

= Jan Henryk Dąbrowski =

Jan Henryk Dąbrowski (Polish pronunciation : [ˈjan ˈxɛnrɨk dɔmˈbrɔfski] ; also known as Johann Heinrich Dąbrowski (Dombrowski) in German and Jean Henri Dombrowski in French ; 29 August 1755 – 6 June 1818) was a Polish general , widely respected after his death for his patriotic attitude , and described as a national hero .

Dąbrowski initially served in the Saxon Army and joined the Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth Army in 1792 , shortly before the Second Partition of Poland . He was promoted to the rank of general in the Kościuszko Uprising of 1794 . After the final Third Partition of Poland , which ended the existence of Poland as independent country , he became actively involved in promoting the cause of Polish independence abroad . He was the founder of the Polish Legions in Italy serving under Napoleon since 1797 , and as a general in Italian and French service he contributed to the brief restoration of the Polish state during the Greater Poland Uprising of 1806 . He participated in Napoleonic Wars , taking part in the Polish – Austrian war and the French invasion of Russia until 1813 . After Napoleon 's defeat , he accepted a senatorial position in the Russian – backed Congress Poland , and was one of the organizers of the Army of Congress Poland .

The Polish national anthem , Poland Is Not Yet Lost , written and first sung by the Polish legionnaires , mentions Dąbrowski by name , and is also known as Dąbrowski 's Mazurka .

= = Biography = =

= = = In Saxony and Poland = = =

Dąbrowski was born to Jan Michał Dąbrowski and Zofia Maria Dąbrowska , née Sophie von Lettow , in Pierzchów , Crown of the Kingdom of Poland , on 29 August 1755 . He grew up in Hoyerswerda , Electorate of Saxony , where his father served as a Colonel in the Saxon Army . He joined the Royal Saxon Horse Guards in 1770 or 1771 . His family was of Polish origin . Nonetheless , in his childhood and youth he grew up surrounded by German culture in Saxony , and signed his name as Johann Heinrich Dąbrowski . He fought in the War of the Bavarian Succession (1778 – 1779) , during which time his father died . Shortly afterward in 1780 he married Gustawa Rackel . He lived in Dresden , and steadily progressed through ranks , becoming a Rittmeister in 1789 . He served as Adjutant general of King Frederick Augustus I of Saxony from 1788 to 1791 .

Following the appeal of the Polish Four – Year Sejm to all Poles serving abroad to join the Polish army , and not seeing much opportunity to advance in his military career in the now – peaceful Saxony , on 28 June 1792 he joined the Army of the Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth with a rank of podpułkownik and on 14 July he was promoted to the rank of vice – brigadier . Joining in the final weeks of the Polish – Russian War of 1792 , he did not see combat in it . Unfamiliar with the intricacies of Polish politics , like many of Poniatowski 's supporters , he joined the Targowica Confederation in late 1792 .

Dąbrowski was seen as a cavalry expert , and King Stanisław August Poniatowski was personally interested in obtaining Dąbrowski 's services . As a cavalryman educated in a Dresden military school under Count Maurice Bellegarde , a reformer of the Saxon army 's cavalry , Dąbrowski was asked to help modernize the Polish cavalry , serving in the ranks of the 1st Greater Poland Cavalry Brigade (1 Wielkopolska Brygada Kawalerii Narodowej) . In January 1793 , stationed around Gniezno with two units of cavalry , about 200 strong , he briefly engaged the Prussian forces entering Poland in the aftermath of the Second Partition of Poland , and afterward became a known activist advocating the continuation of military struggle against the occupiers .

The Grodno Sejm , held in the fall of 1793 , nominated him for a membership in a military commission ; this caused him to be viewed with suspicion by the majority of the dissatisfied military , and he was not included in the preparations for the upcoming uprising . Thus he was taken by surprise when the Kościuszko Insurrection erupted , and his own brigade mutinied . He declared his support for the insurgents after the libation of Warsaw , and from then on took an active part in the

uprising , defending Warsaw and leading an army corps in support of an uprising in Greater Poland . His courage was commended by Tadeusz Kościuszko himself , the Supreme Commander of the National Armed Forces , who promoted him to the rank of general .

= = = In the Napoleonic service = = =

After the failure of the uprising he remained in partitioned Poland for a while , attempting to convince the Prussian authorities that they need Poland as an ally against Austria and Russia . He was unsuccessful , and with the Third Partition of Poland between Russia , Prussia and Austria , Poland disappeared from the map of Europe . Dąbrowski 's next solution was to convince the French Republic that it should support a Polish cause , and create a Polish military formation . This proved to be more successful , and indeed Dąbrowski is remembered in the history of Poland as the organiser of Polish Legions in Italy during the Napoleonic Wars . (These Legions are also often known as the " Dąbrowski 's Legions " .) This event gave hope to contemporary Poles , and is still remembered in the Polish national anthem , named after Dąbrowski . He began his work in 1796 , when he came to Paris and soon afterward met Napoleon Bonaparte in Milan . On January 7 , 1797 he was authorized by the Cisalpine Republic to create Polish legions , which would be part of the army of the newly created Republic of Lombardy .

