

J.C. Grant Company

One of Milledgeville's most iconic businesses, J.C. Grant Company, was created when an enterprising young man became tired of being a simple farmhand. Using his life savings, John Clark Grant purchased watchmaker's tools, taught himself the trade, and set up a repair bench in a friend's shop in Monticello, Georgia.

After gaining experience in the trade, Grant opened his own jewelry store. In 1895, he moved the business to Eatonton, Georgia, where it stayed for 14 years. A family-centered gentleman, Grant wanted to provide better educational opportunities for his six children. In 1909, he made a final move with his family to Milledgeville and opened Grants Jewelry Store.

From the start, earning the trust of his customers was essential to Grant's business ethics. To this day, his words are held up by the family as a guiding principle. He promised, "In asking the people of this city and county for their patronage, I assure them that I will carry a full and complete line of watches and jewelry of the best makes and will deal promptly and honestly with them. I guarantee all repair work entrusted to me will be promptly and rightly done."

Today-five generations later-the family continues to successfully manage the business into the 21st Century. The oldest retail store in Milledgeville, Grandson of the founder, John Jr., along with his daughter Jean Graham and grandson-in-law Justine, oversee the company's daily operation. The store is truly "full service," offering fine jewelry, watches, exquisite gifts and a bridal registry, as well as cleaning and repair.

Knowing a client's taste intimately is what sets Grant Company apart from franchised jewelry stores. Graham is quite skilled in anticipating what a client would enjoy wearing. "I feel like somewhat of a personal shopper," said Graham. "I learn a client's style in jewelry and dress so that I can identify just the right piece that complements their personality."

The tradition of gifting jewelry has always highlighted life's most important moments. Being a crucial part of these special occasions is taken very seriously by the Grants. Marriage proposals are one of the most important and challenging events in a couple's journey and Graham is dedicated to assisting in any way possible. She states, "From choosing the right ring or designing an original piece, to how to actually propose, is all part of how we give our clients the finest personal care."

Although trends in jewelry and gifts change with each passing year, Grant Company keeps up-to-date in current styles while still preserving classic designs. Graham observes, "Diamonds are certainly forever but other choices like gems can add brilliance to any outfit."

Creating a new look for heirloom pieces is another one of the company's specialties. "We can take sentimental jewelry and create a new and unique piece that can be worn and passed down in families," added Graham.

Once the only place in town to have a bridal registry, Grant Company continues the tradition by carrying items that appeal to the modern bride. Georgia plates, crystal, china, and timepieces for the home-all can be placed on the registry and ordered for the engaged couple.

When the arrival of a new life is celebrated, a gift from the Grants is always well-received. Fine baby gifts including spoons, plates, and silver rattles make instant family heirlooms to be handed down through generations.

Celebrating 130 years of business in 2016, J. C. Grant Company continues the legacy of family and excellence in serving their clients. Graham concludes, “We know the most important component of our business is our customer. We are dedicated to providing personal service to each person who trust us to make their life moments memorable.”