



*A mule cart purchased about 1903, shortly after the second plant was opened. Just which one of these mules is "Bird" is doubtful.*

Among the new equipment purchased when the second plant was started was a mule cart and a mule called "Bird". There's a story about "Bird" that is even now remembered by the "old timers" in the plant. "Bird" it seems, unlike most mules, didn't have a particularly mulish disposition. He would go along about his business, and work hard and long—never complaining in the manner which mules sometimes have.

After ten years of hard work "Bird" was pensioned. Yes, pensioned, for Johnson refused to sell him or consign him to the musilage

mart. He said, when a mule goes on like "Bird" has, by gad, he just isn't an ordinary mule—he's a friend of mine and I'm going to take care of him and pension him like any other old employee. So "Bird" had a pasture all to himself, and no work to do. When it became impossible to keep him near the plant, Johnson boarded him on a nearby farm, paying for his keep summer and winter. Bert lived to the ripe old age of twenty-three, and when he died even the Birmingham newspapers carried a story about "Bird" the faithful old mule who was pensioned instead of



*The third plant, constructed in 1908, was located at Avenue E and 22nd St., Birmingham. This plant served until the present masterpiece was built.*