

An Inventory of Fig Varieties in Australia

Prepared
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for the
Heritage Seed Curators Australia

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The fig originates from the Eastern Mediterranean : Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Palestine and Egypt. It has been grown by people in this region for three to four thousand years. Domesticated varieties developed and spread to Italy, Spain, North Africa, France and the Adriatic coast. Pliny the famous Roman writer of the first century AD described 29 varieties including 'Donatto' which is still grown in Italy today.

Growing Figs

The following paragraphs are largely based on the notes of Graham Brookmans on Figs which can be found at his web site :

<http://web.archive.org/web/20031214172932/http://users.bigpond.com/brookman/figFactSheet.htm>

The fig is a deciduous, sub-tropical tree. It produces best in hot, fairly dry areas similar to the Mediterranean where it originated. But it needs extra water for the root system. The Riverland of South Australia and Victoria provides an ideal climate. Very high summer temperatures (e. g. over 35 degrees) can result in pulpless fruit while cool, damp conditions during ripening will give rise to splitting and fungal attack.

While dormant figs can cope with temperatures down to minus 10 degrees C. However while in leaf they are very susceptible to cold. In the USA most breeding programs have aimed at developing cold tolerant fig varieties but this has not been necessary in Australia. But even here late frosts hurt figs badly. So they need to be placed in locations where late frosts don't take place or where they are protected. Figs need well drained soils; they cannot cope with wet feet. Also they will do better in alkaline soils than in acid soils. They can cope with saline water up to 1000 ppm.

The fig dislikes winds and does best in a sheltered site with fertile soils. Plant figs well away from underground gray water or sewer pipes as the roots will get into the pipes and block them in order to get access to nutrients. Too much nitrogen will lead to excessive leaf growth slower ripening of fruit. The roots are wide spreading, shallow so it is best not to cultivate around fig trees as the roots will be damaged.

In Winter prune each fig to a single trunk of at least 75cm. They sucker very readily but if this is left the tree will become a thicket which is hard to harvest. Generally a light annual pruning for form is all that is required but many Italian migrants in Australia prune their tree back very severely to encourage fruiting. The fruit is borne new wood.

One disease that affects figs is Fig Leaf Mosaic. It reduces vigour but normally does not kill trees.

If you decide to grow figs make sure your bird netting arrangements are of a high standard. Birds are enormous fig-lovers. The fig seed in bird droppings will germinate quite readily. I've seen seedling figs trees in a number of gardens in Adelaide and surrounding areas.

The original wild figs depend on the fig wasp for pollination and seed set. Some of the cultivated figs such as Sari Lop and Smyrna still rely on the fig wasp. However most cultivated fig varieties will self pollinate. The trees grown from seed of such fruit will closely resemble the parent tree. However if fig wasps have been present in the fruit and pollinated it the resultant seedlings can be quite different

Most figs often produce two crops annually; the early picking, often in about December is known as the Breba crop (these are frequently big fruit) and the later picking is the Higo or Main crop. Different varieties produce better or worse Breba crops and Higo crops.

Figs in Australia

There are 112 varieties listed in the following Inventory. The first figs came to Australia in 1788 with the First Fleet. Cuttings of 'Large Blue' and 'Long White' were brought to NSW on the first fleet. Officers sent to the new colony also bought fig cuttings when the fleet stopped at the Canary Islands on the way to Australia. Keith Smith notes that there were 'Canary Island' type figs growing in Governor King's orchards at Parramatta West of Sydney in the 1840's.

During the later part of the 19th. Century, especially after the gold rushes, there was great uncertainty about which cultivars of fruit would succeed in the Australian colonies. In response fruit nurserymen made concerted effort to import as many different varieties of fruits from the rest of the world as quickly as possible. Cuttings of a large numbers of fig cultivars were imported from all over the world. In 1873 the fruit nurseryman John J Cole of Richmond near

Melbourne in Victoria, offered 26 varieties of figs that had already been grown and fruited, plus another 9 varieties that were 'new' and so unproven in the new colony. John Goodman at Bairnsdale in East Gippsland a wide range 29 varieties for sale with no descriptions at all. in the 1910 Wholesale Catalogue.

Among these varieties were Smyrna type figs which needs insect pollination to set fruit. This lead to the Fig wasp being brought to Australia. It was introduced at the instigation of Baron Von Mueller, the director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens in the 1870's & 1880's.

During the 1870's till the 1890's the Victorian Horticultural Society (later the Royal Victorian Horticultural Society, RVHS) arranged for the import of a large number of fruit varieties. Approximately 75 fig varieties were among these shipments. This program was funded by RHSV membership. Many of these members were nurserymen but others were enthusiastic amateur 'gentlemen' who wished to have prior access to rare varietal material. The trees were firstly established at the Society's trial gardens at Burnley close to Melbourne. Later when the trees were established scion material was distributed to members. George Neilson's three Reports of 1873. 1874 & 1875 list all the fruits imported and lists the cultivars that had been established. These gardens were the source for many of the fig trees later introduced into nursery catalogues around Australia. Unfortunately we have no records of who received such scion material, where it was planted and if it survived. Many of these figs varieties are now presumed 'lost'. But it is possible that some of them were alternative names (AKA's) for varieties still in existence in Australia or overseas.

