

= Józef Zaj?czek =

Prince Józef Zaj?czek ( 1 November 1752 , Kamieniec Podolski ? 28 August 1826 , Warsaw ) was a Polish general and politician .

Zaj?czek started his career in the Army of the Polish ? Lithuanian Commonwealth , an aide @-@ de @-@ camp to hetman Franciszek Ksawery Branicki . He was Branicki 's supporter on the political scene , before joining the liberal opposition during the Great Sejm in 1790 . He became a radical supporter of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 . As a military commander , in the rank of a general , he participated in Polish ? Russian War of 1792 and Ko?ciuszko Uprising . After the partitions of Poland , he joined the Napoleonic Army , and was a general in Napoleon 's forces until his wounding and capture during Napoleon 's invasion of Russia in 1812 . From 1815 he became involved in the governance of the Congress Kingdom of Poland , becoming the first Namestnik of Kingdom of Poland .

= = Youth = =

Józef Zaj?czek was born on 1 November 1752 in Kamieniec Podolski to Antoni Zaj?czek and Marianna Cieszkowska , members of the Polish noble family of the ?winka . Young Zaj?czek probably attended a school in Zamo?? , and later a Jesuit school in Warsaw .

At the age of sixteen he joined the Bar Confederates , and served as a secretary to Micha? Wielhorski , accompanying him on his diplomatic mission to Paris , France , in 1770 . Zaj?czek stayed in Paris for several years , and in 1773 he met one of the major leaders of the Confederacy , Casimir Pulaski . Falling under Pulaski 's influence , he left Wielhorski 's service , and accompanied Pulaski on his diplomatic mission to the Ottoman Empire in 1774 , where he witnessed the Ottoman defeat at the Battle of Kozludzha on 20 June . Returning to France later that year he wrote a hagiographic biography of Pulaski in French . In 1775 he got an officer ( junior lieutenant ) position in the hussar regiment of the French Army , although after several weeks he abandoned this position to return to Poland . Thanks to the support from the magnate Sapieha family he received a post of an aide @-@ de @-@ camp to hetman Franciszek Ksawery Branicki .

Zaj?czek participated as a deputy from the Podole Voivodeship in the Sejm ( parliament of the Commonwealth ) session of 1784 , and was a vocal member of the hetman Branicki 's faction ( known as the Hetmans ' Party ) . In a similar vein he participated in the Sejm of 1786 , this time as a deputy from the Kiev Voivodeship . During that time he emerged as a vocal critic of king Stanis?aw August Poniatowski . In late 1786 he married Aleksandra Laura , née de Pernet . Meanwhile , he kept being promoted in ranks , reaching that of colonel in 1787 . He was also not a deputy to the first half of the Four @-@ year Sejm ( 1788 ? 1792 ) , and spent the first two years of its deliberations with his unit ( 2nd Front Guard Regiment , Polish : 2 regiment stra?y przedniej ) on the Ukrainian border ; in 1790 , however , he was elected as a deputy once again and joined his patron Branicki in Warsaw . Soon , however , he left Branicki 's camp , joining the faction of Hugo Ko???taj , the Patriotic Party . Zaj?czek became involved in the works of a commission tasked with reforming the Polish military , and contributed to a new project on military exercises and officer training . He became one of the supporters of the new Constitution of 3 May 1791 , and members of the Friends of the Constitution society .

= = Military career = =

= = In the Commonwealth 's army = = =

Displeased with reforms in Poland that were threatening its influence there , Russia invaded Poland in May 1792 , starting the Polish ? Russian War of 1792 . Two weeks before the war started , on May 4 Zaj?czek became the commander of the 3rd Front Guard Regiment ( 3 regiment stra?y przedniej ) . On May 26 he was given command over a reserve corps , and on 29 May he was

promoted to the rank of major general . After gathering some troops near Lublin , he departed towards Dubno , which he reached on 7 June . He was one of the Polish commanders at the victorious battle of Zieleńce , for which he received the highest decoration of the Polish military , *Virtuti Militari* , becoming the fifth person to receive this award , instituted just that year . He took part in some minor skirmishes , but did not participate in any significant battle before Stanisław August Poniatowski surrendered to the enemy , joining the Targowica Confederation . The war ended without any decisive battles , with the Polish army still in the fighting condition , not suffering from any major defeat nor from lack of supplies . Angered at the king 's betrayal , Zajęcek was one of the main proponents of the plan to kidnap the king ; the plan , however , never came to fruition . Like many other dissatisfied officers , including Prince Poniatowski and Tadeusz Kościuszko , Zajęcek requested a discharge from the army ; his resignation was accepted on 18 August .

