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Thomas Alva Edison: The Wizard of Menlo Park

by Mark Lerner

Prologue: During the first week of January 2005, an unusual movie appeared throughout the nation called *White Noise* starring Michael Keaton. I had seen it publicized a few months earlier, had gone to the web site www.whitenoisemovie.com and noticed that the orientation to the film began with a quotation from Thomas Edison. This was just after I had been reading and studying about his life and astrological chart.

The movie is based on what is called EVP or Electronic Voice Phenomenon – and the key is that there may be a means to record voices and images of the dead through technological devices. I have been intrigued about the same subject ever since I made comparisons in *Welcome to Planet Earth* astrology journal in the early 1990s between the Electromagnetic Spectrum (containing waves and frequencies for electric power, radio, television, microwave, infrared or heat, visible light, ultraviolet, x-rays, gamma and cosmic waves) and the many planes of divine consciousness shared in metaphysical source books like those of Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master D.K.

Thomas Alva Edison died in October 1931 – over 73 years ago – but his miraculous inventions have utterly transformed our lives every single day. Many of us have forgotten his incredible role in the technological revolution that has been speeding up during the last few decades. While he was extremely focused on practical devices rather than spiritual pursuits, the quotation for *White Noise* reveals some of his imaginative power at work as it concerns the invisible universe within which souls, spirits, angels and ghostly presences may exist.

“I am inclined to believe that our personality hereafter will be able to affect matter. If this reasoning be correct, then if we can evolve an instrument so delicate as to be affected by our personality as it survives in the next life, such an instrument, when made available, ought to record something.”

–Thomas Edison, October 1920

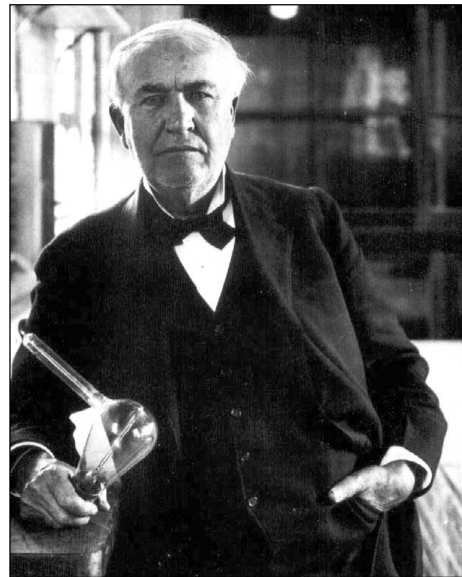
The Heart of the Story

“Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.”

“I speak without exaggeration when I say that I have considered 3000 theories in connection with electric light.”

“Anything that won't sell, I don't want to invent. Its sale is proof of utility, and utility is success.”

– Three quotations from *Thomas Edison*



Dateline: February 9, 2005 Eugene, Oregon – As I write about probably the most remarkable inventor in world history, some extraordinary transits are striking the natal chart of Thomas Edison (born February 11, 1847, estimated time 6:56PM EST, Milan, Ohio). At this moment, the asteroid Vesta at 11 Aries 30 is precisely (no orb) crossing Edison's natal Uranus. This can only occur every 4+ years and last for one day. If that were the only telling transit, I would chalk it up to coincidence. However, note the following: stationary retrograde Pallas at 12+ Libra is exactly opposite Edison's natal Pallas at 12+ Aries; stationary retrograde Jupiter at 18+ Libra is within 1 degree of Edison's natal Vesta; Mars at 2 Capricorn has just returned to his natal placement (something that only occurs every 2 years for a period of 1-2 days). In addition, Mercury in the sky is right where it was when Edison was born (19 Aquarius), it's the 158th anniversary of his birth in two days, and transiting Uranus at 6 Pisces is focused on his natal Venus. Apparently, what all this means is that it is the appropriate time to take a deeper look at the meaning and purpose of his life on Earth.

I wasn't planning on starting the heart of our story with the above paragraph, but I suddenly noticed the large number of precise transits and felt it was my obligation to share the information. What this article

will reveal is that a person – whose destiny was to reshape and restructure our nation and the world through seemingly miraculous inventions – was guided and overlit by solar systemic energies functioning far beyond human consciousness.

