

# Finners Quinlan, "I Lasted Only One Inning"

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From the sandlots of Scranton's Temperance League, to the major league fields of St. Louis and Chicago and the bloody battlefields of northern France, **Thomas Finners Quinlan's** life had a charmed quality to it - until the morning of November 9, 1918.

Early that morning, while serving with the 79th Division in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, Quinlan is assisting another infantry unit in assaulting a German machine-gun emplacement when a high explosive shell lands nearby, causing extensive injuries that results in him loosing both his left eye and left arm. The incident occurs on Quinlan's first day of fighting and a mere two days before the armistice occurs, ending World War I.

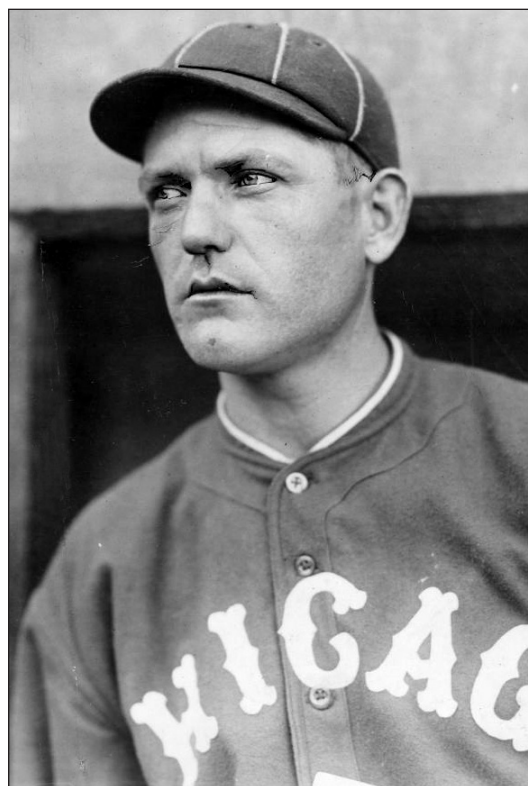
"I lasted only one inning in the big game," Quinlan later says.

Born on October 21, 1887, in Scranton, Pennsylvania, his baseball career has its roots in the town's Catholic Temperance League. Quinlan makes his pro debut with the hometown Scranton Miners on July 6, 1908, replacing baseball legend Archibald "Moonlight" Graham in the lineup and goes 1-for-4 in a 9-4 win over Johnstown-Gloversville.

A year later, Quinlan is one of three Scranton natives - Quinlan, William Harity and Mike Farrell - who "enroll" at Eastern College in Front Royal, Virginia. On April 26, despite 15 games remaining on the school's baseball schedule, all three return home, because they "did not think enough of the location to stay there." The college will later shutter it doors in 1920.



**Finners Quinlan**  
**1918 United States Army**



**Finners "Tommy" Quinlan**  
**1915 Chicago White Sox**

Three weeks later, Quinlan and Farrell leave Scranton and the highly-regarded Temperance League and return to Front Royal to play for a team managed by Charles Sparrow, a former resident of Scranton. This time they last all of eight days before once again returning home, saying the league was "a third class league," and they decided to "hit the trail for home."

In 1910, he splits time playing for Providence in the County League and Shickshinney (population 1,917) of the Susquehanna League.

Quinlan begins his ascent into the realm of pro baseball in early spring of 1911, playing in the pre-season with the Wilkes-Barre Barons before quitting and complaining he wasn't getting into games. Refusing to release him, Barons' manager Bill Clymer assigns the disgruntled 23-year-old to Reading in the Tri-State League, where he lasts about a week before (once again) returning home following a contract dispute.