Shortly afterward Zajęcek left the country , heading to Vienna . In August 1793 he moved to Leipzig , joining a number of other Polish emigres , namely Kościuszko and Kołłątaj , preparing for a new war . Soon he became one of the major planners of this approaching conflict , often tasked with delivering important messages to Poland , and collecting information there ; in particular he was active in Warsaw , and Kościuszko planned for him to become a commander of that region . Zajęcek also went on missions to Dresden and Paris . During that time , he became known as a radical revolutionary , democrat and proponent of abolishing serfdom in Poland . In April he joined the " club of Polish Jacobins " .

Shortly after the Kościuszko Uprising began in March 1794 , Zajęcek joined Kościuszko in Luborzyca on 2 April . Zajęcek was given the command of the Lesser Poland Division , and on 4 April he took part in battle of Racławice , which concluded with a major Polish victory . On 6 April he was promoted to lieutenant general . Over the next few weeks Zajęcek accompanied Kościuszko and his staff . On 8 June he was defeated at the battle of Chełm and retreated toward Lublin . He lost support among the troops , and faced a mutiny , eventually quelled by Kościuszko , on 10 June . In mid June Zajęcek 's forces merged with those of Kościuszko . He commanded the forces in the inconclusive battle of Gońków on 9 – 10 July , and soon after he was one of the Polish commanders of the defense of Warsaw that lasted from mid July until early September . In the following few weeks Zajęcek became one of the members of the Supreme National Council , and a president of its Criminal Court . He was a commander of the defense of Warsaw during the disastrous battle of Praga of 4 November . During the battle Zajęcek was wounded and retreated from the battle even before the conflict was over . He has been criticised for his insufficient preparation for the defense of Warsaw against Russian invasion , and for poor leadership during the battle . Zajęcek escaped to Polish Galicia where he was interned by Austrians . He was released one year later , moving to Paris .

== In Napoleon 's army ==

In Paris , Zajęcek quickly became involved with the active emigre groups there . Hoping to sway revolutionary France into supporting the Polish cause , many Poles , including him , volunteered to join the French Revolutionary Army , eventually leading to the creation of the Polish Legions in Italy led by Jan Henryk Dąbrowski , which became a part of Napoleon 's army . On 8 March 1797 Napoleon ordered that Zajęcek should be recognized as an active brigade general of the French army . That year he published a brochure on his experiences of the 1794 war , *Histoire de la révolution de Pologne en 1794* , in which he tried to justify his actions . Zajęcek was , however , still unpopular among the Polish troops , many of whom blamed him for the fall of Praga ; due to frequent personal conflicts , Zajęcek chose to remain with the French army , rather than joining the Legions themselves . Over the coming years , he took part in the French Revolutionary Wars . He took part in the 1798 Egyptian Expedition . There he also served as a governor of several provinces , first , from July that year , of the Monufia Governorate , later , from January 1799 , simultaneously of the Faiyum Governorate and Beni Suef Governorate . On 25 January 1800 he defeated Murad Bey at the Battle of Sédiman . In 1801 he was promoted to division general , and later took part in the failed defense of Alexandria .

