Henry Shrapnel Encyclopedia Article

Henry Shrapnel

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Henry Shrapnel

1761-1842

English artillery officer who invented the shrapnel shell in 1793. This shell, designed as an antipersonnel device, exploded in mid-air, scattering shot, pieces of metal, and other materials designed to kill or wound nearby soldiers. This device was a great boon to the army because it greatly extended the lethal range of cannon balls, which no longer had to hit someone directly in order to injure them.