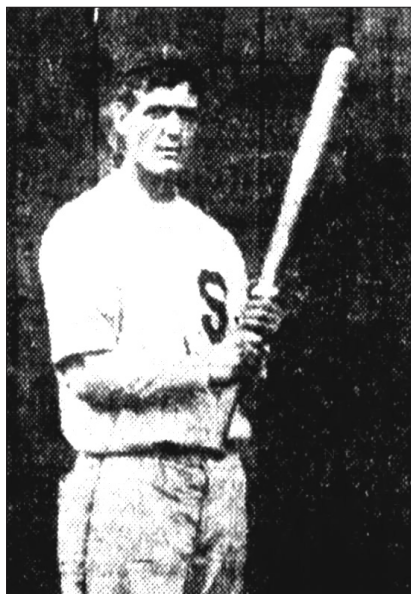
Now a free agent, Scranton Miners' manager Monte Cross signs him and options him to Steubenville in the Ohio-Penn (C) League. In 88 games for the Stubs, Quinlan hits .257 and is 0-3 as a pitcher. On August 20, Quinlan is once again looking for a job when Steubenville and East Liverpool are dropped from the Ohio-Penn League in a secret meeting of the league's directors.

## Finners Quinlan [2 of 7]:

Cross puts Quinlan on the Miners' roster where the prodigal son is 3-for-11 in three games before the National Commission declares him a free agent after it is determined that Steubenville has not paid his salary since July 1.

For the next two seasons, Quinlan is a starter in the outfield for the Scranton Miners of the New York State (B) League. In 1912, he hits .273 for a team that finishes second-to-last. The following year, he improves to .283 for a team that finishes dead last, winning only 49 games.

Quinlan's play is impressive enough to warrant the attention of the St. Louis Cardinals, with whom he signs with on August 8, for a reported \$2,000. A month later, the Cardinals tell Quinlan to join the team in Pittsburgh where he makes his major league debut on September 6, against the Pirates in Forbes Field. In 13 games with the Red Birds, Quinlan hits only .160 with one RBI. His lone RBI comes against New York Hall of Famer Christy Matthewson in a 1-0 win on September 19.



**Finners Quinlan**  
1911 Steubenville Stubs

## Finners Quinlan Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Lev	AB	HT	2B	3B	HR	SB	AVG
1907	Scranton All-Leaguers	--	Amt	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1908	Scranton Miners	New York State	B	4	1	0	0	0	0	.143
1909	Buffalo Hurons	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1909	Scranton Cathedral	City	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1909	St. Peter's	Temperance	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1909	Eastern College	--	Coll	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1909	Front Royal	--	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1910	Providence	County	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1910	Shickshinny	Susquehanna	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	.376
1911	Scranton Choctaws	County	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1911	Jermyn	County	SPro	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
<b>1911</b>	<b>2 Teams</b>	<b>2 Leagues</b>	<b>C-B</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>.257</b>
1911	Steubenville Stubs	Ohio-Penn	C	327	84	12	10	1	7	.257
1911	Scranton Miners	New York State	B	11	3	0	0	0	1	.273
1912	Scranton Miners	New York State	B	480	131	-	-	-	20	.273
1913	Scranton Miners	New York State	B	515	146	-	-	-	28	.283
1913	St. Louis Cardinals	NATIONAL	MLB	50	8	0	0	0	0	.160
1914	Oakland Oaks	Pacific Coast	AA	701	203	24	6	2	43	.290
1915	Chicago White Sox	AMERICAN	MLB	114	22	3	0	0	3	.193
1915	Salt Lake City Bees	Pacific Coast	AA	288	88	18	0	0	13	.306
1916	Salt Lake City Bees	Pacific Coast	AA	771	241	49	6	2	27	.313
1917	Salt Lake City Bees	Pacific Coast	AA	673	171	21	8	0	-	.254
<b>Major League Totals</b>				<b>2 Years</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>.183</b>
<b>Minor League Totals</b>				<b>8 Years</b>	<b>3755</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>.283</b>

**ML Debut: September 6, 1913, at Forbes Field, Pittsburgh:** started in left field (batting leadoff) and went 1-for-4 against Wild Bill Luhrsen in a 4-2 loss to the Pittsburgh Pirates.

**ML Finale: July 15, 1915, at Forbes Field, Pittsburgh:** pinch hit for pitcher Eddie Cicotte in the bottom of the seventh inning and drew a walk off of Rube Bressler in a 5-2 loss to the Philadelphia Athletics.

Quinlan signs with the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League on February 4, with a nice boost in salary. In 1914, he hits a solid .290 for the Oaks, with 24 doubles and a career-high 43 steals in 701 at bats. Oakland trades Quinlan to the Chicago White Sox on August 13, for third baseman Scotty Alcock. However, he rejects the White Sox's contract offer for 1915, telling friends that he will probably play for the Baltimore Feds next season.