Some of the “players” in this drama include: The Discovery of Uranus on March 13, 1781; The Uranus-Neptune Conjunction on December 3, 1821; The Discovery of Neptune on September 23-24, 1846; The Chiron Retrograde Station of February 7, 1847; The Chiron-Pluto Opposition of February 8, 1847; The Birth of Thomas Alva Edison on February 11, 1847; The New Moon of February 15, 1847; The Birth of Alexander Graham Bell on March 3, 1847; The Birth of the Incandescent Light Bulb on October 21, 1879. Nine items have already been listed and this roster could keep growing, but let's stop here to explain why this Thomas Edison story is so important.

Think of it this way. You wake up in the morning, switch on the light in the bathroom, and turn on the stove to heat up some water for a cup of tea or coffee. Thank you, Thomas Edison. You are also in the mood to listen to a CD recording of one of your favorite performers or perhaps get the latest news report from the television plugged into an electrical outlet on the wall. Thank you, Thomas Edison. Suddenly, the phone rings and you answer it and can clearly talk to someone far away. Thank you, Thomas Edison.

In a cover story for *Parade* Magazine on October 24, 2004, author Harold Evans wrote an article entitled *They Transformed the World*. He discussed the top ten innovators that our country had produced and Thomas Edison was at the head of the list. No one has ever owned more U.S. patents (1093) than Thomas Edison. His invention of the phonograph (1877), motion picture camera (1891), and kinetograph (1894) represent the birthing points for recorded music and motion pictures. We are now living in an age of DVDs, iPods, cable television, digital cameras and daily movie rentals – and the electrical, pictorial and reproducible qualities of these inventions really stem from the genius of Thomas Edison and his large group of workers out of an invention factory in New Jersey over 100 years ago. Hopefully, your reading these words will give you a new respect for the amazing devices that make our lives far more exciting and fulfilling (even though the advance of technology is bemoaned by many and sometimes rightly so), and the key person responsible for electrifying and lighting up the 20th and 21st centuries.

If we go back to what I just shared a few para-

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Edison (cont. from page 1)

graphs above, what's astounding is how Edison's birthmap connects to watershed moments in the 1700s and 1800s. For example when Uranus was discovered, Mercury (the mind; thinking; communication) was located at 11+ Aries. This happened on the evening of March 13, 1781. Almost 66 years later transiting Uranus (with Pallas) crossed the same placement (11+ Aries) and Thomas Edison was born. This cannot be a coincidence. Instead, it shows his birth was timed to connect back to the discovery of Uranus and that he was a cosmic Uranian agent-provocateur - destined to lead the nation and the world into a new age of marvelous scientific inventions.

We also note that the maverick-outsider-mentor planet Chiron was closely conjunct the Lunar North Node (destiny point) when Uranus was discovered. The same celestial pattern was in effect when Thomas Edison came into the world. A rare Uranus-Neptune Conjunction of December 3, 1821 (a union merging the intuitive brilliance of Uranus with the imaginative power of Neptune) occurred at 1+ Capricorn. A little over 25 years later, Thomas Edison was born with Mars (planet of personal initiative, drive and energy) at the same zodiacal position. On September 23-24, 1846, the second outer planet to be discovered - Neptune - was sighted at 25+ Aquarius and, oddly enough, conjunct Saturn. Within the next six months - as the Sun sweeps over the Neptune placement - both Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell are born within less than three weeks time. Their destinies will merge when they turn 29-30 years old - during their life-changing Saturn Return time - when Bell invents the telephone, but Edison makes the crucial improvement that transforms the device into becoming a universal success. This is all the more remarkable because Edison has a serious hearing impairment! Just four days before his birth, Chiron at 24+ Libra makes a retrograde station. Thomas Edison is born on February 11, 1847 with an approaching and flowing trine of the Sun in Aquarius to that Chiron placement. This reveals the extraordinary wisdom, knowledge and genius factor so active in the psychic atmosphere as he incarnates.

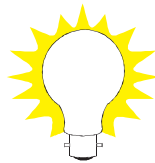
When he dies 84 years later (a full cycle of Uranus around the Sun) on October 18, 1931 at 3:24AM EST, West Orange, NJ, the transiting Sun at 24 Libra will be exactly igniting his natal Chiron within 5 minutes of arc. This is the confirmation that the life he lived was supremely dedicated to that unusual celestial body related to healing, divining the future, and bridge-building between the material and spiritual realms (as Chiron orbits between Saturn - chronological time - and Uranus - eternity).

