains of thyroid since the sixth grade. After I met her, she started taking Essiac, and she hasn't taken a grain of thyroid since.

Rene also found that Essiac would heal stomach ulcers within three or four weeks. She felt that ulcers were a precursor to cancer. Sir Frederick Banting, the CO discoverer of insulin, wanted to work with Rene. She had clinical cases where a person on insulin discontinued it with the Essiac, although no one knew how Essiac would interact with the insulin. Apparently Essiac regulated the pancreas in cases of diabetes mellitus. So these people then became insulin free. Another thing I've found with Essiac is that I've experienced almost perfect health. As you get older you think well, I'm forty now, these things happen. Well, these things don't have to happen. Since I've taken Essiac, I've experienced perfect health. It's amazing. I sleep like a baby, have all kinds of energy, and no sickness, not even a cold or the flu. I also worked with the AIDS Project Los Angeles through their Long Beach and San Padre districts. They had sent 179 patients home to die. They all had pneumocystis carinii and histoplasmosis. Their weight was down to about 100 pounds. Their T 4 cell counts were less than ten. The Project gave me five of these patients. I took them off the AZT and the DDI and put them on Essiac three times daily. Those are the only ones alive today, the other 174 are dead.

ER: That is incredible, but what kind of lives are they dealing with today?

GG: They're exercising three times a day, eating three meals a day. Their weight is back to normal. For all intents and purposes you wouldn't know they were sick a day in their lives. But this information is not disseminated either because AIDS is on the horizon as another big money maker. The chairman of the AIDS project in Los Angeles makes over \$100,000 a year. Even the alternative health care professionals are out there to control, not to cure. Alternative medical practice is just as mercenary and deceptive as the allopathic. No one wants a cure for cancer or AIDS.

The alternative people are also into it for money. What you're finding with Essiac is that it is not even allowed into the arenas of alternative health care. So really what you've got out here is people continually perpetrating these lies against mankind. For money. For money and power. It's that simple. Really once you think about it, the only reason we don't have solar power is that no one's figured out a way to sell EXXON the sun. It's true. If they could, you'd have solar power. You know you'd have it.

ER: So in your own personal experience, this herbal remedy works to I'm going to just quote you here and say "cure" cancer, thyroid conditions, diabetes, AIDS, ulcers

GG: It also cures the common cold. Essiac elevates the immune system. I've been taking one ounce a day for seven years, and in seven years I haven't had a cold, flu or virus.

ER: And all of this from a simple Native herbal remedy.?

GG: Yes although Rene did alter it. She altered it with Turkish rhubarb root (*Rheum palmatum*). Turkish rhubarb has a 5,000 year history. It actually came up from India into China and then was taken by the British.

ER: Turkish rhubarb root is not native in this country, nor available here. Herbals from foreign countries are fumigated and irradiated, so is it a good idea to use the Turkish rhubarb?

GG: You can substitute ordinary rhubarb root. The other two ingredients are burdock root (*Arctium lappa*) and the inner bark of slippery elm (*Ulmus fulva*). They are easy to obtain, usually. Sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) is what destroys the cancer cells. The other three herbs are blood purifiers. Essiac elevates the enzyme system and gives all cancer patients and all AIDS patients the enzymes that have been destroyed. Essiac elevates the enzyme system; it elevates the hormone system, so the body can cure its own disease.

ER: What about quantities? Some herbals are toxic.

GG: Even its worst enemy could never lay claim that Essiac had any deleterious side effects whatever. You can take Essiac safely (through all the clinical trials that have been done), up to six ounces a day. That's two ounces in the evening, two in the morning and two around noontime. That's high dosage. Rene had the correct herbs and she used as little as one ounce a week. But look at the difference between then and now. The food didn't have carcinogens in it, and neither did the water, nor the air. So what have we done? We've killed the air, killed the water, killed the food. So what's left? Nation wide, in the water we drink, over 2,100 organic and inorganic chemicals have been identified, and 156 of them are pure carcinogens. Of those, if you have a tumor, 26 are tumor promoting, so they make the tumor larger. But of course this information is not available to the public

either. Those figures are from the tests conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency which have never been distributed to the public.

ER: How did you get the information?

GG: From Ralph Nader organization out of Washington, DC The media have not disseminated this information. Another problem is that very few people read books any more. We can hope that they'll read "Calling of an Angel" of course, the problem right now is people getting the right herbs.

ER: Anything you'd like to add before we close this interview.?

GG: I would like to say that I didn't do all this research because I felt I have a responsibility to other people. I did it because I have a responsibility to myself, knowing that I've done all that I can to disseminate this information and bring it to the people. I was the first person to release this information on Essiac, how to make it, to the general public and say:"Here it is, here's the formula, here's the story." So now, it's out there and look what's happening: it's getting killed through a misinformation campaign; I mean Harvard, Temple, Tufts, Northwestern University, Chicago all these institutions have tested Essiac with the right stuff, and they all came to the same conclusion as Rene Caisse did. But all the information is being buried.

ER: Gary, it's been very interesting to speak with you.

GG: It's been a pleasure. You're opening Pandora's Box, you know, publishing this interview.

The article concludes: "Essiac is not a hoax or fraud. To hear experiences described by patients themselves cannot help, but convince observers, that dramatic and beneficial changes definitely took place in many of those who received the remedy. Although the focus on Essiac has been as a cancer treatment, it alleviated and sometimes cured many chronic and degenerative conditions because it cleanses the blood as well as the liver and strengthens the immune system."