
In Memoriam

R. Balfour Daniels (1900–1987)

R. Balfour Daniels, who died on October 29, 1987, in Houston, Texas, was born August 6, 1900, in Princeton, New Jersey, to Winthrop More Daniels, a professor of economics at Princeton, and Joan Robertson Daniels. He grew up in Princeton and Washington, D.C., and was educated at the Gilman School in Baltimore, Maryland, and Princeton University. Following graduation in 1922, he went to Yale University for a law degree. He passed the New York bar and practiced law for a time, but returned to the Yale graduate school, where he earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in English. He taught at the University of Tennessee, Edinburg Junior College, and Kansas State Teachers College before joining the English faculty at the University of Houston in 1939.

Following service in the Army Air Corps during World War II, he returned to the University of Houston as a professor of English, eventually serving as chairman of the English Department, dean of Arts and Sciences, and dean of the Graduate School. His specialties included Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Samuel Butler. He published three books and numerous scholarly articles. He retired in 1972, but continued his interests in scholarship, writing, and scholarly organizations such as the American Name Society and the Modern Language Association.

His frequent world travels were often excursions to visit places with names which fascinated him or to visit with colleagues who also studied onomastics. His lectures, both as a professor and as a sought-after community speaker, were full of stories about why the authors or city fathers chose certain names and the significance throughout history of placenames.

Dr. Daniels was preceded in death by his wife Lola Burran Daniels and is survived by his two children, Penelope Daniels Pearson and David Winthrop Daniels, as well as by grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mary Schiflett
Houston, Texas