There is even a potent Chiron-Pluto precise polarity on February 8, 1847 just three days before Edison's birth. A shocking key to the life destinies of both Edison and Bell happens on February 15, 1847 at 6:27AM EST when the New Moon strikes at 26+ Aquarius. Why is this so important? It ignites the Neptune discovery placement by conjunction from September 23-24, 1846 AND Mercury at 25+ Aquarius and Neptune at 27+ Aquarius make this a mind-boggling quadruple conjunction - all focused on

America's natal Moon-Pallas union in late-Aquarius from July 4, 1776. Since Thomas Edison is born 4 days before this New Moon and Alexander Graham Bell is born 16 days after, we can realize that they are really cosmic agents of Neptune. This shows the vital power of Mundane Astrology at work.

OK. What has been shared so far should give you a sense of the confluence of celestial happenings linking heavenly movements to terrestrial births and realities. Let's take a condensed look at the early years of Thomas Edison.

He is born as the 7th child to a family in Milan, Ohio and the Edisons eventually move to Port Huron, Michigan. Thomas becomes ill with scarlet fever at age 7 and that medical crisis badly influences his hearing - becoming progressively worse throughout his life. When he first attends school, the teacher thinks he may be stupid or retarded and the solution is he becomes home-schooled by his mother who is



The Power of 11 Thomas Alva Edison

Born: February 11, 1847
Sun in Aquarius (11th sign)
Invented Electric Light Bulb:
10 - 21 - 1879
Numerologically $1 + 3 + 7 = 11$
His natal Uranus (ruling Aquarius): 11+ Aries
Saturn when Light Bulb Invented: 11+ Aries
Mercury at Uranus Discovery: 11+ Aries
The word LIGHT = $12 + 9 + 7 + 8 + 20 = 56/11$

herself a teacher. By age 12, he gets a job selling candy and newspapers on the daily three-hour train trip from Port Huron to Detroit. Thomas spends hours every day reading at a library in Detroit. He winds up creating the first train newspaper in the USA - called the weekly Grand Trunk Herald (selling by subscription for 8 cents a month) - as a teenager. When he is 15 he saves a stationmaster's son who is almost hit by a railcar. As a reward, the stationmaster agrees to teach Thomas telegraphy - the boy's great love at that time. Thomas Edison spends the next 5-6 years working as a telegraph operator, conducting experiments in a railroad car in his spare time, and creating inventions to improve telegraphy.

At age 22 in 1869 he makes the radical decision to become a full-time inventor, moves to Boston and then New York City. Notice that his natal Sun is at 22+ Aquarius and the Lunar North Node is at 22+ Libra. There is a phenomenon in astrology known as age-arc and here we see one of the correspondences. From age 22 and the decision to be an inventor, there is no turning back. When he has moved to New York City, a stock ticker breaks down where he is working and he is the only one who knows how to fix it. He is immediately promoted and shortly thereafter is paid the enormous sum of \$40,000 by Western Union to invent an improved stock ticker in 1870.

While he invents the mimeograph and witnesses strange sparks as an "etheric force" (which may later be revealed as the basis for radio electromagnetic waves) in 1875, and perfects Bell's telephone (originating on March 10, 1876), his greatest achievements will occur in late 1877 (invention of the phonograph - key dates December 6-7, 1877) and on October 21, 1879 (the incandescent light bulb).

It is hard for us in 2005 to have any grasp of how powerfully the phonograph and electric light bulb took the nation and the world by storm in the last 25 years of the 19th century. The president of the USA - Rutherford B. Hayes - had Thomas Edison bring the phonograph to The White House in April 1878 where the inventor and the president's family stayed up till 3AM playing with the invention. He also demonstrated it at the U.S. Congress. Madame Helena Blavatsky - author of The Secret Doctrine and Isis Unveiled who founded The Theosophical Society on November 17, 1875 (a key seed-point for the future of all metaphysical worldwide organizations) - was enamored with Edison and this invention. She sent an invitation to him to join The Theosophical Society, and he filled out the papers and became a member. For decades he worked on improving the phonograph, creating vast numbers of these instruments for sale to the public, and figuring out ways to perfect recording methods.

