

# Prospector Crusades for Miners' Rights

021773

There is a deep hole in BVFI's new logging road, just east of Houston, for exploration work on mineral claims.

And if prospector, Ed Westgarde doesn't get his way, that hole just might be there for a long time to come.

The logging road, according to Ed was rammed through mining claims he holds, without being consulted.

The story begins back in 1964 when Mr. Westgarde and some others took a serious interest in Micro Wave Hill as they found mineralized ore there. More exploration was done and in 1965 they became convinced that the promise of copper and silver was indeed very real.

All in all some \$ 50,000 was spent with working on claims. As mineral interests increased, and geologists'

continue exploration on claims he finds are rightfully his. Doing this he stopped further progress on construction of the road, link between Babine Lake and the Houston sawmill.

A letter to the Company prompted a reply which said that the Company holds a letter of consent from the Forestry Department for a right of way upon Crown Lands. No provisions of the Mineral act nor the ownership of any surrounding mineral interests would allow Ed to do any exploration work that would damage or injure the road which would impair the Company's operations.

Ed was further advised to cease all his activities or he would be made fully responsible for any damages.

A letter he received this

where the rights of the individual prospector, which are his by law are threatened.

He has started a whole file on the matter, and may be seen by anybody who wishes to see it, 'I have got nothing to hide.'

Mr. Westgarde related that one day police officers paid him a visit at the claims. Ed asked if they had come on behalf of the lumber Company. They didn't. What they did have was a message for the prospector, advising Ed of a meeting to be held in Houston with the Deputy Ministers of Forests and of Mines to be in attendance. Ed asked that his lawyer be advised of this. The meeting was never held. Ed's lawyer did meet with Company officials but the hole is still there.



further substantiated the hunch 'that there was copper in them thar hills' it came as a shock when 1969 cats and heavy equipment tore a road right through the claims. According to Ed mineralized ore was strewn about, and covered again and the work that had been done with pick and shovel was undone in a matter of minutes.

Ed talked to the construction bosses, but received no satisfaction. Later he placed a barricade across the road to

month from an official of the Department of Mines ordered Mr. Westgarde to cease forth-the mineral showings where it interferes with the Highway which crosses the Ed No. 16 Mineral Claims.

Yet the hole is still there, because Mr. Westgarde holds on tenaciously. He is sure that his case is just 'I'll go to prove it to the highest Court in Canada.' Ed is convinced that this is a case

last week Mines' Department Inspectors went over the property, and Ed had some milling done on his own. He was very pleased with the outcome.

A lumber company spokesman when asked about the matter had a 'no comment'.

Mr. Westgarde is now a crusader for the individual rights of prospectors, and of all people who value their freedom, says Ed.

'Some large mining companies are staking all around and over us' Ed told us, 'but why should I turn it over to the large company and have 'the big ones fight it out, I want it established that a little man's rights are as good as those of a million dollar corporation', and I'll go to any length to prove it.



Mr. Ed. Westgarde discusses mineral ore finds with Mine Inspectors who visited the site some weeks ago.