

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

New Information About Godlewsky's Contributions to Turkish Veterinary Medicine History Extracted from a Document

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DEAR EDITOR

An archive document representing an important turning point in the history of Turkish veterinary medicine reveals that Tophane-i Amire was not only important as the industrial center of the Ottoman Empire, but also in terms of military veterinary services. This document (Fig. 1) dated December 2, 1844¹ shows that the First-Class Military Veterinarian Godlewsky, who came from Prussia to the Ottoman lands to provide veterinary education, was concerned not only with the treatment of the horses of the Imperial Army, but also with the health of the animals in Tophane-i Amire. This document sheds light on the beginning of scientific veterinary education in the Ottoman Empire and adds a new dimension to the history of veterinary medicine. Tophane deserves to be remembered not only as a military industrial center, but also as a place that contributed to the development of veterinary medicine with the health services it provided.

Godlewsky, a First-Class Military Veterinarian, was tasked with the establishment of a veterinary school, marking the commencement of scientific veterinary education in the Ottoman Empire. His principal duty involved training soldiers from the Imperial Guard in the identification and treatment of illnesses affecting military horses. In addition to this, he was assigned the responsibility of caring for the horses of two artillery regiments and offering his services to four cavalry regiments stationed in the vicinity

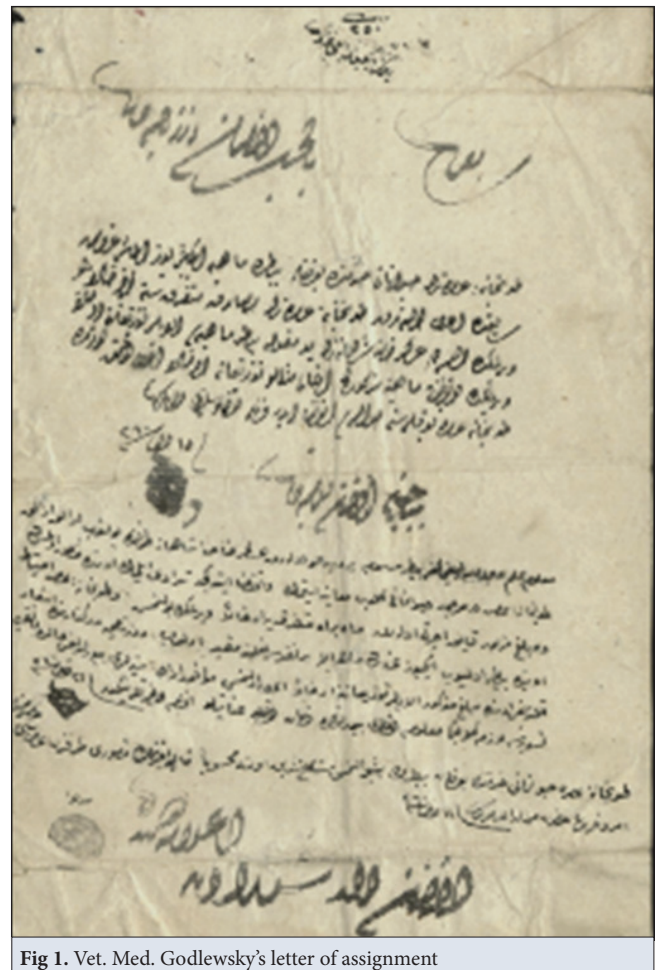


Fig 1. Vet. Med. Godlewsky's letter of assignment

¹ * CAS. 100/4523

of Istanbul during critical periods. In exchange for his services, Godlewsky was granted a monthly salary of 1.750 kuruş, in addition to provisions such as bread, rice, and meat, and an allowance of 150 kuruş for the upkeep of his two horses ^[1,2]. While these responsibilities and compensations were previously documented as part of Godlewsky's contributions to the Ottoman Empire, an archival record indicates that he also provided veterinary care for the animals of the Tophane-i Amire, receiving an extra monthly payment of 250 kuruş (It corresponds to approximately 17.75 grams of gold. ^[3,4]) for this service. The expenses incurred were covered by the minor expenditure budget of the Tophane-i Amire. Furthermore, the document discloses that Godlewsky, who oversaw the horses of the Imperial Guard, occasionally conducted inspections and administered treatment to the horses in Tophane as well. Prior to Godlewsky's appointment, the primary caretaker of the horses was a military chief farrier who received a monthly wage of 200 kuruş^{2*}.

The recently discovered document demonstrates the breadth of Godlewsky's responsibilities to the Empire and positions him as a significant figure in Turkish and world

veterinary history. His contributions warrant lasting acknowledgment and admiration.

DECLARATIONS

Availability of Data and Materials: The data in this lettering are available from the corresponding authors (S.V.G.) in case of a request.

Competing Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions: The contributions of the authors to the letter to the editor are equal.

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² * CAS. 100/4523