In April Dąbrowski lobbied for a plan to push through to the Polish territories in Galicia , but that was blocked by Napoleon who instead decided to use those troops on the Italian front . Dąbrowski 's Polish soldiers fought at Napoleon 's side from May 1797 until the beginning of 1803 . As a commander of his legion he played an important part in the war in Italy , entered Rome in May 1798 , and distinguished himself greatly at the Battle of Trebia on June 19 , 1799 , where he was wounded , as well as in other battles and combats of 1799 ? 1801 . From the time the Legions garrisoned Rome , Dąbrowski obtained a number of trophies from a Roman representative , namely the ones that the Polish king , Jan III Sobieski , had sent there after his victory over the Ottoman Empire at the siege of Vienna in 1683 ; amongst these was an Ottoman standard which subsequently became part of the Legions ' colors , accompanying them from then on . However , the legions were never able to reach Poland and did not liberate the country , as Dąbrowski had dreamed . Napoleon did , however , notice the growing dissatisfaction of his soldiers and their commanders . They were particularly disappointed by a peace treaty between France and Russia signed in Lunéville on 9 February 1801 , which dashed Polish hopes of Bonaparte freeing Poland . Shortly afterwards , in March , Dąbrowski reorganized both Legions at Milan into two 6 @, @ 000 @-@ strong units . Disillusioned with Napoleon after the Lunéville treaty , many legionnaires resigned afterward ; of the others , thousands perished when the Legions were sent to suppress the Haitian Revolution in 1803 ; by that time Dąbrowski was no longer in command of the Legions .

Dąbrowski , meanwhile , spent the first few years of the new century as a general in the service of the Italian republic . In 1804 he received the Officer cross of Legion of Honour , and the next year , the Italian Order of the Iron Crown . Together with Józef Wybicki he was summoned again by Napoleon in fall of 1806 and tasked with recreating the Polish formation , which Napoleon wanted to use to recapture Greater Poland from Prussia . The ensuing conflict was known as the Greater Poland Uprising , and Dąbrowski was the chief leader of Polish insurgent forces in it . Dąbrowski distinguished himself at siege of Tczew , siege of Gdańsk and at Battle of Friedland .

In 1807 the Duchy of Warsaw was established in the recaptured territories , essentially as a satellite of Bonaparte 's France . Dąbrowski became disappointed with Napoleon , who offered him monetary rewards , but no serious military or government position . He was also awarded the Virtuti Militari medal that year . Soon , however he set out to defend Poland against an Austrian invasion under the command of Prince Józef Poniatowski in 1809 . Joining the Army of the Duchy of Warsaw shortly after the Battle of Raszyn , he took part in the first stages of the offensive on Galicia , and then organized the defense of Greater Poland . In June 1812 Dąbrowski commanded the 17th (Polish) Infantry Division in the V Corps of the Grande Armée , during Napoleon 's invasion of Russia . However , by October the Franco @-@ Russian war was over and the French forces , decimated by a severe winter , had to retreat . At the disastrous Battle of Berezina in late November

that year , Dąbrowski was wounded , and his leadership and tactics in it were criticized . After the March reorganization of the Grande Armée , he commanded the 27th (Polish) Infantry Division in the VIII Corps . He commanded it at the Battle of Leipzig (1813) , and subsequently on 28 October he became the commander in chief of the all remaining Polish forces in Napoleon 's service , succeeding Antoni Paweł Sułkowski .

= = = Final years = = =

Dąbrowski always associated independent Poland with a Polish Army , and offered his services to the new power , which promised to organize such a formation : Russia . He was one of the generals entrusted by the tsar Alexander of Russia with the reorganization of the Duchy 's army into the Army of Congress Poland . In 1815 he received the titles of general of cavalry and senator @-@ voivode of the new Congress Kingdom . He was also awarded the Order of the White Eagle on December 9 that year . Soon afterward he withdrew from active politics . He retired in the following year to his estates in Winna Góra in the Grand Duchy of Posen , Kingdom of Prussia , where he died on 6 June 1818 , from a combination of pneumonia and gangrene . He was buried in the church in Winna Góra .

Over the years , Dąbrowski wrote several military treaties , primarily about the Legions , in German , French and Polish .

= = = Remembrance = = =

Dąbrowski was often criticized by his contemporaries , and by the early Polish historiography , but his image improved with time . He has been often compared to the two other military heroes of the time of Partitions and the Legions , Tadeusz Kościuszko and Józef Poniatowski , and to the father of Second Polish Republic , Józef Piłsudski . In particular , his mention in the Polish national anthem , also known as Dąbrowski 's Mazurek , contributed to his fame in Poland . It is not uncommon for modern works of Polish history to describe him as a " (national) hero " .

Dąbrowski is also remembered outside of Poland for his historical contributions . His name , in the French version " Dombrowsky " , is inscribed under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris .