Peter B. Sheridan

Died August 25, 1992, Greenwich, Conn.; a mathematical logician with a special interest in automatic coding and natural language translations by computer; he was a member of the original Fortran development team, responsible for the compilation of arithmetic expressions.

Education: BS, City College of New York; MS, Fordham University.

Professional Experience. research scientist, IBM Corp., 1952-1992

In referring to the development of the section of the original Fortran compiler, Backus (1984) said:

> When I say that somebody "wrote a section of the compiler," it is important to remember that what I really mean is that they *invented* it-they developed all the groundbreaking techniques used in it. It is a great understatement to say only "somebody wrote a section." Peter Sheridan wrote Section One, which parsed algebraic expressions, translated them into code, and optimized that code.

Roy Nutt (1984) termed the technique of inserting parentheses into an algebraic expression (initially "concocted" by John Backus and Irving Ziller) to be a "dubious technique." Peter Sheridan, in his impressive paper in 1959, proved this to be a viable scheme, although some people did not particularly care for his notation.

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Significant Publications

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UPDATES