



Introduction to the
Daniell Family Line





DAVID GONTO DANIELL

1808



His Life as a Baptist Minister

(FS #L583-6X7)

This is the story of David Gonto Daniell who started the First Baptist Church of Atlanta where Dr. Charles F. Stanley ministered to a world-wide audience.

David Gonto Daniell, born in 1808 in Brunswick, North Carolina, was the great-grandson of John Daniell. John's grandfather was Governor Robert Daniell of South Carolina. David was the grandson of Stephen Beaton Daniell and Ann Goodlet Howe and the son of George Washington Daniell and Mary Gonto.

He loved his work, and his strong faith in God sustained him in all the sacrifices he made to serve in the ministry all his long and useful life. In 1839, he attended a minister's meeting held at Powelton Church, Hancock County, Georgia. The church was without a pastor at the time when, on Sunday morning, David Gonto Daniell was asked to preach. The members were so impressed with the young preacher that they voted unanimously for him to

be their Pastor. He accepted the call and moved his family to Powelton. He also ministered the Mount Zion Church six miles away and the Shoulderbone Church in Greene Co. At the time Powelton Church called him, the Christian Index wrote an impressive article about him. He served there for six years.

The Virginia Foreign Baptist Mission Society issued a call to the Baptists of the South to send delegates to a convention to be held in Augusta, Georgia. Three hundred and ten delegates from nine southern states met on May 8, 1845 in the Baptist House of Worship, Augusta, Georgia and organized the Southern Baptist Convention. Many prominent Georgia Baptists took part in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention, among them was Reverend David Gonto Daniell and Reverend Moses Nathaniel McCall. Georgia Baptist can be proud that the organization had its birth in their state and was incorporated by their State Legislature, the Charter being granted December 27, 1845.

The First Baptist Church of Atlanta was first started in 1847. The town of Marthasville had just been incorporated as a city in 1847 and the name changed

to Atlanta, Georgia when they started a Baptist Church. The Georgia Baptist Convention decided to send one of the most prominent ministers in the Baptist denomination at that time to the young and growing town. In January 1848, they sent David Gonto Daniell to Atlanta. He organized the First Baptist of Atlanta and began the erection of a building on the corner lot at Forsyth and Walton Streets. The small, plain wooden structure was dedicated June 4, 1848, and on that day, was held the first religious service in a Baptist Church in Atlanta, and Reverend David Gonto Daniell preached the sermon. He was the first pastor and was there until 1854. The original members of this church were five men and twelve women. (This building was burned down by Sherman's Army in 1864, and was rebuilt on the same location and dedicated November 7, 1869. The second location of the church building was at the corner of Peachtree and Cain streets-third was at Peachtree and Fourth streets.)

The First Baptist Church of Atlanta is now known as a MegaChurch. Our ancestor Reverend David Gonto Daniell, William Daniell's grandson, was its first pastor.

In 1854, he accepted a call to Thomasville, Georgia but in 1855 his love for missions one out as he was appointed to the staff of the Foreign Mission Board in Savannah, Georgia.

Buried in Daniell Lot, Laurel Grove Cemetery, Lot #1593, Savannah Georgia.

In 1971 Dr. Charles F. Stanley was called to be the senior pastor of the same First Baptist Church Atlanta that our ancestor Reverend David Gonto Daniell first pastored in 1848. Dr. Stanley's mega church is now seen on television Sunday mornings from Atlanta by millions of people world-wide.

Church Dates

1848

David Gonto Daniell was sent by the Baptist State Convention to the tiny railroad town now known as Atlanta. He gathered 16 men and women together and First Baptist Church Atlanta was born. They met where they could find space, usually in a small one-room schoolhouse. In June, they dedicated their first church building on the corner of Walton and Forsyth in downtown Atlanta. Unfortunately, the building was heavily damaged during the Civil War, and many members were wounded or killed. Even still, the members trusted in God to provide a new building.

1869

God was faithful and the congregation dedicated a new building on the same lot, debt-free.

1903

At this point, the church had grown and was in need of a new building. Because of Atlanta's growth, they were now surrounded by the business district and wanted to move to the suburbs north of Atlanta. They sold the Walton and Forsyth site for \$81,000 and purchased a lot in the residential area across the street from the Governor's Mansion on the corner of Peachtree and Cain Streets.

1906

The new building opened for worship on June 3.

1920

By this time, once again, the church had outgrown the building and was surrounded by the business district. Sunday school had grown so much that some parents

sent their children to neighborhood churches because there was no room for them at First Baptist. When the site had been bought it was in a residential area, but now the business area was closing in again, leaving no room to grow. To accommodate the current membership and provide room for growth, the church purchased an entire city block in the new residential area north of the business district at Peachtree and Fifth Streets.

1930

The sanctuary was completed. Many people thought the building would take care of the needs of the Church forever.

1971

Dr. Charles F. Stanley was called to be the senior pastor of First Baptist Church Atlanta. The Church continued to experience tremendous growth under his teaching and leadership. By 1988, the membership had outgrown the available space again.

1989

First Baptist Church Atlanta purchased 55 acres from the Avon Corporation in the Dunwoody area with plans to renovate the building to meet its expanded needs as a congregation.

1997

The congregation moved to this current location in April.

NOTE: Dr. Stanley's Mega Church is now seen on television Sunday mornings from Atlanta by millions of people world-wide.