On September 2, 1914, the St. Louis Cardinals fail to exercise their option on Quinlan, thus making a "gift" of the talented outfielder to the Oaks. The Cardinals' Miller Huggins fails to include an option clause in the contract agreement with Oakland and the Oaks claim "title" to Quinlan and the National Commission agrees.

Eventually though, he accepts Chicago's contract offer and opens the 1915 season as the team's starting left fielder. After a strong start (six hits in his first four games), Quinlan is hitting only .193 in 42 games when on July 25, the Pale Hose sell him to the Salt Lake City Bees of the Pacific Coast League, where he plays the rest of the season, hitting a solid .306 with 18 doubles and 13 steals.

Back with Salt Lake City in 1916, he hits a career-high .313 and leads the PCL in hits with 241. His 49 doubles tie for third-best in the league while his batting average ranks sixth. That February, the Bees send their All-Star outfielder a contract calling for a pay cut where he was looking for a pay raise. The two sides eventually agree to the same

## Finners Quinlan [3 of 7]:

salary from 1916 and Quinlan reports to the team's training camp in Modesto, California. In 182 games, a disgruntled Quinlan hits a minor league career-low .254.

In the off-season, Salt Lake City President Bill Lane implies that Quinlan will be traded before the start of the season, saying that he has slowed up "woefully" and is one of the poorest hitting outfielders in the PCL. True to his word, on February 6, Lane trades Quinlan to the Columbus for Larry Chappell. After a brief tryout with Columbus, Quinlan returns home to Scranton saying that he left the team because he expects to be in the military draft soon.

During the summer, despite having a war-related job in the shipyards, he enlists to join the Army and in August, is sent to Fort Lee, Virginia, for training. The 1st Division deploys to France that October and takes part in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive which gets underway September 27.

Quinlan returns to Scranton in March of 1919, and enters local politics, running for the county commissioner position of Lackawanna County, and to no one's surprise, the popular war hero wins the election, beginning a long career in politics. He retires from public service in 1949.

Quinlan passes away from pneumonia on February 17, 1966, at the age of 78.



**Finners Quinlan**  
1913 St. Louis Cardinals



### Eastern College

Founded in Front Royal, Virginia, Eastern College sells 1,200 shares of stock at \$10 each prior to its opening on September 18, 1901. By 1904, the school lists collegiate and academic programs as well as preparatory, business, music, arts, drawing and elocution (speech). The college also has a "no hazing" and a no entrance exams policy listed in their ads. Following a fire that destroys one of its buildings, the college moves to Manassas in 1909, where it enrolls 184 students. Sports play a major role at the college with teams in football, baseball and women's basketball. The baseball schedule is particularly ambitious with the likes of George Washington, Mount St. Mary's, St. John's (Maryland), VMI, Georgetown and Maryland Agricultural College (now the University of Maryland) on the schedule. In 1920, the school runs into severe financial problems, forcing its closing.

## QUINLAN CHRONOLOGY

October 10, 1907

Following completion of the New York State League schedule, Quinlan joins the Scranton Miners for an exhibition game against a team from Patterson ... Quinlan is 2-for-4 with a double, and for at least one game is a teammate of Frank "Moonlight" Graham, who start in left field for the Miners.

November 19, 1907

Quinlan 3-for-5 with a double as the Scranton All-Leaguers even their Cuba tour mark at 1-1, beating the Havana Reds 7-1 and out-hitting the Cubans 16-to-2 in the process.

July 6, 1908 - Pro Debut

Quinlan makes his pro baseball debut with the Scranton Miners of the New York State League ... replacing Moonlight Graham in the lineup, Quinlan starts in center field and is 1-for-4 in a 9-4 win over Johnstown-Gloversville.

◀ April 26, 1909

Three Scranton natives - Quinlan, William Harrity and Mike Farrell - elect to attend Eastern College in Front Royal, Virginia ... two weeks after enrolling, but with 15 games remaining on the school's schedule, the trio returns to Scranton because they "did not think enough of the location to stay there." ... Eastern, behind the four-hit pitching of Farrell, had defeated Maryland Agricultural College (now the University of Maryland) 4-2 on April 18.

