

## The “Japanese Oil” ingredient in the Sisk Healing Oil Recipe

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My wife, Rachael (Sisk) McSwain, is the great-granddaughter of Reverend Henry Clay Sisk (1866-1945), founder of the Missionary Methodist Church. “Uncle Henry”, as he was known, died in 1945 when Rachael was only 4 years old so her memories of him are vague.

One of the ongoing legacies of Rev. Sisk was the use of a healing oil medicine which he produced in his home and which was used widely in the surrounding communities. At least one account of the origin of this medicine is that it was the result of a divine revelation. The list of ingredients was known to only a few persons, and following his death, it was continued to be made by his daughter, Aunt Lillie Sisk McCluney, in her home at 605 Smith Street in Shelby, NC. It was registered in NC (whatever that means), stocked in local drug stores and sold to the public. In addition to its use as an external medicine, I understand it was also used as an anointing oil in baptisms, ordinations, healing services and prayers for the sick.

My wife recalls its frequent use in her family when she was a child (1940s and early 1950s) for a variety of illnesses and it was still readily available during the early years of our marriage and the arrival of our first children (late 1950s and early 1960s). It is almost impossible to locate a bottle of it now although we do still have one almost full bottle in our possession (though we do not use it as a treatment). We preserve it for its family and historical significance.

I have a list of the ingredients used to make the healing oil but was always unsure of one of the ingredients: it shows on the ingredients list as “Japanese Oil” and in parenthesis beside it, says (en-ar-co). I was always perplexed by this description and wondered what this ingredient is.

Finally, I decided to investigate it and eventually sleuthed it until I think I found the answer.

I learned that, during Rev. Sisk’s lifetime, there were actually TWO products that were marketed under the name EN-AR-CO. One of these was a medicinal product also known by the name of “Japanese Oil” and this is the one Rev. Sisk obviously used in his recipe. The other was a petroleum product, primarily canned motor oil, used in the automotive industry.

The origin of the name EN-AR-CO, in both products, came from a phonetic sounding of the initials, NRC, of the names of each of the two different companies. The medicinal product was manufactured by the National Remedy Company and the motor oil was manufactured by the National Refining Company. So, the initials of each company, NRC, with a small o added at the end to indicate the Company, was NRCo. In saying the initials of the Company name, it is phonetically pronounced as EN-AR-CO. In time, this became the name of their main product.

The National Remedy Company was located in New York City at 115 Fulton St. in 1912. It was started about 1884. They were proprietors of a number of medicinal products which did fairly well on the national market. **One of these was called Japanese Oil (1904). The Name was later changed to EN-AR-CO Oil (1912-1933+).**

EN-AR-CO was composed of fusel oil\*, capsicum (the hot stuff in red pepper), turpentine, camphor oil, choro-thymol, along with perfumes and essential oils. The advertising states that the product was on the market “for over fifty years” and that it had been used since 1884. The product was essentially a liniment and antiseptic for treating “muscular stiffness, aches and soreness, neuralgia” and so on. EN-AR-CO was also used as a vapor for treating head colds and respiratory problems. **Before 1900, the product had been known as “Japanese Oil”.**

**\*fusel oil**, a mixture of volatile, oily liquids produced in small amounts during alcoholic fermentation. It is sometimes called fusel alcohol or potato oil in Europe. It is a fermented alcohol usually found in cider, beer and wine. In German, it means “bad liquor”.

The information below includes pictures of an EN-AR-CO bottle (empty), box it came in, and the directions for use. This was for an item sold on E-Bay several years ago, but the description and pictures were still available for viewing. Notice on the directions, box and bottle that this was distributed by the National Remedy Company in New York; that it is named EN-AR-CO; and that it repeatedly refers to the product as “Japanese (style) Oil”.

**THIS PRODUCT IS ALMOST CERTAINLY THE SOURCE OF THE INGREDIENT IN THE “SISK HEALING OIL” RECIPE THAT IS LISTED AS- Japanese Oil (en-ar-co)**

## Directions for Use

# EN - A R - C O

(JAPANESE style OIL)

### An Efficient Antiseptic Application

### CONTAINS NO ANIMAL OIL OR FAT

### FOR HAIR AND SCALP

#### For Loose Dandruff:

Shampoo once per week. Apply JAPANESE (style) OIL to the scalp, three nights per week.

Poor circulation means improper nourishment of the scalp with gradual loss of hair, and Dandruff once it starts, adds to the difficulty.

