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KELLEHER, Al.

of Intelligencer sports writer Ken Colling, who told Kingston Ponies coach Ben Lady about the "good little ball player here in Belleville," Shirley said.

Lady had been catcher for the Toronto Maple Leafs ball team.

"Al had real respect for him because he was a real good coach. He was the one that figured (Al) was a good first baseman."

So, Al was moved to first. But the move to the Ponies meant more than just getting to first base. The Ponies were paid to play.

"They were men," Shirley said. The higher league paid \$200 a month and that was "big money."

"The first thing he did was buy clothes." Al was a clothes-horse, Shirley admits.

Al's opportunity at the big time came in 1947 when he was spotted by the Brooklyn Dodgers (later the L.A. Dodgers).

"The Dodger Scouts had seen him the year before and they sent him to Vero Beach, Florida for spring training. After spring training they sent him to one of their farm clubs. From there they sent him to Sudbury and this was a semi-pro league. He played for the Froot Tigers." (Froot was a mine in Sudbury.)

"In order to pay him, he had to pretend he was working for the mines. He used to sit in the open pit and work out. He'd stand up there and hit the ball. They resented this ball player, I'm sure."

Al was paid \$300 a month.

"The next year he was back to spring training and then back to the Froot Tigers. He had a good time up there. He like the guys he played with, he was the big star. He went and spent all his money on clothes."

Shirley isn't kidding. Al spent so much money on clothes he hadn't enough for food. Al collected baseballs off the field which he sold to feed himself.

Despite his hunger, he was well-

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