The First World War had a huge impact on the nursery trade. There was a severe shortage of workers especially in rural areas, as about half a million men joined the Australian armed forces. Probably demand for fruit trees dropped also as the war disrupted farm exports. By 1916 there were only 6 fig varieties offered in the Goodmans catalogue. This diversity was never recovered. In the period after the War the focus for all orcharding changed to growing fruit varieties which would keep and could be exported to Great Britain. Figs being primarily a soft fresh fruit became mainly a garden fruit in Australia. In 1934 Goodmans offered just five varieties of fig. In 1989 four varieties were being sold.

But other fig varieties were being grown. Since the 1890's Italian, Greek, Spanish Serbian, Macedonian and other immigrants from Mediterranean countries have brought fig varieties to Australia. This process increased during the 1950's and 1960's. But these cultivars were largely smuggled in and did not go through the normal quarantine processes. And there is a strong reluctance by migrants who have done this discuss what varieties they are growing. Frequently these varieties came from home villages and have no published established variety names.

During the early 20th. century state governments established research fruit orchards. One of the functions of these orchards was to be repositories of a wide range of fruit cultivars. The

monograph by R. Ikin of the CSIRO published in 1974 reflects this effort to preserve a range of horticultural diversity. The South Australian fig repository at Loxton reportedly had some 17 varieties in it in 1994. I say reportedly because the state government then decided as a cost cutting measure to close down this and other heritage orchards. The figs were bulldozed and the land sold off.

Fortunately before the destruction was complete members of the South Australian Rare Fruits Association were invited to take cuttings to propagate on the fig varieties at this orchard. Other varieties from a government orchard in Alice Springs in the Northern Territory have also become part of this collection. Currently members of the S. A. Rare Fruits group have some 45 fig varieties growing in the gardens and orchards. But many of these are undocumented and undescribed. A list of some varieties was published in the rare Fruits Group Newsletter 3 years ago. The Association hopes in time to build up a database of information about the varieties being held by members. John Rance of the SA Rare Fruits Association has especially helped greatly with this Fig Inventory by sharing information about varieties being grown by the group. So has Graham Brookman of the Permaculture inspired farm called 'The Food Forest' at Gawler in South Australia. Graham offers a number of fig varieties for sale that are unavailable elsewhere in Australia.

In the early 1990's the East Gippsland Organic Association started a project to preserve heritage fruit varieties. This started a major effort to preserve heritage apple varieties but was expanded later to take in fruits like pears, plums and figs. This effort included a series of grafting days every winter in Victoria. After 1997 this effort was sponsored by the "Heritage fruits Group" of Permaculture Melbourne and lead to many rare fruit varieties including rare figs being preserved and propagated within the Permaculture movement across Australia. In fact it is among permaculturally inclined growers and gardeners that the desire to preserve heritage varieties is strongest. As part of this work a list of heritage fig varieties were compiled by Permaculture Melbourne's "Heritage fruits Group". This list was then placed on the Permaculture Melbourne web site. All the references in this inventory to varieties being grown by the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria in 1896 at Burnley come from the fig list on the Permaculture Melbourne web site.

In 1900's the Museum of Victoria in Melbourne commissioned the creation of sets of wax replicas of fruit varieties grown in Victoria at the time. These wax replicas sets still exist and are in the custody of the Science Works Museum in the West Melbourne suburbs of Spottswood. Among them is a collection of 4 painted wax replica figs which reputedly are very accurate. The fig list compiled by the Permaculture Melbourne web site also incorporates this information. The references to wax models in this inventory of fig varieties re based on this work as I have not been able to see them myself.

One cause for optimism is that fig trees once established can be extremely long lived. For example the oldest known fig tree in the world was planted in Cuzco in 1540 by Pizarro when the Inca empire was destroyed by the Spanish Conquistadors. A fig tree planted in the

grounds of Lambeth Palace by Cardinal Poole in 1525 at the time of Henry VIIIth. lived into the 1900's. In South Australia figs planted in the 1880's at Martindale Hall near Mintaro have survived without care since the 1950's. It is extremely probable that there are other examples of these heritage fig varieties to be found in abandoned orchards and in old gardens around the Australian countryside. It is a matter of looking, if possible identifying them, and taking scion cuttings!

Just recently I visited a Permaculture garden in a southern suburb of Adelaide. There in the backyard was a huge magnificent fig tree planted according to the owner, many decades ago. The fruit reportedly is dark skinned and quite small, but it was also very distinctive in it's growth habit: low and spreading with very short internodes between the branches. Perhaps in time it will be identified! That is one of the practical benefits that hope will flow from this exercise.

Bill Hankin

HSCA

17/6/2001

A Bois Jasper ***Grown by***
the RHSV in the
1890's at Burnley.
Introduced commercially
by Goodmans in their
Wholesale Fruit
Catalogue of 1909 to
1913 No description.
Lost

Adam Introduced by the RHSV in the 1890's at Burnley. Listed in the Law Sumner & Co catalogue of 1915. Sold commercially by Brunnings as an "early good dark fig with a large breba crop". Sold by Goodman's until the early 1950's. Ikin states that it was in the Victorian, Western Australian and NSW State fruit Collections in 1974. Rance says of Adam that it is an early 'San Pedro' type fig needing pollination from the fig wasp. The with good 'breba' crop and 'higo' crops. The fruit is 'red to purple and the flesh amber to reddish with a full sweet flavour'. Source : SA Rare Fruits Association.

Agen ***Listed by George***
Neilson in 1874 as
being grown at the

***RVHS gardens at
Burnley. No
description. Lost***

Adriatic (AKA : Fragola, Fico Di Fragola, Strawberry Fig, Verdone, White Adriatic) Origin central Italy. Breba crop light and good late crop of small to medium, skin greenish, flesh strawberry colored fruits with an open eye. The fruit can split otherwise a superb eating fig. Planted for market and for drying. Large vigorous tree leafs out early; subject to frost damage. Prune to force new growth. Railtons catalogue of 1880' states that variety ripens in February in Victoria. Has been available commercially in Australia since the 1880's and is still available from nurseries. Glowinski states that this variety is better suited to warmer areas and is used mostly for drying. Widely available commercial variety

Angelique Noir _____ ***Listed in***
***the Report by George
Neilson for the RVHS
gardens at Burnley in
1875. Offered by C W
Wyatt in 1874 with
the note " rather
small ". Lost.***

Aubique Blanches _____ ***Grown***
***by the RHSV in the
1890 ' s at Burnley.
Lost.***

Aubique Noir _____ ***Grown by***
***the RHSV in the
1890 ' s at Burnley.
Lost.***

Belle Dame Blanche
***Goodmans Wholesale
Fruit Catalogue of
1910 No description.
Lost***

Betada _____ ***Listed by George***
***Neilson in 1874 as
being grown at the
RVHS gardens at***

**Burnley. No
description Lost.**

Black Bourgassotte _____ :

**Listed in D A Crichton
and described as a
"very early French
variety with medium
sized roundish oblate
fruit.. Skin quite
black and thickly
covered with a blue
bloom, cracks in lines
when fully ripe. Flesh
deep red, firm, syrupy
and highly flavored.
The tree is upright
and vigorous and
prolific. " Offered in
Goodmans Fruit
Catalogue from 1915 to
1919. Described as an
excellent dessert fig,
medium broader than
long with a black skin
and dark red pulp.
Still sold by
Brunnings in 1920
(?) Now seems to be
lost.**

' s

Black Genoa (AKA San Pedro) This fig needs to be pollinated to set good crops of fruit. A J Downing says that the "fruit is long obovate with dark purple skin becoming nearly black. The flesh is bright red ; excellent flavour. A strong growing tree." Offered by Goodmans in 1903 catalogue & still offered for sale by Daley's Nursery a popular backyard variety. According to Ikin in the NSW & Victorian state fruit collections in 1974.

Black Ischia (AKA Blue Ischia, Nero) Named after the Italian Mediterranean island of Ischia where this variety originated. Offered by John C Cole in 1867. Described as having medium sized fruit with deep purple, almost black skins..Flesh red, sweet and luscious.. A very handsome fig ". Crichton describes it as "medium sized turbinate fruit, flattened at the top. Skin deep purple black and flesh deep red and sweet.. ripening a little after Black Genoa ."Offered by Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1900.Offered by W C Grey in 1907. Listed by

Ikin in the NSW & Victorian state fruit collections in 1974. James Railton catalogue of 1880's states that this variety ripens in the second week of January in Victoria.

Black Mission _____ (AKA

***Beers Black,
Californian Large
Black, Franciscan,
Mission, Verdone)
Originally from the
Balearic Islands in
Spain. Introduced into
England in 1727.
Introduced into
California by the
Franciscan missionary
Fr. Junipero Serra who
planted it at the San
Diego mission in 1769.
Fruits all-over black
purple, elongated,
Flesh watermelon to
pink, fairly good
taste. Easily dried at
home. The brebas are
prolific, & fairly
rich. The tree grows
very large and should
not be pruned after
reaching maturity.
Widely available
commercially in the USA
but no known source in
Australia.***

Black Provence _____ (AKA

***Black Marseilles)
Grown by the RHSV in
the 1890 ' s at
Burnley. D Crichton
describes this as " a
French variety with
roundish oblong fruit
rather below medium***

size. Skin brownish black. Flesh red, tender very sweet and luscious.. ripens rather early The tree is hardy and bears prolifically ". Offered in Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911; Sold by Law Sumner & Co in 1915. Probably lost.

Blanche Royale Known

only from the wax replica at the Science Works Museum in Victoria. Not referred to in any other literature.

Blue Provence Rare fig variety offered for sale in Australia occasionally. Offered in Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911 to 1915. Bunnings catalogue of 1916 describes it as having large fruit with a true blue skin colour, ripening late. According to Ikin in the NSW, fruit collection in 1974. Rance says that it is mid season variety with " squat pyriform shaped fruit with a violet skin showing prominent ribs, an open eye and blue tinged/purplish meat with red seeds... Very soft and sweet... The tree is large and vigorous with exceptional large ornamental leaves. "

Bluet Goodmans

Wholesale Fruit Catalogue of 1909 to 1914. No description. Lost

Bondance Precoce

(Possibly a misspelling of "Abondance Precoce".. or Early Abundance") Grown by the RHSV in the 1890 ' s at Burnley. Lost.

Bordeaux (AKA :

Violette, Violete De Bordeaux, Grosse Rouge De Bourdeaux ?)

Described by Crichton as a " desirable French variety with large long pyriform fruit. The skin black and thickly covered with bloom and when dead ripe splits in lines. flesh yellowish red, tender juicy and sweet. tree is robust and a moderately good bearer." This variety was offered by W C Grey in 1907. and described differently :

' large

jet black fruit with deep red pulp of excellent quality." No known sources and probably lost in Australia. Still available from Davis California, USA.

Bourjassotte Blanche

Grown by the RHSV in the 1890 Burnley. Lost.

' s at

Bourjassotte Gris

Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911. Fruit 5 cm in length with greenish violet skin darker at the apex.. The flesh is red. Facciola notes

that this variety is popular in the UK as it responds well to forcing. . No source in Australia but is available still in the USA.

Bourjassotte Noir

Grown

by the RHSV in the 1890 ' s at Burnley. Lost.

Brown Ischia

(AKA :

Chestnut) Crichton says this variety was : " an excellent Italian variety with medium sized roundish fruit, which ripens early. Skin light chestnut brown. Flesh reddish purple, very sweet and highly flavored. Fruit liable to crack and burst in wet seasons.." Offered by John C Cole in 1967. Described as having large fruit with purple flesh and chestnut coloured skin .. Very luscious. very superior fig. Offered by Goodmans Fruit Catalogue from 1911 but dropped in 1915. Lost.

Brown Turkey (AKA's : Aubicon, Aubique Noire, Black Spanish, Blue Burgundy, Brown Naples, California Large Black, Ever bearing, Negro Largo, San Piero, Brown Italian, Large Black, Lee's Perpetual) Originally from Provence in France. Fruit is pyriform fruit with dark brown skin and red juicy flesh. Very hardy and gives 2 crops annually. Medium, skin is purplish brown. Good

flavor. Best when fresh. Light breba crop. Small, hardy, vigorous tree. Prune severely for a heavier main crop. Listed by Ikin in all the state fruit collections in 1974. Railtons catalogue of 1880's states that this variety ripens from the end of February to the middle of March in Victoria. A popular commercial variety in Australia widely sold.

Brunswick : (AKA
Clementine, Madonna, Magnolia, Black Naples)Variety grown in NSW 1890 ' s According to Goodmans catalogue of 1917 " Produces large long fruit with violet brown skin. Grown in Texas, USA, since the 1840 ' s under the name Magnolia because it resembles a magnolia (?) Used for drying. The flesh is reddish brown... a fine fig ". According to Ikin in the W A state fruit collection in 1974. Available from Davis California, USA.

Bull ' s No 1 : Listed by George Neilson in 1875 as being grown at the RVHS gardens at Burnley. No description Probably a UK variety. Lost.

Cape White (AKA, Blanche,)An early maturing medium sized fig; ripens in January in Adelaide in SA. Has a green skin and cream flesh. Compact tree. The fruit is used for jam. Listed in Ikin in the NSW, Victorian and Qld. fruit collections in 1974.

Capri Roeding No. 1 Listed by Ikin in the South Australian state fruit collection in 1974. No Description available. Also available from Davis California, USA.

Capri Roeding No. 2 Listed by Ikin in the South Australian state fruit collection in 1974. No Description available. Also available from Davis California, USA.

Capri Roeding No. 3 Listed by Ikin in the South Australian state fruit collection in 1974. No Description available. Also available from Davis California, USA.

Capri Simmons Listed by Ikin in the Western Australian state fruit collection in 1974. No Description available.

Castle Kennedy

 A UK fig

variety that derives its name from Castle Kennedy in Scotland. Probably grown as a glass house variety in the UK. Offered by John J Cole in 1867 . Very large fruit with pale brown skinned fruit.. flesh pale and opaline : A very large and handsome fig and remarkably early. "Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911. Railtons catalogue of 1880 states that variety ripens at the end of December in Victoria. No sources in Australia or the USA; presumed lost.

Celeste (AKA Blue Celeste, Honey Fig, Sugar Fig, Violette) Small to medium fruit with light violet to violet-brown skin; flesh reddish amber. Very sweet, usually dried. Light breba crop. Tightly closed eye. Small, productive & hardy. Available commercially in the USA and available in limited way in Australia.

Chemeghour

 Grown by the RHSV in the 1890 at Burnley. Probably a French variety. Lost ?