On the day the light bulb was invented, transiting Saturn reached 11+ Aries - exactly crossing Mercury from the discovery of Uranus and Edison's own natal Pallas-Uranus conjunction. **This key Saturn crossing (that can only happen once every 29+ years) reveals the manifestation or materialization (Saturn) of what was originally an idea (Mercury) by the inventive genius (Pallas-Uranus) of Thomas Edison.** He had literally performed thousands of experiments to finally perfect the light bulb - working on all kinds of filaments and the vacuum process needed to sustain the glowing light. Fifty years to the day after the light bulb's invention, Thomas Edison re-enacted the event for the entire nation in a special anniversary ceremony. Transiting Uranus in early Virgo had just crossed Thomas Edison's own birth Ascendant for the first time in his life on October 21, 1879 and there was also an almost exact Chiron-Neptune conjunction at 11+ Taurus. [Note: This merging of Chiron and Neptune is significant. In many ways, Thomas Edison might be considered a cosmic emissary from three sources - Chiron (because he is born at its station), Neptune (because he is born close to its discovery and right during the New Moon triggering the discovery placement), and Uranus (because he is a Sun-sign Aquarius and lived an archetypal Uranian life of 84 years). I have not seen this duplicated in my research in astrology for over three decades.]

Realize that with Virgo rising and his ruling planet Mercury in Aquarius - close to the Sun and Neptune - personal and world service were keynotes in his life. Virgo and Aquarius are really the twin signs of service. And most of us know that Virgo also has strong workaholic tendencies. When you study the life of Thomas Edison, you learn how indefatigable he was, often sleeping only 4 hours or less a night,

Continued on page 4

Thomas Alva Edison

Natal Chart

Feb 11 1847 NS

6:56 pm EST +5:00

Milan, OH

41°N17'51" 082°W36'20"

Geocentric

Tropical

Koch

Mean Node

Compliments of:-

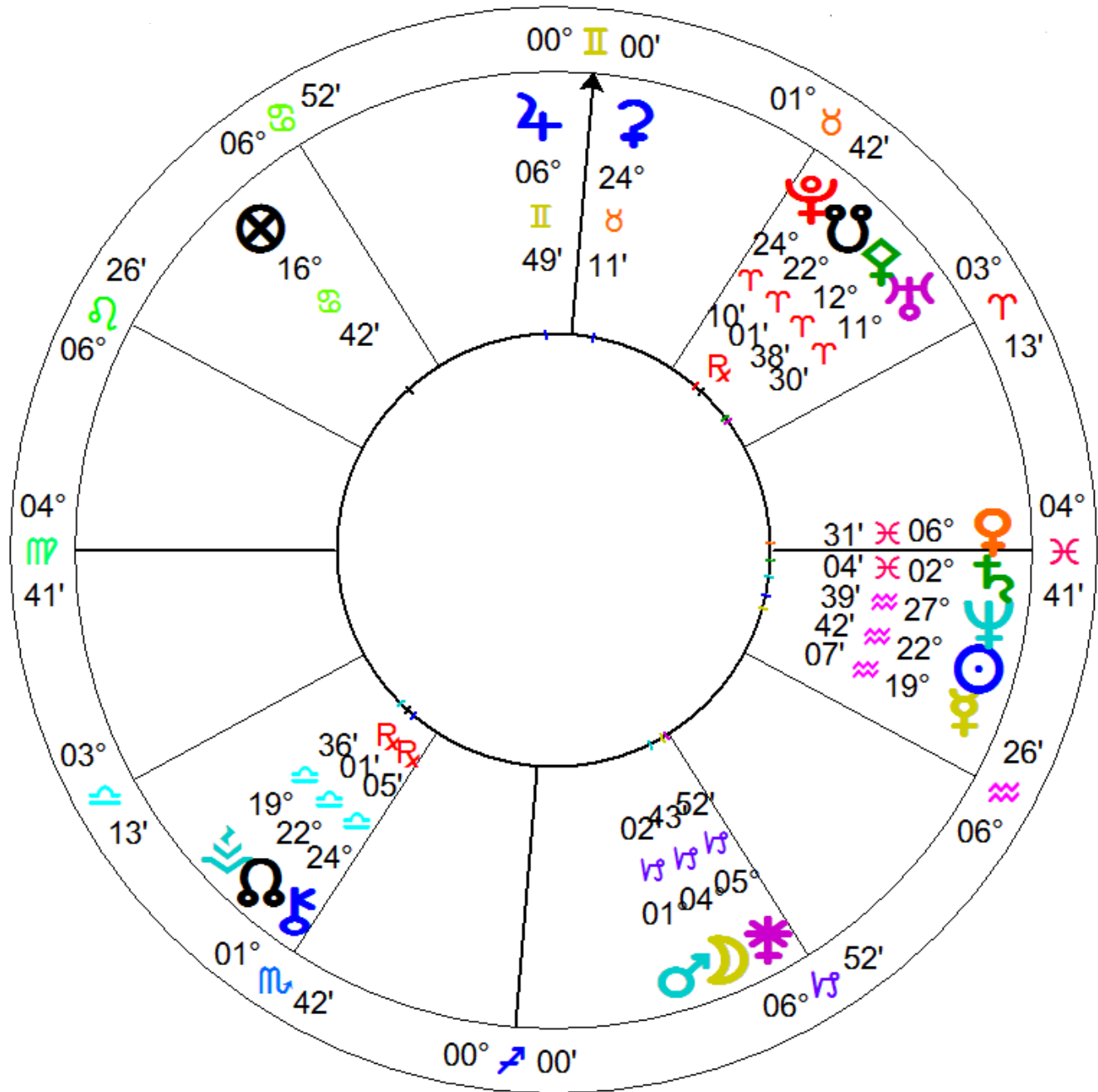
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Edison (cont. from page 2)

