

Maid of Honour: Britain's first celebrity baker

Britain has a long history of enjoying food in the open-air, and one of the ways eighteenth century Londoners could enjoy both, was in the numerous pleasure gardens of the time. The largest, Ranelagh and Vauxhall Gardens, covered many acres in or near the city and boasted numerous well-lit walks and discrete alcoves. However, for a brief forty years in the middle of the century, Marybone Gardens, a small attraction in the rural fields to the north-west of the city, managed to compete with them on an almost equal level. This was due to the vision of one family to, unlike the other venues, serve tasteful and elegant food and drinks in peaceful and refined surroundings.¹ This enterprise would create Britain's first celebrity baker, whose career and creations can be traced, almost exclusively, through the newspaper advertisements of the day.

The Setting

Marylebone Pleasure Gardens are no more, and haven't existed for over 250 years. They were swallowed up in the building work of the late 1770s as London sprawled outwards, consuming what had been open fields and rural retreats. Nevertheless, for the middle years of the eighteenth century, they held a status equal to the larger and grander destinations of Vauxhall Gardens and Ranelagh.

The height of popularity for Marybone Gardens, as it was then called, came in the late 1750s when they were managed by John Trusler. Although there were many contributing factors, Trusler's background in catering² was instrumental in allowing Marybone to compete with the much larger rival pleasure gardens. However, it was the baking skill of his daughter that was to become key to the garden's popularity. She was to achieve quite the celebrity status in Georgian London and, in addition, was possibly the creator of a classic English pastry still enjoyed today.

The information available on Marylebone Gardens is relatively scant. It warrants a mere ten pages in Warwick Wroth's Victorian tome *"The London Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century"* (1896) and it would be almost a century after this before Molly Sands' *"The Eighteenth Century Pleasure Gardens of Marylebone 1737-1777"*

- 1 The sole dissenting voice in this portrayal of Marybone Gardens appears in a relatively recent publication, *"Epic Performances from the Middle Ages into the Twenty-First Century"* Oxford University Press, 2018. In his paper entitled "Midas and the Musical Stage", author Henry Stead writes of burlettas "These were performed at John Trusler's Marylebone Pleasure Gardens from 1758 to 1760. Outside the main hall, where a modicum of decency was at least feigned, the gardens were also the venue for bull-baiting, boxing, gambling, cockfighting, prostitution, and the like." Despite repeated requests, the publishers were unable to supply credible evidence to support this claim, and consequently it should be regarded as having no basis in fact.
- 2 "Trusler, the proprietor of the gardens, was a cook." *A Book For A Rainy Day : Or, Recollections Of The Events Of The Last Sixty-Six Years.* John Thomas Smith, Richard Bentley, London, 1845, p44. "John Trusler, a cook from Bath" *"The Eighteenth Century Pleasure Gardens at Marylebone"* Molly Sands, Society for Theatre Research, 1987, p25.

(1987), although neither give much information on the Trusler years and the refreshments offered.

John Trusler had been involved in the management of the gardens from the late 1740s. In 1746 he took over from Daniel Gough as the landlord of the Rose Tavern on Marylebone High Street,³ through which the gardens were accessed.⁴ His partner, responsible for the Gardens' entertainments, seems to have been his nephew, John Sherratt [Figure 2]. The main role of the Gardens was to provide evening musical entertainment in a pleasant and agreeable atmosphere, with fashionable singers of the day performing popular songs. Possibly due to the dangers involved in travelling to the then remote Gardens at night time,⁵ there were attempts, sometimes rather haphazard, to utilise the Gardens during daylight hours.

M A R Y B O N E G A R D E N S
Tuesday next at 11 o'Clock in the Morning will be
A General REHEARSAL of the Whole Band
of MUSICK, each Perfon paying Two Shillings Admittance,
Breakfasting included.
Good Performers are engaged to play Country Dances as ufual.


 **Breakfasting to continue on Tuesdays and Fridays**

Figure 1: Advertisement placed in the General Advertiser, April 6th, 1749

Advertisements of the time announce public breakfasting on two mornings a week, occasionally combined with country dancing or with musical rehearsals [Figure 1]. The partnership between Trusler and Sherratt likewise did not run smoothly, and by 1751 the pair were squabbling in public via newspaper advertisements on when the Gardens were opening [Figure 2].

The disagreements on the running of the Gardens might have exacerbated by the December 1752 passing of the Music Hall Act, requiring licenses for any place of entertainment within 20 miles of Westminster and the City of London. Although the Gardens acquired a licence for the 1753 season, an ill-advised decision to stage

3 "The Eighteenth Century Pleasure Gardens of Marylebone 1737-1777", Molly Sands, 1987, p25.

