

community as he did, just as he was guided in many other ways since he had embraced life as an occultist.

Bill Lawrence's life had not been an easy one. Being born with gifts did not make it easy for him to grow up, especially in some closed-minded communities. And for a good part of his young life he tried hard to make an identity for himself that was one of his choosing, and not one that was just assigned to him. Tim Boyd delves into some of Lawrence's early experiences growing up:

"As I came to understand it, he grew up in central Illinois in a little town called Georgetown, next to Danville. His father was a coal miner named John Lawrence, who was half British and half Native American; his mother was Leona, and she was half Native American and half African-American. His father looked like he was European, and his mother really looked like she was Black. When you put these two together you got Bill Lawrence, but to look at him he could have been Italian or Egyptian or black Irish; he could have been a lot of different things, he could have been Native American. Black is not what you would have thought, but that was how he identified.

"Bill Lawrence was a peculiar child because apparently he was one of those kids who are born clairvoyant. I remember hearing Dora Kunz talk about how some children are born with a flap of skin that comes down over the face like a veil, typically they remove this, but she said there was this old wives tale that this is a sign that they have second sight. Dora was born with this cowl, and Bill Lawrence was also born with a cowl. His older sister lived with us for a while; her name was Velma, but we called her 'Sis.' She described all the trouble he used to get into because of his clairvoyance. Velma was also quite clairvoyant, but nothing like Bill. In his time, kids were supposed to be seen and not heard. When Bill was a child, various people would come into the house, and he would describe things about them that weren't supposed to be known. He would just say it, and then they'd always punish him. Back then, as punishment, you would get a beating; and he got more beatings than his share.

"Velma and Bill once talked about how one time a woman came in whom none of them liked, and he said, 'Oh, I see that she's going to get her breast caught in a wringer.' Back then they used hand-cranked wringers to help dry washed clothes. Sure enough, the talk among the women later was