

# Today in Math History...

**-3 September 1884**

**Solomon Lefshetz born.** He invented the word “topology.”

*Perhaps the first work which deserves to be considered as the beginnings of topology is due to Euler. In 1736 Euler published a paper on the solution of the Königsberg bridge problem, “The solution of a problem relating to the geometry of position.” The title itself indicates that Euler was aware that he was dealing with a different type of geometry where distance was not relevant. The paper not only shows that the problem of crossing the seven bridges in a single journey is impossible, but generalizes the problem to show that, in today's notation, “A graph has a path traversing each edge exactly once if exactly two vertices have odd degree.”*

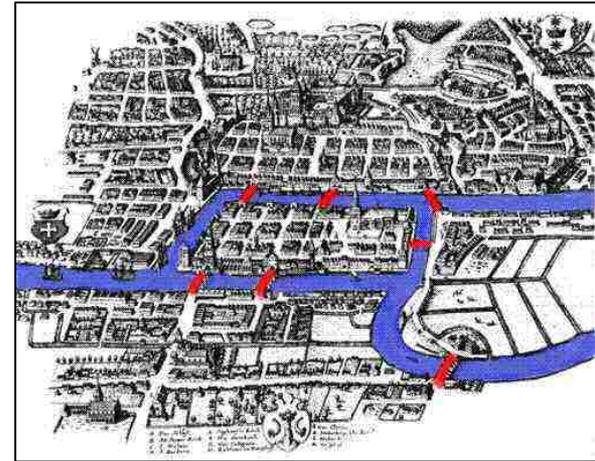


Diagram of the Königsberg bridges.