

## Josef Ginz At His Antique Store



This is a picture of the antique store that belonged to my paternal grandfather Josef Ginz. The picture was taken in Prague in the 1900s. My grandparents lived in Zdanice, near Prague. In the beginning my grandpa was a teacher, but then, I don't know at what point in his life, he began to deal in antiques. He opened an antique store, at first in Kostelec nad Cernými Lesy, and then he moved with his family to Prague, and opened an antique store on Jungmannovo Namesti [Jungmann Square] in Prague. According to various letters, notes, pictures and what I had heard from my father, my grandfather was a very educated person, though I don't know where he came by his education; most likely he was self-taught. Grandpa also knew many languages and was very intelligent and had a talent for art. I have several pictures that he himself painted and that look like they were done by a professional artist. He also wrote poetry, and I have part of his business correspondence written in verse in German and also in Czech. Besides artistic talents, my grandfather also showed a talent for business. When he died in the year 1912, at a relatively young age, he left behind an extensive collection of antiques and an estate large enough to enable his wife and five children to lead a comfortable life. This could have lasted up to her death, but unfortunately the Nazi regime severed this beautiful family. My grandfather's store on Jungmannovo Namesti was in those days a well-known place in Prague where Czech and German artists and poets would meet. They would mainly pick through rare books that my grandfather was an expert in. A large part of his antique collection was made up of rare old books. While he was still alive, my grandfather was a big proponent of Czech culture and associated with the Czech intellectual elite.