

David Bushnell Encyclopedia Article

David Bushnell

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David Bushnell

1740-1826

American inventor who designed the first military submarine. Before he graduated from Yale, Bushnell had learned how to detonate gunpowder in water and he planned how to construct a submarine. He secretly built a submersible wooden vessel, named the *American Turtle*, to use offensively against British naval forces during the American Revolution. Thwarted by alert British sentries, Bushnell then built mines that frightened the British into indiscriminately firing at Delaware River debris in an action called the Battle of the Kegs.