Clementine**Grown by**

***the RHSV in the
1890 ' s at Burnley.
Lost***

Col Di Signora Nera

***Listed in the Report
by George Neilson for
the RVHS gardens at
Burnley in 1875.***

***Offered in Goodmans
Fruit Catalogue of
1900 ' s to 1914.***

***Described by Crichton
as an Italian fig of
high quality, " used
for drying. Has medium
sized pyriform fruit
with a long neck..
thick yellowish green
skin thickly covered
with bloom.. Flesh
deep red, firm, syrupy
and highly flavored..
Tree robust and
prolific.." Lost.***

Conadria (Red Conadria) Bred by Prof. Ira Condit at Riverside in the early 1950's by crossing White Adriatic and a Capri type fig; introduced in 1956. The fruit is pale green, medium sized and has strawberry red flesh which is mildly sweet. Mainly used as an excellent drying fig. Has a light breba crop. The tree is vigorous, tends to excessive growth under irrigation. Does best in hot climates. Offered in Australia by Birdwood Nursery in Nambour in Qld in 1996.

Datte**Listed in the**

***Report by George
Neilson for the RVHS
gardens at Burnley in
1875. Not mentioned
elsewhere. Lost***

Deana : Commercial US variety that is not widely available in Australia. . A late large fruiting

variety with light green/yellow skin and amber coloured flesh.

De L'Archipel (AKA's : Archipel, Blanche in the USA, Italian Honey fig, Lattarula, Lemon, Neveralla, Osborn's Prolific, White Marseilles) Offered by John J Cole in 1867. Described as having fruit which was above medium size with pale greenish yellow skin and opaline flesh "remarkably rich and sugary.. One of the most delicious figs in cultivation" A slow growing, dense, hardy tree for short-season, cool-summer areas. Has a light breba crop. Offered by Goodmans Nursery from 1890's. Variety grown in NSW 1890's. Still available commercially in the USA. Medium to large, skin is dark reddish brown, flesh golden & very sweet. A good fresh eating fig with a light breba crop and heavy main crop. The tree is upright & will grow in the shade. Ripens late. Does well in cooler climates but not in warm areas. Still available from members of the South Australian Rare Fruits Association. NB: In the USA the variety named 'Blanche' is noted as having a lemon flavour in the flesh but this characteristic is not mentioned in the Australian literature.

De Lipari _____ **Listed by**
George Neilson in 1874
as being grown at the
RVHS gardens at
Burnley. No description
Lost

De Quartre Saisons _____
Grown by the RHSV in
the 1890 ' s at
Burnley. Lost

De Sainte Jeane _____ **Grown by**
the RHSV in the
1890 ' s at Burnley.
Lost

Doctor Hogg _____ **' s Black**
Grown by the RHSV in
the 1890 ' s at
Burnley. Lost

Doree _____ **Listed by George**
Neilson in 1874 as
being grown at the
RVHS gardens at
Burnley. Sold by Law

Somner & Co in 1915.

No description

. Lost

Desert King (AKA

Charlie, King) A San Pedro type fig

originally introduced in 1930 in California.

The fruit is large

pyraform with deep

green skin. The flesh

is strawberry red.

Sweet, delicious fresh

or dried. Need to be

pollinated,

' ' to have good fruit

set. The tree is

vigorous, hardy and

does well in cool

areas. even growing in

coastal British

Columbia. Commercially

available in the USA

but no known sources

in Australia.

' Caprified

D ' Or de Laura Variety

mentioned only by

Crichton and not

listed in any

available catalogues .

Crichton says it was a

French variety .."

excellent for drying ..

with oblong under

medium sized fruit with

yellowish green skin.

Lost

**Dottato****(AKA :*****Kadota in the USA ,)***

A very old Italian heritage variety praised by the Roman writer Pliny (23-79 AD). Fruit is medium sized with yellowish green skin; the flesh is amber, tinged pink at center; rich flavour. Small breba crop but good main crop. The tree is upright and needs an annual pruning to slow it ' s growth. Does better in a hot, dry climate. Commercially available in the USA but no known sources in Australia.

Dwarf Prolific***Listed in***

the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875. Not mentioned elsewhere. Lost.

Early Violet***Listed by***

John J Cole in 1867 as a small;; fruited variety with brownish red skin and red flesh of good flavour.. "Much too small to cultivate except for variety." Was grown in the 19th. century in the UK as a greenhouse variety. Also available from Davis California, USA.

Excel Bred by W.B. Storey at Riverside, California in 1975. The fruit is early bearing, large with yellow skin & flesh light amber. Fruit has no neck, is blocky, very sweet and does not split. Excellent, all-purpose fig. Light breba crop. The tree is vigorous, and in California over vigorous. Was trialed at Narara Arboretum, in NSW. and is now sold by Daley's Nursery in Kyogle in NSW and is by their account, well-adapted to subtropical conditions in Australia. Good all- purpose fig.

Figure D ' Or **Grown by the** ' s at
RHSV in the 1890 Burnley. Lost

Flanders Bred by Ira Condit at Riverside, California in 1960's from a seedling of White Adriatic. Introduced in 1965. Has medium fruit that does not split with a long neck; skin is green purple with white flecks. The flesh is amber with a strong, fine flavor. Excellent all-purpose fruit. Good breba crop. The tree is said (by CRFG) to be vigorous in California but needing 'no great pruning'. Listed by Baxter as a new fig variety in Australia being trialed at the Narara Arboretum, NSW in 1990. Currently available from Graham Brookman, Gawler SA but he lists the Flanders variety he offers as having "green skin and pink flesh" so it is probably a different variety.

