Henry Shrapnel Encyclopedia Article

Henry Shrapnel

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Henry Shrapnel

1761-1842

British inventor and artillery officer whose name is synonymous with the exploding fragmentation shell he invented in 1784. The shrapnel shell was adopted by the British army in 1803 and used for the first time in warfare by the British Army against the Dutch in Suriname in 1804. It contained small lead or iron balls that also came to be known as shrapnel, and a timed fuse designed to explode the shell in the air above enemy troops.