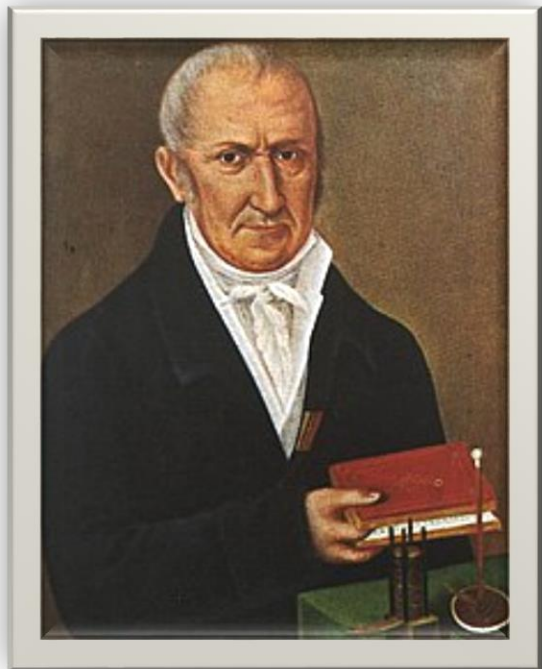


Count Alessandro Volta

(1745 – 1827)



Count Alessandro Volta was born in Como, northern Italy. He was an Italian physicist, chemist, and a pioneer of electricity and power. He was the inventor of the electrical battery and the discoverer of methane. In 1774, he became professor of physics at the Royal School in Como. A year later, he improved and popularized the electrophorus, a device that produced static electricity. After that Volta established that the animal electricity observed by Luigi Galvani, 1737–1798, in experiments with frog muscle tissue placed in contact with dissimilar metals, was not due to any exceptional property of animal tissues but was also generated whenever any wet body was sandwiched

between dissimilar metals. This led him to develop the first voltaic pile, or battery, consisting of a large stack of moist disks of cardboard (electrolyte) sandwiched between disks of metal (electrodes).

In 1779, he became professor of experimental physics at the University of Pavia and he worked there for almost 40 years. In 1801, in Paris Volta gave a demonstration of his battery's generation of electric current before Napoleon.

The volt, a unit of the electromotive force that drives current, was named in his honor in 1881.

Teachers may suggest students to make a collage of photographs of scientists in physics depicting the advancements in the subject.