Florentine (AKA ' s :
Italian Honey) Green skinned and honey coloured sweet flesh. Grown as a container variety in the Eastern states of the USA. Available commercially in the USA but not in

Australia.

**Gourande Rouge Listed in
Goodman ' s catalogue of
1909. No description.
Lost.**

**Gourandi Grown by the
RHSV in the 1890 ' s at
Burnley. Lost**

**Grossale Grown by the
RHSV in the 1890 ' s at
Burnley. Lost**

**Grosse Blanches De
Marseilles Grown by the
RHSV in the 1890 ' s at
Burnley. Lost . Grosse**

**Monstreuse De Lipari
Listed in the Report
by George Neilson for
the RVHS gardens at
Burnley in 1875.
Offered by W C Grey in
1907. Described as
having very large fruit
with brown skin and
red flesh of good
flavour. There is a wax
replica fig called "
Grosse Monstreuse " at
the Science Works
Museum in Victoria. A
variety called simple
" Monstreuse" is also
available from Davis
California, USA. and
this may be the same.**

**Grosse Vert e Listed
in the Report by**

George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875. Large yellowish green skinned fruit with red flesh; very late : Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1921. Railtons catalogue of 1880 states that variety ripens in February in Victoria.

Hill 's Large Brown

Grown by the RHSV in the 1890 ' s at Burnley. Lost

Jerusalem _____ Grown by the RHSV in the 1890 ' s at Burnley. Lost

Large Black Genoa Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911. Still offered by Goodmans 1988 Catalogue. Listed by Ikin in the Qld. state fruit collection in 1974. No description.

La Royale _____ Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1909 to 1911. Sold by Law Sumner in 1915. No description. Lost

Large Blue _____ Offered by John J Cole in 1860 ' s. Tree has large leaves and is handsome.. Fruit is "above medium size with bluish purple skin and purple flesh.. but not richly flavored. " Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS

gardens at Burnley in 1875.

Large White Genoa Round large, obovate fruit with thin pale yellow skin. The flesh is and well flavored. Listed by Ikin in the Victorian & Western Australian state fruit collections in 1974.

Longue Blanche de

Provence _____ ***Listed in the***

Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875. Not mentioned elsewhere

Mackenwood _____ ***Grown by the***

RHSV in the 1890 Burnley. Lost

' s at

Madeline _____ ***Railtons***

catalogue of 1880 states that this variety has small pale yellow fruit that are very rich ripening at the end of December in Victoria. Grown by the RHSV in the 1890 Burnley. The Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911 lists the variety but with .no description. Lost

' s

' s at

Malta _____ ***(AKA Small***

Brown) Described by Crichton as a " a small richly flavored variety of doubtful origin suitable for drying. The fruit will hang on the tree till it ' s gets shriveled,

when it becomes a pleasant sweetmeat. The fruit is roundish and ripens late. Skin pale brown. Flesh pale brown and very sweet.. tree fair, vigorous and bears freely.. "
Was introduced into Australia by the RHSV in the 1880

' s.

Martinique Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875. Not mentioned elsewhere. Lost

Minorca Bianca Offered by W C Grey in 1907. described as having medium sized fruit with a green skin.. fine quality.

Monaco Blanche Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875. Variety called Monaco Bianco listed as growing at Burnley in 1896 is probably the same variety. Not mentioned elsewhere. Lost

Mouissoune : Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in

1875. Not mentioned elsewhere. Lost

Negronne (AKA

Nagronne ?) Listed by George Neilson in 1874 as being grown at the RVHS gardens at Burnley. No description. A variety of the same name is described by Whealy as having " small black fruit with excellent tasting red pulp. of good flavour fresh or dried. " Still available in the USA used for drying or fresh. No known source in Australia.

Negro D ' Espayne Listed

by George Neilson in 1874 as being grown at the RVHS gardens at Burnley. No description. Lost.

Nepolitaine Listed by

Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Nigra Listed by

Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Oblique Blanche

**Goodmans Fruit
Catalogue of 1909 to
1914. No description.
Lost**

Oeil De Perdrix Listed

**by George Neilson in
1874 as being grown at
the RVHS gardens at
Burnley. Still being
grown there in 1896.
No description. Lost**

Palane Listed in the

**Report by George
Neilson for the RVHS
gardens at Burnley in
1874 . Still being
grown there in 1896.
Listed in Goodmans
Fruit Catalogues of
1909 to 1914. No
description. Lost**

Panachee (Striped

**Tiger, Tiger) Small to
medium, skin is
greenish yellow with
dark green strips,
flesh strawberry, dry
but sweet. Best fresh.
No breba crop. Requires
long, warm growing
season. Ripens late.
Available commercially
in the USA but not yet
introduced into
Australia.**

Peau Dure (AKA

**Peldure) Listed only
by Crichton in 1893.
" A French variety**

said to be admirably well adapted to for drying. Fruit medium sized, pyriform, with a short neck. Skin pale yellowish green. Flesh pale red, sweet firm and rich."

