

MS. GALL. QUART. 13

Binding:

Binding made of red leather and wood, richly gilded, original, of a very high bibliophilic value.

History:

On the basis of characteristic features of writing, it might be assumed that the manuscript was made in the 17th century. Comments in the margins written by the hand of the copyist indicate that he had wide knowledge of treatment of horses to which the manuscript is devoted. It could be therefore assumed that he was a “vet”, however, the binding of great bibliophilic qualities indicates that it was rather an aristocrat who was interested in this art. The copyist was the first owner of the manuscript in which he expressed his interests. Alterations made by a later hand indicate that the next owner of the manuscript was a person with similar interests. Certain linguistic features suggest that the manuscript might have been made in Italy or by an Italian. On the front endpaper there is the old pressmark: *Nevill : 21*. Nevill is the surname of one of the English aristocratic families. Therefore, later the manuscript might have reached England. It reached Königlische Bibliothek in Berlin before 1828.

Content:

The author of this treatise on methods of treating horses, conveyed in this manuscript, is anonymous. The treatise consists of 103 chapters. Some of them are technical, e.g. “On ointments appropriate for this art of treatment” (fol. 3r^o-v^o), others refer to particular diseases, like the one devoted to ulceration (fol. 16v^o-17r^o), the remaining ones are devoted to taking care of horses, like the chapter on the ways of greasing horses’ hooves (fol. 22v^o). Presentation is very clear. Treatises devoted to the treatment of horses have a very long tradition; they are retained in manuscripts or old prints. Among Italian manuscripts of the “Berlin” collection at the Jagiellonian Library, there are also several such copies. The treatise conveyed in the manuscript does not seem to have been printed; its other potential manuscripts have not been found. With reference to this manuscript cf. Lemm, p. 15.