In 1802 Zajęcek became the commander of the French 2nd Division . In 1803 he received the Knight 's Cross of the Legion of Honour ; a year later , the Commander 's Cross . In 1805 during the War of the Third Coalition he was assigned to the French Army of the Rhine , where he worked at army 's High Command . Next year in September , during the War of the Fourth Coalition , he was assigned to command of the foreign ( mostly Polish ) North Legion ; in the following month he organized another similar unit , the Kalisz Legion . In 1808 those units were reorganized into parts of the Army of the Duchy of Warsaw , in which Zajęcek became a general . During that time , dissatisfied with his transfer from the French army , and being made subject to Prince Józef Poniatowski whom he disliked , he refused to wear a Polish uniform and swear an oath to the Duchy , and was forced to do so only on direct orders of French marshal Louis @-@ Nicolas Davout . In 1809 he commanded several formations in the Polish ? Austrian War , where he failed to distinguish himself , instead suffering the only significant defeat in this campaign at the battle of Jedli?sk on 11 June . He remained in the Army after the war , commanding the 2nd Division , and organizing the troops for the expected conflict with Russia .

During Napoleon 's Invasion of Russia in 1812 , Zajęcek commanded the 16th Infantry Division of the V Corps in la Grande Armée . His division performed well at the battle of Smolensk in August where he was wounded , recuperating till October . He rejoined his unit in the time to take part in the battle of Tarutino . After Prince Poniatowski , commander of the V Corps , was wounded , from 1 November Zajęcek took charge of that formation . He led it at the battle of Vyazma and battle of Krasnoi until a wound at Berezina claimed his leg , which was amputated by doctor Dominique Jean Larrey . While recuperating from the wound he was taken prisoner by the Imperial Russian Army in Wilno ( Vilnius ) .

Zajęcek 's name is found on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris .

= = Prince and namestnik = =

Zajęcek was imprisoned in Poltava fortress until January 1814 , first to Bia?ystok , then ? in July ? he was returned to Warsaw . There he was assigned to the post of a deputy president of a Military Commission , reorganizing the former Napoleonic Army of the Duchy of Warsaw into a new , Russian @-@ controlled Army of the Congress Poland .

Russian tsar Alexander I , also newly crowned King of Poland , gave Zajęcek on 3 December 1815 the position of the first Namestnik of Kingdom of Poland ( tsar 's deputized ruler of the territory , a position similar to that of a viceroy ) . This nomination surprised many , including Zajęcek himself , who is said to have at first refused this position , but in the end accepted it after Alexander phrased his request as a direct order . Zajęcek 's years as a namestnik have garnered mixed reviews , both among his contemporaries , as well as among later historians . He was actively interested in economic development of Polish lands , and contributed to the industrialization and urbanization of the Kingdom 's lands ; he was also one of the founders of the University of Warsaw . He has been criticized , however , for being inexperienced for such a major civil leader position , too servile to the wishes of his patron , Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich and he often disregarded the Constitution of the Congress Poland , which contributed to a slow but steady erosion of the country 's freedoms and autonomy . Deferential towards the Russian authorities , he readily let Duke Constantine and Alexander 's commissar , Nikolay Nikolayevich Novosiltsev , neither of whose positions were envisioned in the Constitution , become the de facto rulers of the Kingdom . In recognition of Zajęcek 's services , Aleksander I bestowed upon him the title of ' Prince of Poland ' on 27 April 1818 .

In the spring of 1826 Zajęcek fell ill , steadily becoming weaker . On 25 July that year he lost consciousness , and died in the morning of 28 July . He died in Warsaw 's palace called Pa?ac Namiestnikowski ( Regent 's Palace ) , nowadays a seat of the President of Poland . His funeral lasted from 2 to 5 August . He was buried at the Church of the Holy Heart of Jesus in Opatówek , where he had a manor on the lands received from Napoleon . His heart was placed in the Bernardine Church in Warsaw , and his insides were buried at the Pow?zki Cemetery , also in Warsaw .

Zaj?czek and his wife had no children ; Aleksandra outlived her husband by nineteen years .

= = Honours and awards = =

Commander 's Cross of the Virtuti Militari ( 1807 )

Order of the White Eagle ( 1815 )

Order of St. Andrew ( 1816 )

Order of the Black Eagle ( Prussia , 1819 )

Knight 's ( 1803 ) and Commander 's Cross of the Legion of Honour ( France , 1804 )