

**Solution Mining Research Institute Fall 2022 Conference  
Chester, United Kingdom, 26-27 September 2022**

## **The Cayuga Rock Salt Mine 1915-1925: A Rocky Start for One of the U.S.'s Most Durable Rock Salt Mines**

William M. Goodman, Yalaha, Florida USA

David B. Plumeau, Dryden, New York USA

### **Abstract**

With start of mining by 1922, Cargill's Cayuga Rock Salt Mine marks a century of production this year. The Cayuga Mine, located in Lansing, New York, thus joins Avery Island, Detroit, Retsof, Independent Salt, and Lyons Salt as mines having historically reached this durability threshold. The initial development of the Cayuga Mine during years 1915-1925 proved challenging, but by the later date, business and geologic impediments to full production and transport of salt both by rail and water were overcome.

This paper focuses on that challenging first decade of the Cayuga Mine's history. Key players and events to discuss include Watkins Salt Company, Rock Salt Corporation, John A. Clute and Warren Clute (executives of both aforementioned companies), the sinking of the first shaft to the shallowest salt bed (#1 Salt Bed), the discovery of poor salt quality in the #1 Salt Bed, the resultant suicide of John A. Clute, formation of the Cayuga Rock Salt Company with backing by Watkins Salt, Gannett, Seelye and Fleming Engineering and ice cream manufacturers, exploration and shaft sinking to the deeper, economically viable #4 salt bed, and finally full production of quality salt under the leadership of General Manager, Frank L. Bolton.

**Key words:** rock salt, mining, shaft sinking, Central New York Salt District, Cayuga Rock Salt Co.

©2022 – Solution Mining Institute

Full Paper is Available in the SMRI Library([www.solutionmining.org](http://www.solutionmining.org))