

Greater Poland Uprising 1918-1919

<https://pw.ipn.gov.pl/pwe/form/r331084568613,ZENKTELER-Kazimierz.html>
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ZENKTELER Kazimierz

Person

ZENKTELER Kazimierz

Born

1884

Died

1955

Description

Commander of the Western Front of the Uprising and lieutenant colonel in the Polish Army. Born on 24 January 1884 in Wojnowice (Nowy Tomyśl powiat), to the family of a merchant - Edward, and Joanna née Szyfter. After completion of 7 years of gymnasium in Poznań, he was called up (1 September 1906) for one-year conscription to the German army. He did his military service in the 5th Heavy Artillery Regiment, where he completed the course for aspirant officers. He received a promotion to the rank of sergeant (30 July 1909) after completing the mandatory exercises. He got engaged in commerce. After the

outbreak of World War I, on 1 August 1914, he was called up into the Germany army. After conscription into the repair commission, he was transferred to the 3rd battalion of the 5th Heavy Artillery Regiment, and in September, to the 1st battalion of that regiment. He participated in the campaign on the Western Front and in November was promoted to deputy officer. In January 1915 he was appointed commander of the light column of the battalion in Poznań, with which he left for the Eastern Front. There, he was promoted to the rank of heavy artillery second lieutenant (30 October 1915). After his transfer to France (2 May 1917), he took part in battles in Flanders. He got severely wounded at Kemmel mountain (25 June 1918) and was taken to hospital in Malbork, and then in Poznań. By a ruling of the medical board (7 July 1918) he was released as fully disabled. He returned to Buk and got involved in the independence operation, joining the Polish Military Organisation of the Prussian partition (November 1918). He was appointed president of the Grodzisk Poviát People's Council (November 1918). At the same time he was appointed commander of the Poviát People's Guard. On 28 December, he proceeded with the organisation of insurgent forces in the region of Western Greater Poland. From 1 January 1919, the insurgent groups in the following towns linked their activities with him: Buk, Grodzisk, Opalenica, Rostarzewo, Rakoniewice, Wielichowo, Przemęt, Witkowo Polskie and Kamieniec. On 5 January, he was the architect of an insurgent operation of troops from Wielichowo, Kościan, Wilkowo Polskie, Stęszew, Wielkie Łęki, Kamieniec, Odra, Rakoniewice and Grodzisk, which seized Wolsztyn. The insurgents commanded by him at that time captured weapons with a large amount of ammunition and all the equipment of the military hospital. In the application for the awarding of the Order of Virtuti Militari, the

statement was made that, despite not having recovered from his wounds (using a stick), he fought battles for Wolsztyn, Nowy Tomyśl and Zbąszyń. By day order No. 2 (dated 7 January 1919) of Central Command in Poznań, he was nominated as commander of Military District V in Grodzisk, which comprised the poviats of Międzyrzecz, Nowy Tomyśl, Grodzisk and Babimost (from 13 January 1919). As the commander of the Western Front, he launched a number of offensive actions (after 10 January 1919) near Kopanica and Zbąszyń, to name a few. After the taking of command of the Western Front by Colonel M. Milewski, he performed the duties of district commandant (from 17 April 1919). By command No 46 of Central Command (dated 19 February 1919), he was appointed commandant of the western stage. By decree of the Commissariat of the Supreme People's Council (dated 17 April 1919), he was promoted to the rank of captain. As a consequence of structural changes in June 1919, he took over Military District II, at the same time he acted as commander of the 155th Infantry Regiment (1st Reserve Regiment), which consisted of 4 battalions (from 4 October 1919). By day order No. 238 of Central Command in Poznań (dated 7 October 1919), he was appointed commander of the group of the Western Greater Poland Front. In January 1920, the troops commanded by him participated in the repossession of the western territories of Greater Poland, which were finally granted to Poland. During the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1920, he commanded the 7th Reserve Greater Poland Infantry Brigade, and then after being promoted, the 23rd Infantry Division. During the Silesian Uprising he supported the Polish Military Organisation of the Upper Silesia with military materials. The Polish government administration appointed him commander of the insurgent army there (3 June 1921). His task was

to keep the insurgent army in control when decisions on the liquidation of the Uprising and division of the Upper Silesia would be taken. After the liquidation of the uprising, he returned to the Polish Army. On 31 December 1921, he was transferred to the reserves. He settled down in the countryside in Mieściska (the former Szamotuły powiat). In his social life, he was distinguished by generosity and nobility, and never had a problem with financially helping those in need. He became an honorary member of many associations of Insurgents and Soldiers in Lwówek, which also accepted him as their patron. He was part of a group of former commanders of the uprising who took the decision on the establishment of the Central Committee for Research on the History of the Greater Poland Uprising 1918-1919 (20 January 1926). In view of his bad health condition he was released from duty to serve in the reserves (4 March 1926). He was repressed after the September 1939 campaign, in December, the Germans deported him to the General Government. He settled in Jędrzejów in the Kielce region where he became engaged in trade. He died on 22 January 1955 in complete oblivion and was buried in the former Cistercian cemetery of the St. Trinity Parish in Jędrzejowo. A modest monument on his tomb was erected by the city and the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy in Jędrzejowo. He received the Order of Virtuti Military of the 5th class, the Cross of Independence with Swords, the Cross of Valour, the Legion of Honour and the Order of Polonia Restituta. He never married.

Bibliography

Z. Kościański, Zenkteler Kazimierz (1884-1955), Powstańcy wielkopolscy. Biogramy uczestników powstania wielkopolskiego 1918-1919, v. IV, ed. B. Polak, Poznań 2008, pp. 228-231.

Author of the entry

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