

# [The Potato] William Paine

**Date:** This recipe is from Reel 1 of William Paine's Papers, correspondence dated 1768-1822. | 1768/01/01 to 1822/12/31

Contributors

Contributor Role

Compiler

Contributor Name

William Paine

Publication Format

Manuscript

Type

Agriculture

Food

Ingredients

potato

wine

oil

vinegar

prunes

salt

Places

Peru

India

Barbary

Spain

London

**Source:** William Paine Papers

**Institution:** University Of New Brunswick | **Source Origin:** Loyalist Collection | **Reference:** MIC-Loyalist FC LFR.P3W5P3

Description

This recipe includes physical descriptions of the potato plant, as well as preparation suggestions. Reel 1. Image use courtesy of American Antiquarian Society.

## Transcription

### The Potato

The following curious ~~the following curious~~  
Description of the Potato is copied from a [History of Plants](#)  
printed in 1633.

This plant (which is called of some, Sisarum Peru –  
vianum, or Skyrrets of Peru) is generally of us called  
Potatus or Potato's. It hath long rough flexible branches  
trailing upon the ground like unto those of Pompions,  
whereupon are set greene three cornered leaves, very  
like those of the wild cucumber. There is not any  
that have written of this plant, have said anything of  
the flowers; therefore I rifer this assumption unto those  
that shall hereafter have further knowledge of the  
same. Yet have I had in my garden divers roots  
that have flourished unto the first approach  
of Winter, and have grown unto a great length of  
branches, but they have brought forth no flowers,  
at all; Whether because the winter causeth them  
to perish before their time of flowering, or that they  
be of nature barren of flowers, I am not certain.

The roots are many, thicke, and knobly, like unto the  
roots of Peonies, or rather of the white Asphodile, joined  
together at the top into one head in manner of the Skye-  
root.

#### The Place

The Potato's grow in India, Barbary, Spain, and other hot  
regions; of which I planted divers roots, (which I bought  
at the exchange in London) in my garden, where they  
flourished untill winter, at which time they perished  
and rotted.

#### The Time

It flourisheth to the end of September. At the

first approach of great frosts the leaves together with  
the roots and stalks do perish.

#### The Names.

Clusius calleth it Batata, Camotes, Amates, and Ignames:  
in English, Potatoes, Potatus, and Potades.

## The Nature

The leaves of Potato's are hot and dry, or may evidently appear by the taste: the roots are of a temperate qualities.

## The Vertues

The Potato roots are among the Spaniards, Italians, Indians, and many other nations, ordinarie and common meat; which no doubt are of mighty and nourishing parts, and doe strengthen and comfort nature; whose nutriment is as it were a mean between flesh and fruit, but somewhat windie; yet being rested in the embers they lose much of their windinesse, especially being eaten sopped in wine.

Of those roots may be made conserves no less toothsome, wholsome and dainty than of the flesh of quinces, and likewise those comfortable and delicate meats called in shops. Morselli Placentulae and diuers other such like.

These roots may serve as a ground or foundation whereon the cunning Confectioner ^orSugarBaker may work and frame many comfortable and delicate conserves, and ^restorativesweet meats.

They are used to be eaten rosted in the ashes. Some when they be so rosted infuse them and sop them

in wine – and others, to give them the greater grace in eating, do boyle them with prunes, and so eat them. Likewise others dress them with oil, vinegar, and salt/every man according to his own taste and liking.

Annotations

### **[History of Plants](#)**

This text is from John Gerard's The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes (London, 1633), p. 926.

The Potato recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes: <https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/588>