conducting experiment after experiment, in a tireless search for solutions, answers, improvements, successful working models of his ideas. This is also revealed in his natal Moon-Mars-Juno conjunction in Capricorn trine the horizon. And with the largest asteroid Ceres in Taurus – within 1 degree of its own discovery placement and elevated near the top of the chart – being productive and prolific were always of central importance to him.

People born with the Moon in Capricorn often feel a great sense of responsibility – as if the whole globe is resting on their shoulders and they need to be an Atlas holding up their worldly duties 24/7. To the detriment of his family life and children – he had six children and two marriages – he often spent so much time with work and inventions that there was little time left for happiness on the home front.

One of the great successes in his life occurred on September 4, 1882 at 3PM in New York City when the first electrical power station opened on Pearl Street with the flick of a switch. For several years after the invention of the incandescent light bulb, Edison and his employees were consumed with the task of bringing electricity and light to the public. On this day 85 homes of paying customers were suddenly brought into the electrical age by a network of underground cables and generators. This achievement was like a shot heard round the world. The light bulb had been transformed into the power of electricity to serve the needs of families, households, neighborhoods, towns, cities, and nations.

Remember I mentioned that Edison was born at a Chiron retrograde station and that Chiron functions as a major bridge-builder between realms? Well, as the Pearl Street power station became a reality, Chiron once again in the sky turned stationary and retrograde! Thus, Edison as the maverick-outsider-wizard-sage was himself a kind of rainbow bridge, a connector between the idea realm and physical reality, the light bulb and electrical power in the country, and America's genius broadcast to the rest of the world. His triumph in New York City in 1882 led to the formation of electrical light companies in England, France, Italy, Holland and Belgium. [Note: What we know now as GE or the General Electric Company has its origins in Edison's work with lighting and electricity. He was part of the founding of that giant corporation.]

Even though Thomas Edison is mostly recognized for his individual inventions, his greatest breakthrough was probably in designing the forerunner of R & D or Research and Development laboratories of major businesses and companies all over the planet. From the spiritual perspective this is crucial. The Tibetan Master D.K. – throughout the Alice A. Bailey books on metaphysical subjects – suggests that the wave of the future depends on individuals creating coherent and attuned group formations – where those organizations can become impressed with hierarchical wisdom and enlightenment. In terms of the seven rays,

it is most likely that Thomas Edison was vibrating as a second ray soul (through his Virgo rising) and a second ray personality (with Jupiter being the esoteric ruler of his Sun-sign Aquarius and channeling the second ray). Above all this is the ray of Love-Wisdom and the Christ as world teacher, and in charge of all movements in advanced education. This is also the soul ray of America. The reason that Thomas Edison's inventions, ethic of hard work and service, and dynamic group focus were so revolutionary is revealed through the synchronicity of his ray energies with those of the United States.

Like many geniuses, Thomas Edison had his faults. He could be incredibly stubborn and self-righteous. His progressive hearing loss undoubtedly increased some of his quirkiness and cranky behavior. During the last four decades of his life, he spent enormous periods of time in the fields of iron ore and cement production as well as a kind of idealistic quest for a perfect form of natural rubber. This focus on the earth and elements/materials from the ground and Mother Nature is definitely linked to his triple conjunction of Mars-Moon-Juno in Capricorn, Ceres in Taurus, and Virgo rising. During the Panic of 1893 (a national and global financial meltdown), his economic fortunes declined considerably and he was forced – like many other wealthy business people of that decade – to make some drastic decisions about what type of work to focus on. This financial disaster occurred just after three Neptune-Pluto conjunctions (7-8 Gemini) in 1891-1892. These were the first Neptune-Pluto unions in 492 years and they zapped America's Uranus exactly and were very close to Thomas Edison's natal Jupiter. This reveals another tie between the great inventor and America – his Jupiter (success; expansion of consciousness; societal growth) in the 10th house of profession and career was conjunct the nation's Uranus (revelations; revolutionary and radical ideas; intuitive thinking). Edison drew strength, fulfillment and inspiration since the nation's Uranus was on his Jupiter while his Neptune was conjunct the USA Moon-Pallas union.

It is noteworthy that Thomas Edison was born with a combination of Pallas conjunct Uranus. Eleanor Bach – who pioneered the creation of the first asteroid ephemeris in 1972 – strongly suggested that one of the key meanings for Pallas is invention. She said that even more so than Uranus, Pallas is the key to inventive thinking. Perhaps Uranus provides the lightning, the flashes of illumination, but that Pallas is the visualized form of the invention presenting itself within the mind of the genius so inspired. Eleanor Bach also suggested that Pallas – so aligned with mental brilliance and intellectual prowess – was a “city slicker” and dynamically associated with “Think Tanks.” Clearly, Thomas Edison was tuned into this goddess full-force – with his gifts to modern-city life and his invention laboratories employing hundreds of scientists and highly-skilled workers.

Thomas Edison invented the alkaline storage battery in 1900-1901 – a vast improvement over lead batteries that would often corrode and leak. Edison

considered the alkaline storage battery one of his greatest inventions and he hoped to see electric cars (rather than polluting gasoline-driven automobiles) operating on these batteries as a wave of the future. In another remarkable life-connection, we find that Henry Ford – the father of the mass-produced automobile and assembly-line production – worshiped Edison as a hero. Ford also lived an archetypal Uranus life of nearly 84 years (born in July 1863 and died in April 1947).

Seven days before Thomas Edison passed away, there was a Partial Solar Eclipse on October 11, 1931 at 17+ Libra. Remarkably, Uranus was exactly opposite at 17+ Aries. This means that Thomas Edison left this world during a rare Uranus-Earth-Moon-Sun lineup in the solar system. Considering he had just lived an archetypal Uranus life cycle of 84 years, this is pretty shocking and yet totally in keeping with this planet of upheavals, surprises and the unexpected. If you also include a Saturn-Vesta union in mid-Capricorn and a Juno-Pluto union in Cancer, there was a Grand Cross in cardinal signs lighting up the heavens. By adding on Mercury, Venus and Vesta also in Libra, a total of 10 celestial bodies were in the four cardinal signs. I believe this is a testimony to the extraordinary meaning of this man's active life, tangible accomplishments, and what he brought to America and the world. Three days after his passing – on October 21, 1931 at 10PM EST – everyone in America turned off their lights and electrical equipment for 1 minute in his honor.

Here's one final note. When Thomas Edison was born, the Sun was applying to a conjunction to Neptune just 5 degrees away in the setting area of his chart. When he died, transiting Neptune had just crossed his Virgo horizon – occupying the same place that Uranus had reached when he invented the incandescent light bulb. As befitting someone so connected with these planets, it seems appropriate that a man who had transfigured the realms of the recorded voice, global communications and motion pictures would now have the aegis of Neptune (the planet discovered so close to his birth) fixed to his birth horizon. From 2006-2010, transiting Neptune will cross Edison's natal Mercury, Sun and Neptune. The full scope of his mission and the inventions he let loose upon the world will be revealed in those years. This time-period will also include Neptune making its first return to its discovery placement – a zodiacal and astrological event that may result in a gigantic wave of new inventions and inventors arriving on Spaceship Earth.

Recommended Reading:

Edison: Inventing the Century by Neil Baldwin (Hyperion Hardcover, 1995) – probably available at your local library.

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