## Finners Quinlan [4 of 7]:

May 18, 1909

Quinlan and Farrell leave Scranton and the Temperance League to return to Front Royal to play for a team managed by Charles Sparrow, a former resident of Scranton.

June 4, 1909

Quinlan and Farrell return home saying the league was "a third class league," and "hit the trail for home."

January 25, 1911

Quinlan signs with Wilkes-Barre of the New York State (C) League.

May 9, 1911

Quinlan is released by Wilkes-Barre, and later Reading, before being signed by the Steubenville Stubs of the Ohio-Penn (C) League.

July 12, 1911

Overcoming an early-season hand injury, Quinlan is hitting .320 for Steubenville when it is reported that the Chicago White Sox are thinking about signing the outfielder.

August 20, 1911

Quinlan is looking for a job after Steubenville and East Liverpool are dropped from the Ohio-Penn League.

September 8, 1911

Quinlan plays in three games for Scranton when he is declared a free agent after it is determined that Steubenville has not paid his salary since July 1.

September 11, 1911

With only six days left in the regular season, Quinlan and pitcher Tom McCabe are in Albany, New York for a tryout with the Senators of the New York State (B) League.



Finners "Tommy" Quinlan  
1915 Salt Lake City Bees



Finners Quinlan  
1915 Chicago White Sox

April 25, 1912

Quinlan not only makes the Scranton Miners opening day roster, he opens the season as the team's starting left fielder and is 1-for-4 in a 6-2 loss to Elmira ... prior to his first at bat, Quinlan is presented with a suitcase from local admirers.

June 25, 1912

St. Louis Browns' scout Monte Cross opines that Quinlan is one of three outfielders in the New York State league that show promise of being in the major leagues.

September 9, 1912

Quinlan finishes his first full minor league season leading the Miners in batting average (.273), at bats (480), hits (131) and steals (20).

February 25, 1913

Pitcher Festus Higgins and Quinlan are holdouts with Scranton.

March 6, 1913

The Troy Trojans offer third baseman Jim Kennedy straight-up for Quinlan, who remains a hold-out ... three weeks later, Scranton trades Otto Wagner for Kennedy, but Kennedy refuses to report to the Miners and retires from baseball and run a hotel in New York City, co-owned by himself and his brother ... however, a new law in New York requiring hotel bars to close at 1:00 a.m., gives

## Finners Quinlan [5 of 7]:

Kennedy reason to come out of retirement and Scranton then loans him to Binghamton on May 11 ... Kennedy is returned to Scranton in mid-June and is hitting a solid .278 when he is released on July 7.

### FINNERS QUINLAN GETS \$50 FOR HITTING BULL

Troy, N. Y., June 24.—Finners Quinlan, the clever young outfielder of the Scranton team, today received a check for \$50 from the Bull Durham people, as his reward for hitting the bull in right field in the game between Syracuse and Scranton, Saturday afternoon. This is the first time that the sign has been hit in Syracuse since 1911 when Harry Armbruster turned the trick.

February 4, 1914

Quinlan signs with the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League.

June 30, 1914

Pacific Coast League President A.T. Baum suspends Quinlan for three games and fines him \$25 for protesting balls and strikes in the first inning of a Oakland-Sacramento game two days earlier.

August 1, 1914

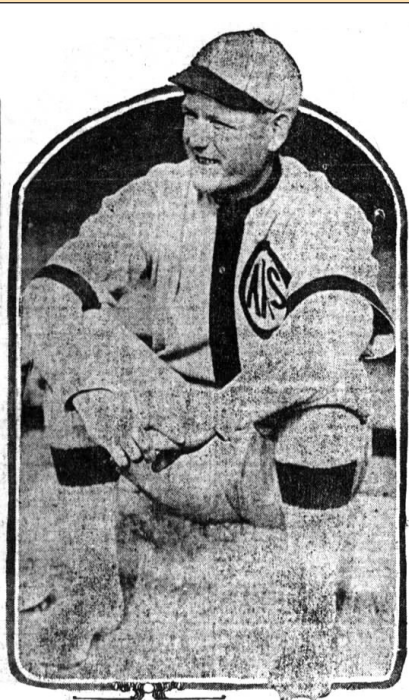
Oakland Oaks' manager Tyler Christian says that he will sell Quinlan to any team willing to pay \$10,000 for his services.

