

# Olympic Athletes

# Frederick Simpson



*The most important thing in life is not the triumph, but the fight:  
the essential thing is not to have won, but to have fought well.*

*Olympic Creed*

Three representatives of North America's First Nations were at the starting line - Tom Longboat, an Onondaga, Lewis Tewanima, a Hopi, and Frederick Simpson, a Mississauga. It was 1908, the men's marathon at the 4th Summer Olympic Games of the modern era, being held in London, England.

It was a newsworthy event, particularly given the climate of racism at the time.

Results for the race show that Tom Longboat was forced by sickness to withdraw while leading the pack, but that Lewis Tewanima finished ninth and Frederick Simpson sixth. These were remarkable performances since both Tewanima and Simpson were relative newcomers to the sport.

Longboat, who had already won the Boston Marathon, was from the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario; Tewanima was from Arizona; but Frederick Simpson was one of ours, born and raised on the Alderville Reservation, just north of Cobourg.



Photo courtesy of David Mowat



**1908 Olympic Games  
London, England  
Marathon  
6th Place**



*During this era, First Nations people were often barred from amateur competitions because they were automatically thought to be professionals... and because of racist assumptions about their having natural athletic talent.*

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