Poileus Blanche

Goodmans Wholesale Fruit Catalogue of 1909 to 1914. No description. Lost.

Preston Prolific : Modern late maturing fig variety sold since the 1960's in Australia. The fruit is large with a hairy green skin. Flesh is creamy white and juicy according to Daley's but amber according to Baxter. Matures mid to late season. The tree is vigorous and according to Baxter, hard to pick. Listed by Ikin in the Vic, & NSW state fruit collections in 1974.

Recourse Noir

Listed by

Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Rocardi

Listed by

Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Royale Blanche

Listed

in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1874. Still there in 1896. Not mentioned elsewhere. Lost

Royale Vineyard Listed by George

Neilson in 1874 as being grown at the RVHS gardens at Burnley. Still there in 1896. No description Probably a UK variety. Lost.

Saint Dominique Violet

Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875. Still being grown there in 1896. Large dark violet fruit.. listed in Goodmans Fruit Catalogues of 1905 - 11. Sold by Law Sumner in 1915. here is a wax replica fig called " Saint Dominique Violet " at the Science Works Museum in Victoria. Lost

Saint John Listed by

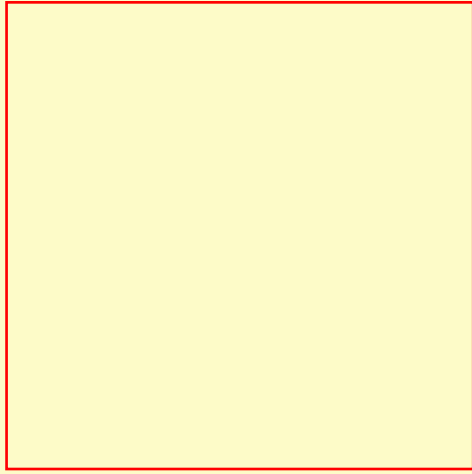
Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources. Lost.

Sari Lop A traditional

Smyrna type fig grown for many thousands of years in the area around the Meander valley. A drying type fig drying to a light straw colour.

Singleton Perpetual

Listed by Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.



Smyrna (AKA Calimyrna in the USA, especially California)

Originally a traditional Greek type from the Meander valley near Ephesus/ Smyrna in what is now Turkey. Facciola says of Smyrna that it is a 'class' of fig not a specific cultivar. " Cultivars of this class set virtually no breba crop. The second crop develops on the current season's growth and reaches full maturity only when the flowers are pollinated by the fig wasp and the ovules develop into fertile seeds adding a nutty flavour to the meat and pulp." Figs of this type are distinguished by the large eye in the base of the immature fruit. Fruit is yellow skinned with amber to light strawberry flesh. Offered by Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911. Also listed by Ikin as being in the NSW , South Australia & Vic. state fruit collections in 1974.

Spanish Dessert : Another variety that was in the SA collection at Loxton and was bulldozed in the 1990's. Scion was rescued by SA Rare Fruits Association members and propagated. A late maturing spectacular variety with dark purple skin and dark red flesh. Fruits over a long season from March to May. Delicious tasting.

Tena (AKA : Teem, Col Di Signora Bianca) Grown by the RHSV in the 1890's at Burnley under the name 'Col Di Signora Bianca'. A mid season variety with a good breba crop. The fruit is small to medium and oblate in shape; skin light greenish yellow and flesh amber to rose. Used fresh or dried. Rance says of : "The tree is a strong grower with ascending branches and spur type growth; unusually long narrow deeply divided leaves.

Toulousienne

Listed by

George Neilson in 1874 as being grown at the RVHS gardens at Burnley. No description. but

clearly from Southern France. Lost

Trifere Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911. No description. Lost.

Trojan Listed by Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Vermissique Listed by Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Verdal De Valence Listed by George Neilson in 1874 as being grown at the RVHS gardens at Burnley. Still being grown there in 1896 under the name "Verdal de Valencesses." No description. Lost

Verdognola Listed by Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896..Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1909 - 1914. No description. Lost.

Verte (AKA Green Ischia) A late season type with small to medium fruit. The fruit has no neck and is a tough green/yellowish skin and dark seedless strawberry flesh. The fruit does not split but may shrivel when over ripe.; does well in short summer areas.

Violet Grosse Offered by

John J Cole in 1867 in Victoria. Had large oblong violet purple skinned fruit with red flesh.. "A good and handsome fig ." Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875.

White Bourgassotte

Offered by John J Cole in 1867. Medium sized fruit with greenish yellow skin.. flesh reddish.. sweet and pleasantly flavored. Listed in the Report by George Neilson for the RVHS gardens at Burnley in 1875.

Offered by Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1911 with no description. Delisted in 1916. There is a wax replica of the White Bourgasotte at the Science Works Museum in Victoria.