## FINNERS QUINLAN JOINS CARDINALS

Thomas Quinlan, better known to State league fans as "Finners," was ordered to report to the St. Louis Cardinals last night and left to join the major leaguers in Pittsburg late today. Manager Johnny Kelly was notified by wire early last night that the St. Louis management wanted Quinlan immediately. He will probably be put in left field to fill the vacancy caused by the injuries sustained by Teddy Cuthers, who cavorted in the local pasture last season.

Both Manager Kelly and Owner Coleman were not in favor of letting Quinlan go, but after considering the hopelessness of the locals' chances to better their position, and the fact that with the Cardinals, Quinlan will draw his pay up to October 12, was finally decided to part with one of the niftiest outfielders who ever graced State league lots.

The news of his immediate deportation struck Quinlan so suddenly that he was rendered speechless for several minutes. But his eyes soon brightened with the prospects of going up and he felt "tickled to death." As a minor league baseball player, Finners has no peer. All over the league, he is considered the fastest fly-stabber and one of the best all-around players. Local fans are sorry to see him go, but are pleased that their favorite son has a chance to shine in the big show.



Finners Quinlan  
1914 Oakland Oaks

August 13, 1914

Oakland trades Quinlan to the Chicago White Sox for third baseman Scotty Alcock ... Alcock had batted .173 in 54 games for the Pale Hose.

August 15, 1914

Quinlan rejects a contract for the 1915 season offered him by the Chicago White Sox.

September 1, 1914

Quinlan tells friends back in Scranton that he will play for the Baltimore Feds next season.

September 2, 1914

The St. Louis Cardinals fail to exercise their option on Quinlan, thus making a "gift" of the talented outfielder to the Oakland Oaks ... the Cardinals' Miller Huggins fails to include an option clause in the contract agreement with Oakland and the Oaks claim "title" to Quinlan ... the National Commission agrees with Oakland and awards the talented outfielder to the Oaks.

January 7, 1915

Quinlan tells *The Scranton Times-Tribune* that he will not sign with the Federal League.

February 20, 1915

Quinlan returns his White Sox contract unsigned saying he wants more money.

## Finners Quinlan [6 of 7]:

March 8, 1915

Quinlan finally agrees to terms with Chicago and leaves Scranton for Los Angeles, where the White Sox "are getting into shape."

July 25, 1915

The Chicago White Sox sell Quinlan to the Pacific Coast League's Salt Lake City Bees.



**Finners Quinlan**  
**1915 Salt Lake City Bees**



**Finners Quinlan**  
**1915 Salt Lake City Bees**

July 31, 1915

Quinlan and Bunny Brief, a pair of White Sox emigres, make their Salt Lake City debuts in a 6-3 win over the Los Angeles Angels ... Quinlan is 3-for-4 with a pair of doubles while Brief is 1-for-4 with a two-bagger.

September 14, 1915

Salt Lake City manager Ted Blankenship tells the United Press that Quinlan and Brief will not be leaving the team at the end of the season as Chicago's option on both players has expired and they are now property of the Salt Lake City baseball club.

October 24, 1915

In the final game of the season, Quinlan is 1-for-4 with a run scored while Brief is 2-for-4 with a double and two runs scored as the Bees close out their first season in the Pacific Coast League with a 12-6 win over Los Angeles enabling Claude "Lefty" Williams, of Black Sox infamy, to pick up his 33rd win of the year.

Since Quinlan and Brief were inserted into the starting lineup on July 31, the Bees close out the season with a 56-25 (.691) mark ... Quinlan hits .306 with 18 doubles while Brief hits .363 with 23 double and eight home runs.

June 17, 1916

Quinlan makes his Salt Lake City pitching debut in Oakland ... trailing 9-0 in the sixth inning, Quinlan convinces manager Cliff Blankenship to let him take the mound ... he

allows two tainted runs on four hits and two walks in three innings.

May 6, 1916

Quinlan and Vernon's Swede Risberg engage in the first fight seen on the local diamond in Los Angeles in seven years ... the fisticuffs start when Quinlan attempts to take out Risberg at second base on a double play and knocks the second baseman down ... both players are ordered off the field, but neither player is suspended or fined.

