

**Maine's first Marathon**  
**28 Miles**  
**August 14, 1908 | Rockland**



**Home Week's Grand Windup**  
**Marathon Race Excited Unparalleled Interest In Four Knox County Towns.**  
**(Rockland Courier-Gazette)**

When the Courier-Gazette when to press last issue the runners were toeing the scratch for the great Marathon race, which must be now be looked back upon as the greatest sporting event of Old Home Week, and the most interesting athletic contest of any kind that Knox county has ever witnessed.

It is true that there were only three starters, and two who ran the entire course, but the three men in question are among the finest runners that New England can produce, and their names are familiar to all who have perused the newspaper accounts of the Boston Marathon races, in recent years.

The Marathon is a 25-mile contest of the go-as-you-please order, but where the competition is sharp and the men are capable, it is a cinch that there will not be much walking done. The Knox county course as laid out for Friday's race registered 24 miles by a cyclometer, but the three runners gave the unanimous opinion that it was nearer 28 miles than 24. "I have been in four Marathon races and the roads were the hardest for a running race that I ever saw," remarked one of the runners to a Courier-Gazette reporter when half of the distance had been covered.

The three starts were James J. Lee or the star distance runner of the Boston Athletic Association; Arthur Halstead of the Lawrence, Mass. YMCA and Samuel C. Pavitt of the Somerville, Mass YMCA. Brawley of Boston was entered, but did not put in appearance.

The starting point was at the corner of Main and Park streets, and it was exactly 10:47 by the watch of Orel E. Davies, official timer, when the pistol shot sounded for the race to begin. A goodly crowd was assembled, and the athletes went

away with a fine word of encouragement. The automobile of Alfred S. Black, served as pacemaker. Its occupants were Mr. Black, who was chairman of the committee on field sports; E.B. MacAllister, president of the Home Week Association; W.C. Robbins, one of the heroes of the recent Olympic races in England; F. Ernest Homan and a representative of the Courier-Gazette. In the rear of the runners was the automobile of the official timer and several other motor cards, all of which followed the runners over the entire course, but not without frequent mishaps and vexatious delays. It is no exaggeration to say that two of the three runners finished in better condition than four of the five automobiles.

When Lovejoy's Corner was reached quite a crowd was assembled for a glimpse of the runners. All the way across the Old County road and through Rockland Highlands, there were people in ever door-yard, and the quarrymen were out on the banks to see the race. The spectators were very enthusiastic. All shouted words of encouragement and at one house near Blackington's corner a dozen flags were waved as the racers sped past. The whole countryside appeared to be watching the runners and it is safe to say that no other event has aroused so much interest in that section for a great many years.

Pavitt, the deaf-mute, showed signs of distress before Lovejoy's Corner was reached and near Blackington's Corner withdrew from the race, complaining of cramps in the stomach. He was taken into one of the automobiles and assisted in training the other runners during the remainder of the contest. Each auto was equipped with a liberal supply of oranges, fresh water and Florida water. At frequent intervals the runners were handed wet sponges with which they laved themselves. They drank very sparingly, but frequently imbibed juice from freshly cut oranges. A rubbing down process was undergone a few times by each man.

To Lovejoy's Corner, according to the cyclometer measurement was a distance of 3.3 miles. It was reached at 11.05 [am], Lee leading by several hundred yards, with Pavitt about an equal distance in the rear of Halstead. Blackington's Corner, registering 7.1 miles was reached at 11.35 [am], and here the number of runners was reduced by the withdrawal of Pavitt. Lee had slightly increased his lead. From this point the first bulletin was sent back to Rockland by the newspaper representative. Rockville postoffice was reached at 11.49 [am] with the distance between Lee and Halstead practically unchanged. The distance traveled thus far was 9.7 miles, and Lee went fully another mile before he slowed into a walk for the first time. Here he received a rubbing down for 15 seconds. Lee was constantly attended over four-fifths of the course by Mr. Black and Eaton Blackington, who provided him with fresh water, oranges and sponges whenever needed. Mr. Black followed the runners afoot more than half the distance and exhibited wonderful powers of endurance. It is not beyond the

range of probabilities that next year's Marathon (for it is a certainty that there will be one here) will find him one of the contestants.

While Lee was being the recipient of these attentions Halstead was being well cared for by a mounted attendant in the person of young Parker Norcross, who followed the runner astride his pony and never once deserted him in the long stern chase. How far this aid and encouragement were factors in the victory of Halstead would be difficult to estimate, but the Lawrence YMCA man appeared very grateful for the favors he received from this source.

Simonton's Corner was reached by Lee at 12:23 [pm]. The distance covered at this time was 13.8 miles and over half the run had been accomplished. Lee complained of a cramp in his right leg and there was a brief rubbing down period. Halstead was nowhere in sight. The road through this section was rough and sandy – the hardest kind of a highway for runners, and they heaved sighs of relief when they struck that beautiful piece of road built through the munificence of J.C. Strawbridge. Camden caught by a passing glimpse of the runners, for the route there took them down Free street, where few people were astir. The car track was reached at 12:46 [pm] marking 16 even miles that had been traversed. Still no Halstead.

Rockport postoffice, 17.7 miles from the starting point, was reached by Lee at 1:05 [pm] and quite a crowd of interested spectators was on the street to greet him. Lee and his convoy had passed Hoboken school house without being able to sight the second runner, but when they reached the top of the next hill they saw an auto and pony-rider dash into view, soon followed by Halstead. The latter was running but Lee limped somewhat and was rubbing only at intervals. Closer and closer pressed the Lawrence man and on toiled Lee. Half a mile this side of Ballard Park Halstead overtook the erstwhile pacemaker. They grasped hands cordially but said no word. Lee's followers encouraged him by word, but although he forced a smile, it was the smile which bespoke defeat.

Mr. Black and the Courier-Gazette representative now changed to the head automobile, which, by the way was the one in which they had started. Reaching Glencove in advance of the runners the party hastily called Rockland by phone and told the story of the exciting finish. Charles H. Cables, the megaphone, promptly got busy, and notified the rapidly increasing crowd on Main Street that the runners were near at hand.

When Halstead dashed down the home stretch towards Limerock street it was to pass through a lane of cheering people, estimated at over 1000 in number. The exact time of the finish was 2.07.10 [pm] making 3 hours, 20 minutes and 10 seconds that it had taken the winner to cover the course.

Halstead appeared comparatively fresh, and after receiving congratulations was able to walk to the hotel. Lee came in sight about eight minutes later, finishing at

2.17.50 [pm]. He was plainly exhausted and an auto conveyed him to the hotel. It was a hard race for him to lose, but he modestly refrained from offering excuses.

Both men came out of the race in fine condition and danced in the evening at the Home Week hop.

Halstead's prize is a solid silver cup valued at \$75, and Lee's is a silver cup valued at \$35. The trophies are beauties and the winners were well pleased with them. They stated that first prize in the biggest Marathon races did not exceed \$50 or \$100 in value.

That the Marathon will be made an annual event in Knox county is not to be doubted. It is a wonderfully fascinating game and with 15 or 20 contestants, as there will certainly be next year, the interest would reach a very high pitch. There will then be several local runners. Ross Wilson, a well known Thomaston athlete has already announced his intention of competing - and there will be others.

**Results:**

- 1. Arthur Halstead, Lawrence, MA, 3:20:10**
- 2. James Lee, BAA, 3:30:50**  
**Samuel C. Pavitt, Somerville, MA DNF**