

“Chicago at that time was really embroiled in a lot of gang violence. You could say parts of the city are still that way now, but back then it was probably even worse because you had whole neighborhoods that were controlled by teenagers with guns. They really were quite organized. The house that the Old Man lived in was right where three of these major gang turfs met. He started to have meetings at his home, not just for one individual gang, but for all of them together. These were guys who, if they saw each other on the street outside the old man’s house, would have been in fights, there would have been shots, there would have been something going on. And yet they would all come to his house, and they would meet, and he would talk to them.

“Basically the Old Man talked to the gang members just about Theosophy, though not in any terms that anybody at the Theosophical Society would use. He would talk to them about karma, and he would use the example of an apple seed and an apple. He would say, ‘If you plant an apple seed, what do you get? You get an apple tree and then you get an abundance of apple fruit. You guys around here are planting seeds of violence, pain, and injury. What do you think you are getting out of that?’ And they started to kind of get it.

“Eventually the police noticed that, for whatever reason, things in the hottest spot of the city were dying down. I met a lot of those guys. A lot of them ended up being quite good friends of mine and still are to this day. They were just natural-born leaders. As teenagers they headed up two, three, or four hundred member gangs, and all those gang members looked to them for marching orders. They were old souls, for whatever reason, incarnated into a situation with no direction. But when they met Bill, a lot of them got a direction and decided that, instead of being like the baddest guy on the block, they were going to be more like ambassadors of peace. That was a bigger challenge. So they said, ‘We’re going to cool it down around here,’ and a lot of them just started to go out and spread that as the message. As a result, it cooled down.”

It is obvious that Bill Lawrence was no normal man. That is not just because he curbed the gang violence in Chicago or even because he took those responsible and molded them into altruistic members of the community. The reason Bill was so unique is that he was doing this all intentionally, following a plan. He was guided to purchase the house and to change that