### ***Fist Battle Between Quinlan and Risberg Enlivens Matinee***

October 24, 1916

Quinlan leaves for home five days before the end of the season ... hit by a pitched ball the previous week, his elbow is the size "of a mountain" ... Quinlan leads the Pacific Coast League in hits (241) and is third among hitting leaders with a .3126 average, a mere .001 behind's Duke Kenworthy (.3143) and teammate Bunny Brief (.3139) ... Quinlan also ties for most assists by an outfielder with 42.

November 5, 1916

The *Salt Lake City Tribune* names Quinlan as the league's all-star center fielder.

## Finners Quinlan [7 of 7]:

December 30, 1916

Quinlan informs the Salt Lake City Bees that he will not return there under "any consideration" next year ... the star outfielder is angered over alleged suspicion with which his injuries were handled.

**"Tommy Quinlan, who quits the Bees and starts for home every time the club loses a game, has shaken Salt Lake again."**

**-Salt Lake City Telegram, December 30**

April 11, 1917

Having not signed his contract six games into the season, Quinlan is suspended for game seven, a 7-5 loss to Los Angeles ... he remains suspended for two days as the Bees refuse to cover his travel expenses.

August 16, 1917

Quinlan uses "vile language" and steps on the shoes of umpire Phyle and is later fined \$25 by League President Baum.

### **December 28, 1917 - How the mighty have fallen**

A San Francisco scribe notes that "Quinlan is not wanted in Salt Lake any more. Tommy is a pretty fair ball player, but likes to get his own way."

January 15, 1918

Salt Lake City President Bill Lane says that Quinlan will be traded before the start of the season, noting that he has slowed up "woefully" and is one of the poorest hitting outfielders in the PCL.

February 6, 1918

Quinlan is traded to the Columbus for Larry Chappell.

April 24, 1918

Quinlan returns home after a tryout with Columbus and says that he is leaving the team because he expects to be in the next military draft.

May 9, 1918

Quinlan signs with the Bristol shipyard team for \$200 a month.

August 4, 1918

Quinlan has been classified I-A and certified eligible for the draft despite working in a shipyard.

October 6, 1918

Thomas McGowan, one of Quinlan's best friends, is one of 327 American soldiers to perish when the troop transport Otranto collides with the steamer Kashmir and sinks on the south Scottish coast.

November 9, 1918

While fighting with the 79th Division in the Argonne Offensive in France, Quinlan is severely injured, losing his left eye and left arm when hit by an explosive shell only two or three hours after the battle had started ... the battle takes place a mere two days before the armistice occurs, ending World War I.

February 17, 1966

After being admitted to Scranton's Mercy Hospital on February 6, Quinlan dies on February 17.

## **A Curious Exchange**

**"Eighteen Thousand Dollar Beauty," A. A. Fence Buster, Traded for Tom Quinlan**

On February 2, 1918, Salt Lake City trades its talented, but disgruntled outfielder Tommy Quinlan to the Columbus Senators of the American Association for outfielder Larry Chappell. The *Salt Lake Herald-Republican* calls Chappell "one of the greatest natural hitters in baseball," and compares their newly-acquired outfielder with the likes of Ty Cobb, Tris Speaker and Clyde Milan.

Coming off a sub-par season filled with quarrels with management and manager Bill Berhard, Quinlan hits a minor league career-low .254. Having worn out his welcome with the Bees, Quinlan reports to the Senators' pre-season training camp but decides to leave the team on April 24, returning home to Scranton where he takes a job in the shipyards in Chester.

In the fall of 1913, the Milwaukee Brewers sell Chappell to the Chicago White Sox for the princely sum of \$18,000. A.F. Timme, president of the Brewers, opines that Chappell "is a detriment to any club," noting that Chappell is independently wealthy having been left a large sum of money and doesn't need baseball to live well. In five major league seasons, Chappell hits a meager .226 with no home runs and only 26 RBIs.

In limited action with the Bees in 1918, Chappell is third in the PCL in hitting (.326) when he leaves the team on June 20, to join the Letterman Hospital Corps in San Francisco. The 28-year-old Chappell contracts pneumonia and passes away in San Francisco on November 8, 1918.