Antiseptic JAPANESE (style) OIL massaged well onto scalp removes loose Dandruff, cleanses the scalp and aids the superficial circulation.

#### For Hair Treatment:

Saturate a small piece of clean absorbent cotton with the oil and rub well onto scalp once a day before retiring. Both the oil and its antiseptic vapor will disappear almost immediately. Continue to apply once each night preferably for from 30 to 60 days, (depending upon severity of case), then cut it down to two applications a week. Shampoo at least once a month. Do not wet hair with water too often. JAPANESE (style) OIL will keep it in place. Use oil full strength.

At first the antiseptic odor of JAPANESE (style) OIL may prove disappointing to those accustomed to highly perfumed hair tonics. But it is results and not aroma which count. The peculiar odor of JAPANESE (style) OIL is unique. JAPANESE (style) OIL is a medicine—not a "dressing". To change the odor would mean to remove its most active ingredients. Used by both men and women.

**NOT INTENDED FOR EYELASHES, OR HAIR DYE**

*If desired, JAPANESE (style) OIL may be diluted with Castor Oil*

*Use Care Not to Get Oil in Eyes*

**For other uses of JAPANESE (style) OIL see reverse side**

The excellent results obtained through the use of our JAPANESE (style) OIL are due to the power which this preparation exerts in carrying to the body soothing and counter-irritant oils, which combined with its antiseptic properties produce results. When JAPANESE (style) OIL is directly applied to the body it results in the creation of a soothing warmth that quickly stirs up the superficial circulation, thus permitting nature to exert herself. JAPANESE (style) OIL may be used by busy people when it is not convenient to make use of hot water bags, electric pads, mustard plasters, or electric lamps in the treatment of indicated conditions, as it stimulates the circulation into renewed activity without the necessity of massage or continued treatment at home. When this preparation is allowed to remain in contact with the body surface it exerts an excellent antiseptic action on bacteria with which it may come in contact. Keep bottle capped when not in use.



## OTHER USES FOR EN-AR-CO (JAPANESE style OIL)

DIRECT METHOD

VAPOR METHOD

MADE IN U.S.A. SINCE 1884

### VAPOR INHALATION

#### FOR DISCOMFORT OF HEAD COLDS AND BRONCHIAL IRRITATION

JAPANESE (style) OIL makes its own vapor as soon as the cap is removed. Inhale this vapor direct from bottle or, by putting a few drops on a piece of cotton held close to nostrils. For relief at night while sleeping, pour a few drops of the oil in a glass of hot water placed beside the bed. The vapors given off are beneficial in relieving the constrictions of the nasal passages so common in simple Head Colds.

#### FOR CHEST APPLICATION

JAPANESE (style) OIL is an excellent preparation for external application to the Throat, Chest, or Neck in cases where such treatment is indicated. Rub in well.

#### FOR EXTERNAL USE

Bathe with warm water and dry. Then vigorously rub a generous quantity of JAPANESE (style) OIL on the affected parts several times a day if necessary, or until relief is obtained. Allow the excess oil to remain, and, when possible, bind the parts with flannel bandage. In severe cases wrap a thin rubber bandage or oil silk bandage over flannel one. This direction for external use applies whenever a reliable antiseptic or soothing counter-irritant is indicated.

#### FOR CHILDREN

(Externally)

Reduce strength somewhat by mixing with a little lard, petroleum jelly, olive oil or castor oil.

JAPANESE (style) OIL is recommended as beneficial in the case of abrasions, scratches, bruises, contusions, sprains, chapped hands, chilblains, frost bites, simple neuralgia, stiffness and muscular soreness due to fatigue or exposure, insect bites, minor throat and bronchial irritation.

*Won't Burn or Blister the Skin*

NATIONAL REMEDY CO., INC., NEW YORK CITY

*Distributors*



This information below is included here only for the purpose of establishing that, while a petroleum product existed under the name EN-AR-CO, that **this was definitely NOT the “Japanese Oil” EN-AR-CO that was one of the ingredients in the Sisk Healing Oil.**

The National Refining Company was founded in Cleveland, Ohio, and was sold in 1950. The National Refining Company used many trademarks throughout its 68 years of operation, but the one most familiar is the EN-AR-CO and White Rose trademarks. **EN-AR-CO was used for the grease and oil products** and White Rose was used for gasoline. EN-AR-CO was the trademark used by the company starting in the early 1900's.

