

## **E.J. DeSmedt**

E. J. DeSmedt, a Belgian chemist, might be considered the father of asphalt paving in the United States. In 1870, on a street in Newark, New Jersey, he placed the first asphalt pavement in this country, using natural asphalt from the asphalt lake in Trinidad.

Four years later, he laid a similar sheet of asphalt pavement on Grand Place in Washington, D.C., again using Trinidad asphalt. The success of these efforts led to the paving of streets with sheet asphalt in many other cities across the nation, many of which still use this method.

After the paving of Grand Place, Mr. DeSmedt was appointed Inspector of Asphalts and Cements for the District of Columbia.

**Elected: 1965**