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**Title: The Eddington Eclipse Expeditions**

**Abstract:**

The first direct experimental test of Einstein's theory of general relativity involved a pair of expeditions to measure the bending of light at a total solar eclipse that took place one hundred years ago, on 29 May 1919. So famous is this experiment, and so dramatic was the impact on Einstein himself, that history tends not to recognise the controversy that surrounded the results at the time. In this article, I discuss the experiment in its scientific and historical background context and explain why it was, and is, such an important episode in the development of modern physics.