

The discovery of elliptic functions emerged from investigations of integral addition theorems. An addition theorem for a function  $f$  is a formula expressing  $f(u + v)$  in terms of  $f(u)$  and  $f(v)$ . For a function defined as a definite integral with a variable upper limit, an addition theorem takes the form of an equation between the sum of two such integrals, with upper limits  $u$  and  $v$ , and an integral whose upper limit is a certain function of  $u$  and  $v$ . In this paper, we briefly sketch the role which the investigation of such addition theorems has played in the development of the theory of elliptic integrals and elliptic functions.