

= Ignacy Potocki =

Count Roman Ignacy Potocki , generally known as Ignacy Potocki , (Polish pronunciation : [i??nat ? s? p??t?t ? sk?i] ; 1750 ? 1809) was a Polish nobleman , member of the influential magnate Potocki family , owner of Klementowice and Olesin (near Kurów) , a politician , writer , and office holder . He was the Marshal of the Permanent Council (Rada Nieustaj?ca) in 1778 ? 1782 , Grand Clerk of Lithuania from 1773 , Court Marshal of Lithuania from 1783 , Grand Marshal of Lithuania from 16 April 1791 to 1794 .

He was an educational activist , member of the Commission of National Education and the initiator and president of Society for Elementary Textbooks . He was an opponent of king Stanis?aw II August in the 1770s and 1780s , and a major figure in the Polish politics of that era . During the Great Sejm he was a leader of the Patriotic Party and the reform movement and eventually backed the King in many reform projects . An advocate of a pro @-@ Prussian orientation , he helped conclude an alliance with Prussia in 1790 . He co @-@ authored the Constitution of 3 May 1791 .

= = Life = =

= = = Youth = = =

Potocki was born in Radzy? on 28 February 1750 into the influential magnate Potocki family . He was the son of Eustachy Potocki and Marianna K?tska , brother of Jerzy Micha? Potocki , Jan Nepomucen Eryk Potocki and Stanis?aw Kostka Potocki .

Potocki was an alumnus of the Collegium Nobilium in Warsaw , where he was a student in the years 1761 ? 1765 . From 1765 he studied theology and law in Rome , where he attended the Collegium Nazarenum , up to about 1769 . His parents intended for him to join the ranks of clergy , but he refused to follow this path . After traveling through Italy and Germany , he returned to Poland around 1771 . On 27 December 1772 he married El?bieta Lubomirska . This marriage brought him close to the political faction of Familia . Early on , Potocki made a major impression on many of his contemporaries , being groomed as the next leader of Familia . From 1772 he was invited to the King Stanis?aw II Augustus ' Thursday Dinners .

= = = Political career = = =

As a member (1772 ? 1791) of Poland 's Commission of National Education (Komisja Edukacji Narodowej) ? the world 's first ministry of education ? he was the initiator of and presided over the Society for Elementary Textbooks (Towarzystwo do Ksi?g Elementarnych , founded in 1775) . He presided over the renovation of the Za?uski 's Library (in 1774) . He was involved in the development of numerous projects , such as the history curriculum . In 1781 he reviewed and endorsed Hugo Ko???taj 's work at the Cracow Academy . His involvement with the educational projects earned him a nickname baka?arz (holder of baccalarius degree , teacher) . His involvement with the educational reforms lessened only during the era of the Great Sejm (1788 ? 1792) , when he became increasingly involved with the wider reform program .

On 29 May 1773 he received the office of Great Clerk (Writer) of Lithuania , a relatively low @-@ ranked position that was seen by some as below the magnates of the Potocki family . He participated in the Partition Sejm of 1773 , where he sat on several commissions . Seeing himself in opposition to the king , he refused a seat on the Permanent Council that he was offered in March 1774 . The king tried to appease him with the Order of Saint Stanislaus on 14 July that year , but that failed to bring Potocki to his side . Instead , Potocki became , for the next decade and half , one of his chief political critics and opponents ; on 1776 he went to Moscow to argue , unsuccessfully , for limiting the power of king and the Russian ambassador , Otto Magnus von Stackelberg . Later that year , his election to the Sejm was disputed , and the king and Stackelberg managed to block his election . In 1778 however , the growing rift between the king and Stackelberg allowed him to

take , through political maneuvering , the chairmanship of the Permanent Council Marshal of the Sejm . That year he also became a Knight of the Order of the White Eagle .

In 1779 Potocki joined the freemasonry , and by 1780 he advanced to the head of a freemasonry lodge . He became de facto head of the " Familia " , and of anti @-@ royal opposition (succeeding its previous leader , Stanisław Lubomirski , upon his death in 1783) . That year also saw the sudden death of his wife . During a trip to Italy and France , in absentia , the influence of the Familia resulted in his appointment to the office of the Court Marshal of Lithuania . He continued to oppose various royal projects at the Sejms of 1784 and 1786 . In 1785 he lost some face for his involvement in the Dogrumowa affair , in which the king was falsely accused of an instigation of a poisoning attempt .

