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Eponyms in pathology . . .

GOLGI, Camillo (1844-1926) was born in Cortena, an alpine village in northern Italy. The son of a distinguished local doctor, he followed the family tradition and studied medicine in Pavia, qualifying in 1865. For several years he worked in the department of psychiatry where he wrote his first paper on the postmortem findings in a case of pellagra. In 1875, after a three year spell as a physician in Milan, he was appointed Professor of histology at Pavia, and apart from a few months as professor of anatomy at Siena, he remained in Pavia, active in scholastic and civic life almost to the end. It was while in Milan that he pioneered the use of silver nitrate to stain nerve

cells, a method described in 1873 after work by candlelight at a laboratory in his home. This marked the beginning of a great advance in the knowledge of the anatomy of the nervous system. Among his many papers on this subject, the principal one was "Studi sulla fina anatomia degli organi centrali de sistema nervoso", published in 1883, in which he described long and short axon nerve cells of the cerebral cortex (Golgi type 1 and 2 cells, respectively). Other structures which carry his name are the Golgi apparatus (1896) and Golgi corpuscles. In 1906 he shared the Nobel prize for medicine with Ramon-y-Cajal, despite their life-long rivalry.