White Genoa : (AKA White Marseilles) Large pyriform fruit. with skin that is greenish yellow mottled with white; flesh is amber yellow with a mild flavour; good fresh or dried. Light breba and main crops. Tree upright, requires constant annual pruning. Does better in cooler areas with fruit continuing to ripen even after first frosts. The eye of the fruit is relatively large allowing dried fruit beetles which are common in warmer areas, to get into the fruit " One of the best varieties for all purposes." Offered in 1860-1870's by John J Cole and by Goodmans Catalogues. Railtons catalogue of 1880's states that this variety ripens in the first week of January in Victoria.

White Ischia (AKA Yellow Ischia) Listed by Richton in 1893 as an " Italian variety with small roundish fruit.. ripening late. Skin pale yellowish green and flesh reddish purple. Small tree

bearing early and prolific.." Sold by Law Sumner in 1915. Rance describes this as an early variety with a small breba crop and a good main crop used for preserves and pickles. Grown in UK in pots because the tree is compact and it can be forced so as to give three crops a year.

White Pacific

Listed by

Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Sold in Goodmans Fruit Catalogue of 1909 to 1913. No description. Lost

White Provence

Offered

by John J Cole in 1867. Has large light brown skinned fruit, ..." much lighter than White Genoa, pale flesh, very sweet and rich." Growing at Burnley in 1896. Still sold by Law Sumner in 1915. Lost.

William ' s Prolific

Listed by Barraclough as being grown at Burnley in 1896. Not listed in any other sources.

Yellow Ischia Offered by John J

Cole in his 1867 catalogue the fruit is small with pale greenish yellow skin, purple flesh.. and very rich and luscious.. a great bearer with the second crop heaviest. Offered by W C Grey in 1907.

***Confused description
but probably meant
that it had large
fruit with yellow skin
and red flesh. Lost.***

A special note of thanks : My experience of growing figs is very limited. This inventory could not have been completed without help from John Rance and Andrew Thompson of the SA Rare Fruits Society and Graham Brookman of "The Food Forest" in Gawler, SA. Thanks also to Graeme George of the Permaculture Melbourne 'Heritage Fruits Group".

Sources:

Paul Baxter & Glen Tankard, The Complete Guide to Growing Fruit In Australia MacMillan , Melbourne, 1990

R M Brooks & HP Elmo, Register of New Fruit & Nut Varieties UC Press 1972

California Rare Fruit Growers website in 2001

Graham & Annmarie Brookman of "The Food Forest" of Gawler in South Australia. Fig list on their Web site: <http://web.archive.org/web/20031214172932/http://users.bigpond.com/brookman/figFactSheet.htm>

John Brunnings & Sons Descriptive Catalogue of Fruit Trees Somerville, Undated but probably 1916.

John C Coles, Catalogue of Fruits 1867-1874

D A Crichton, The Australasian Fruit Culturalist Melbourne, 1893

Daley's Fruit Nursery (Kyogle, NSW) web site. <http://www.daleysfruit.com.au/>

Graeme George & Neil Barraclough Heritage Figs List A list of varieties of figs compiled from the Goodmans Fruit catalogues of the early 1900's, the Brunnings catalogue of 1916 and records of the RHSV fig Collection at Burnley in the 1896. Available on the web at : <http://web.archive.org/web/20031214172932/http://home.vicnet.net.au/~pcmelb/figs.htm>

CJ Goodmans, Fruit Catalogues 1900-1989

Fig Inventory, University of California at Davis, Sept. 2000, published in PDF format at : <http://web.archive.org/web/20031214172932/http://www.ars-grin.gov/ars/PacWest/Davis/ficus.html>

(This lists 120 fig varieties held at UCLA Davis and available to interested parties. Many are breeding lines that have been developed in the USA over the past 100 years. Some are heritage varieties no longer available elsewhere.

NB : fig scion cannot now be imported into Australia without the material going through quarantine to ensure that diseases or insects are not introduced.)

W G Grey, Fruit Catalogue of 1907 , Allwood Nursery Diamond Creek in Victoria. Lists 9 varieties of which 4 were perhaps unique to this nursery

A J Downing, The Fruits & Fruit Trees Of America John Wiley 2nd Edition 1885

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Louis Glowinski The Complete Book of Growing Fruit in Australia Lothian 1992

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R. Ikin Ph.D. Varieties of Fruit trees, Berry Fruit, Nuts and Vines in Australia. Australian Government Publishing Service Canberra, 1974

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Noth American Fruit Explorers Fig List. See : <http://web.archive.org/web/20031214172932/http://www.nafex.org/fig.html>

George Neilson Three Reports on the Experimental Gardens to the Victorian Horticultural Society at Burnley in , 1873, 1874, 1875.

James Railton's Seed & Plant List, Melbourne, Victoria, undated but probably from the 1890's (Railton was John J Coles' Melbourne agent in the 1870's. It seems he set up for himself selling directly later on.)

John Rance, "The Loxton Fig Collection" South Australian Rare Fruits Society Newsletter 1997. See also the SARFS web site at :

<http://web.archive.org/web/20031214172932/http://www.geocities.com/NapaValley/Vineyard/9601/>

Keith Smith Growing Uncommon Fruits & Vegetables New Holland Publishers, Sydney, 1998

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