

Man with a golden touch

Victor's Quartz c.1896 – c.1906

Thomas Rudolph Victor is remembered as one of Australia's greatest prospectors with an unequalled nose for finding gold.

Although his career started as a blanket washer in a crushing mill at Bonnie Doon, he quickly carved a promising prospecting reputation for himself.

Prospecting was a lonely, unforgiving task involving trekking many miles in rough country. Despite this, Victor discovered a particularly rich reef in 1896. It was subsequently named the "Victor Quartz Mine". Within 16 years it had paid 30,000 Pounds in dividends. In 1905 Victor sold his shares and invested in inner city Melbourne real estate which was an extremely successful investment.

Victor was a man of few hobbies and took up golf at the age of 61. Eight years later he had a handicap of ten. Amusingly, he claimed to never have to buy new balls as he could always find his own in the rough.

Never losing his prospecting instincts in retirement he had to be convinced not to climb a 700 foot peak in New Guinea to look over a potential prospect.

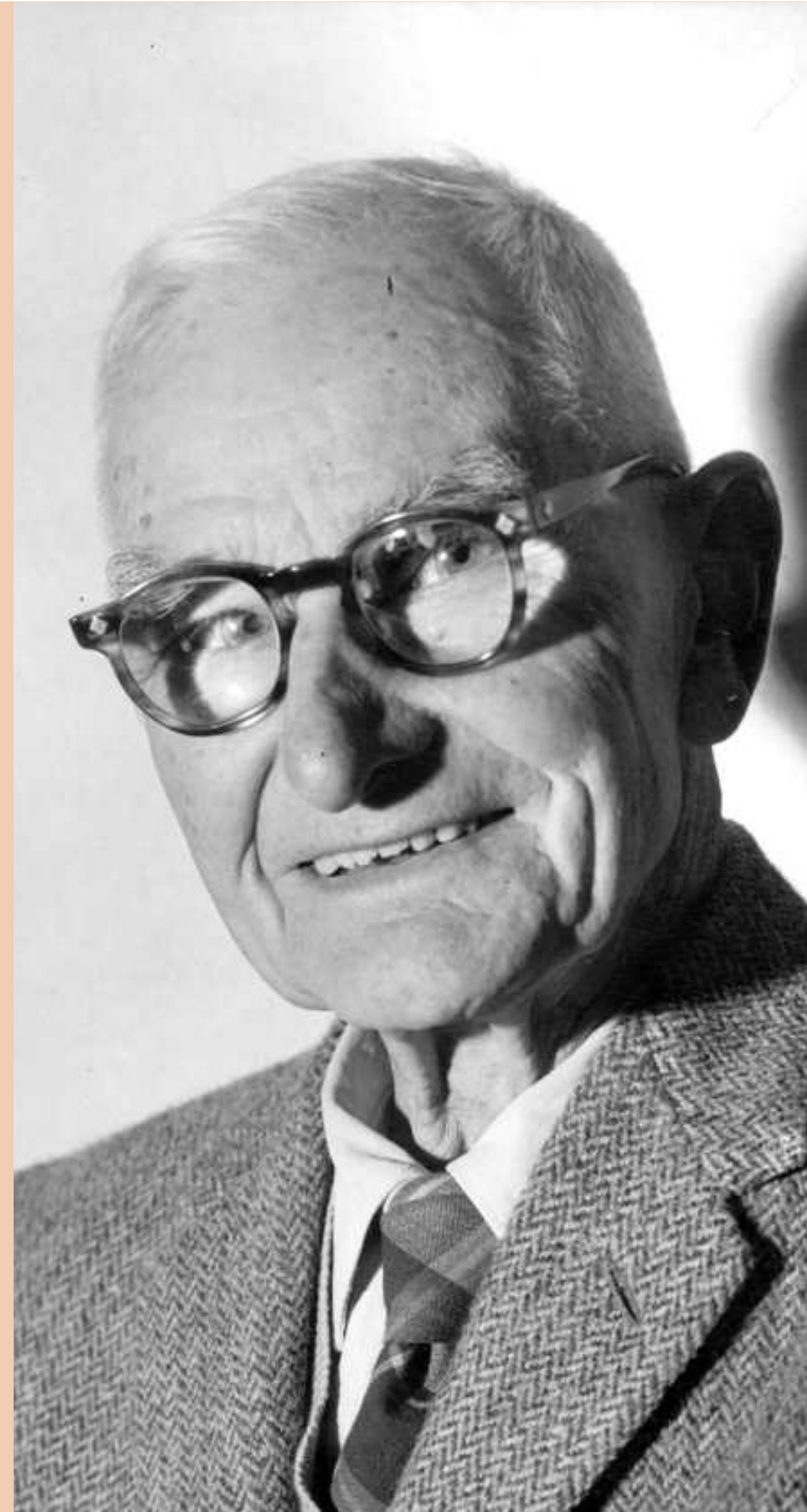


Photo: 1961, courtesy of The Herald & Weekly Times Limited.
Source: Mitchell, J., 1971, "Man with a Golden Touch" The Age, 5 June, Saturday Review- Business.
Rodgers, J.G., 1998, 'Jericho on the Jordan: a Gippsland Goldfields History'

He remained on mining boards until the age of 86. It was often deemed his signature was enough to guarantee any float. One particular site in Fiji which had failed to impress any other prospectors ended up yielding 100 million dollars worth of gold after Victor convinced the company to continue with it.

He died in Melbourne in 1971 aged 96. His influence was crucial in developing the mineral fields in Fiji, New Guinea, the Northern Territory and King Island.

The township

Victor's Quartz township had its own football and cricket teams. When it hosted local sports days it drew people all the way from the Jordan Valley, Aberfeldy and Woods Point.

Other social events were also organised. In 1903 New Years Day was celebrated with athletic activities and ample refreshments in a huge marquee with dancing in the hall finishing off the night.