



[Marco Chiapponi \(1854-1929\)](#)  
**Italian Mining Engineer**

### **2016 Inductee from Mining's Past**

Marco Chiapponi was an Italian Mining Engineer who immigrated to Chile and played a crucial role in the resounding success of the Braden Mine, better known as El Teniente.

In the late 1890's Chiapponi examined some inactive mines in the Andes for the Concha y Torro family. When advised of the cost to bring into production, they hired Chiapponi to sell the property. Chiapponi approached William Braden in 1903. Capital was raised and the Braden Copper Co. started developing the deposit. Braden received founder's shares which he split with Chiapponi.

Chiapponi played a major role in the development of the mine. He was contracted to build a road connecting the mine with the railroad and also in freighting equipment to the mine. Over 1000 men were employed in this endeavor. By 1906, the concentrator started production. Production slowly expanded and it was apparent a railroad would be needed. To get additional capital, Braden sold out to the Guggenheims in 1910.

As expansion proceeded, mill recoveries became a serious problem, falling under 50%. Confident that low grade ores could be processed, Chiapponi's last, and perhaps most important act was to suggest to Braden to send ore samples to Minerals Separation Co. in London for

testing. These tests were successful, and Braden became the first mine to successfully use flotation for concentrating copper.

Chiapponi returned to Italy before his death in 1929, leaving remarkable achievements including the development of the world's largest copper mine and the successful application of copper flotation