Disappointed with Russia 's lack of support for any serious reforms in Poland , he shifted to favoring an alliance with the Kingdom of Prussia instead . Although this resulted in the split of the anti @-@ royalist opposition , he was seen as the leader of opposition (the Patriotic Party) when the Great Sejm begun in 1788 . After some initial political manevrouving , the issues of a closer relation with Prussia (that would eventually grew into the Polish @-@ Prussian alliance) and a major reform of the government , both with which he was closely involved , begun accelerating in 1789 . At first supportive more of a republican form of a government , political reality (such as royal faction victory at the elections of 1790) resulted in his acceptance of a more constitutional monarchy approach . In 1790 , through the mediation of Scipione Piattoli , the king and Potocki begun drifting closer together , working on a draft document that would eventually become the 3 May 1791 constitution . Alongside Poniatowski , Kościuszko and Piattoli , he is seen as one of the major authors of that document . He supported the quasi @-@ coup d'état in which the constitution was passed on 3 May 1791 .

On 17 May 1791 , he had to resign his position in the Commission of National Education to take an appointment (Minister of Police) in the newly created government , the Guard of Laws . From March 1792 he also held the position of Minister of War . During the War in the Defence of the Constitution in 1792 he went on an unsuccessful diplomatic mission to Berlin to request assistance from the Prussian government . On 4 July 1792 a sudden depression made him resign his ministerial positions . A vocal opponent of the Targowica Confederation and likely an author of an anonymous anti @-@ Targowica brochure , he was specifically requested by the Russian government to not be involved in the negotiations ; he also refused to join the Targowica Confederation , even after Poniatowski 's accession to it .

= = = Final years = = =

Following the victory of the Targowica Confederation and the abrogation of the May 3rd Constitution , Potocki emigrated from the Polish ? Lithuanian Commonwealth , settling in Leipzig . Together with Tadeusz Kościuszko , he proposed a plan for a French @-@ Polish alliance of republics , that was however not met with much support in France . He co @-@ authored a work with Hugo Kościuszko , On the Adoption and Fall of the Polish Constitution of 3 May (O ustanowieniu i upadku Konstytucji Polskiej 3 @-@ go Maja , 1793) .

Potocki participated in preparations for the Kościuszko Uprising of 1794 . In early April he left Leipzig and arrived in Kraków . He was involved in unsuccessful diplomatic negotiations with various foreign powers , in a vain attempt to gain support for the insurgents . During the Uprising he served as a member of the Supreme National Council (Rada Najwyższa Narodowa) , as a chief of its diplomatic department . Upon suppression of the Uprising , instead of emigrating again , he took part in the surrender negotiations , which gained him respect in many quarters . Eventually on 21 December 1794 he was imprisoned by the Tsarist Russian authorities . He has lost most of his wealth following the Uprising , as most of his estates were confiscated . Near the end of his life he would be troubled by his inability to pay off debts from the 1780s .

Released in 1796 , following the death of Catherine the Great , Potocki retired to Kurów , Galicia (southern Poland) . There he devoted himself to historical studies , publishing several books , translations and commentaries . He also wrote poems , but those were never published during his lifetime . Historians still debate over his potential authorship of several anonymous works (primarily

political brochures) . He distanced himself from activists discussing a new insurrection , but was nonetheless arrested and imprisoned by the Austrian authorities again in the years 1798 ? 1800 . In 1801 he joined the Warsaw Scientific Society . He returned to politics shortly after much of Galicia was liberated by Napoleon and attached to the Duchy of Warsaw . During the negotiations with Napoleon in Dresden he contracted severe diarrhea and died on 30 August 1809 . He was buried in Wilanów .

He had no direct descendants , his daughters died in infancy . His reduced estates were inherited by a nephew , Aleksander Potocki .

= = Remembrance = =

In private life , he is said to have had a weakness for gambling , but he also had a reputation of an honest reformer , who puts the good of the country above his own .

He is one of the figures immortalized in Jan Matejko 's 1891 painting , Constitution of 3 May 1791 .