4 A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800: Volume 15, Tibbett to M. West, SIU Press, 1993, p51.

5 Newspaper articles of the day indicate that armed footpads and the like targeted the elegant Marylebone Gardens patrons in robberies: "On Wednesday Evening last, a Gentleman who was amusing himself with a Walk, being drawn by the Music in Marybone Gardens into the Field behind the same, was so delighted therewith, that staying there a little too late, was surprized by a Fellow, who putting a Pistol to his Breast, demanded his Money, threatening at the same time to blow his Brains out if he did not instantly deliver it. The Gentleman not a little Startled at being so roughly accosted, thought it most advisable to deliver both Watch and Money, and return home, though not well satisfied with the Conclusion of the Evening's Entertainment." London Daily Advertiser, 28/06/1751. "Tuesday Evening between Eight and Nine o'Clock, as a Servant was going to Marybon Gardens, he was attacked in the Fields by two Footpads, who robbed him of Two Shillings and Nine-pence Farthing; one of the rogues had a Pistol, the other a Cutlass." Covent Garden Journal, 04/07/1752.

fireworks at the conclusion of the 1753 season in October of that year might well have led to the disastrous news the following month that "... the Proprietors of Ranelagh and Marybone Gardens have been refused licences by the Justices this Year."⁶

Marybone Gardens, April 15, 1751.

AS Mr. *John Sherratt* continues to advertise, "That on Wednesday the 17th Instant, at Eleven o'Clock in the Morning, there will be a General Rehearsal of the whole Band of Musick, and Publick Breakfasting continued on Wednesdays and Fridays as usual at Mary-bone Gardens," notwithstanding my Advertisement in the Daily Advertiser of the 6th Instant, that they would not be open'd till farther Notice from me: I therefore think it my Duty, as sole Proprietor of the said Gardens, to acquaint the Publick, that such Advertisements were inserted without my Knowledge, that the Gardens are not at present fit for the Reception of Company, and will not be open'd till publick Notice is given by their

Most obliged and obedieut Servant,
JOHN TRUSLER.

Marybone Gardens, April 16.

WHEREAS by Advertisement of Yesterday, put into the Daily Advertiser, signed *John Trusler*; reciting my Advertisement, and signifying that the said Gardens are his sole Property, and will not be opened till further Notice from him, I beg leave to assure the Public, their Diversions shall not be any ways interrupted by the Difference at present subsisting between me and the said John Trusler my Uncle, as the same is already in a Course of Proceeding in Equity, and that the said Gardens will be opened To-morrow, at Eleven o'Clock in the Morning, when and where there will be a General Rehearsal of the Whole Band of Musick, and Public Breakfasting will be continued on Wednesdays and Fridays as usual at the said Gardens, notwithstanding any Advertisement that may appear in this or any other Paper, by whomsoever signed, to the contrary, the Gardens being very commodiously and in a better manner than heretofore fitted up, for the Reception of Company, at my present sole Expence, and at the like Expence the Wines, &c. laid in, altho' the said John Trusler hath had Notice in Writing from me, of the Time for Opening the same, and to provide his Stock of Wines, &c. I am for myself and Co.

The Public's most obedient and faithful humble Servant,
JOHN SHERRATT.

Figure 2: Advertisements placed in the General Advertiser, 16th April, 1751

Without a licence, Marybone Gardens would have been unable to stage neither musical entertainments nor dances. They might open for refreshments and allow patrons to enjoy the grounds, but nothing more. This was especially calamitous, as the Gardens had been extensively improved and embellished a mere six months previously [Figure 3], which must have been expensive.

6 Public Advertiser 7th November 1753.

MARYBONE-GARDENS.

THE Evenings Entertainments at this Place, will begin To-morrow, with considerable Additions and Improvements, and continue every Evening (Sundays excepted) during the Summer Season.

The Walks are rendered more commodious, and the Gardens much more extensive than before, by taking in the Bowling-green, several new Walks are added, some thousands of Trees planted, and the greatest Part of the original Ground is laid out in a new Form, and enlightned with a great Number of additional Lamps; there is also erected a Temple, decorated with Painting and Machinery; the Band of Musicians enlarged, and there are two new Voices. Lights are erected in the Coach-way from Oxford Road, and in the Foot-way from Cavendish-square, to the Gardens; and Persons with Fire-arms are employed to guard Company to and from the Gardens. The Company are desired not to give any Money to those Persons, and if any of them refuse to attend, upon Complaint being made to the Proprietors, such Persons will be discharged.

Figure 3: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, 25th May, 1753

The year 1754 was a real *annus horribilis* for everyone associated with Marybone Gardens. After trying their best to make a go of the Gardens without a licence, both John Sherratt and John Trusler were listed as bankrupts in July⁷ and in September the remainder of the lease on the Gardens was put up for auction [Figure 4].

To be SOLD,
To the best BIDDERS,
At the Rose Tavern in Marybone, Middlesex. on Wednesday the 11th Inst. between the Hours of Three and Six in the Afternoon,

THE Remainder of a Lease, which will expire seven Days before Lady Day 1756, of the said Tavern, with the Gardens and other Appurtenances, commonly called Marybone Gardens, subject to a yearly Rent of 101 l. 5 s. 6 d. Also an equitable Interest in a like expiring Term of other Part of the said Gardens, formerly a Bowling-green, and other Parts called Quarters, with the Appurtenances held at the Annual Rent of 43 l. 14 s. 6 d. and a large Piece of Painting called Neptunus's Temple, placed in the Gardens.

For further Particulars enquire of Mr. Joseph Letch, in Elm-court, Temple.

Figure 4: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, September 9, 1754

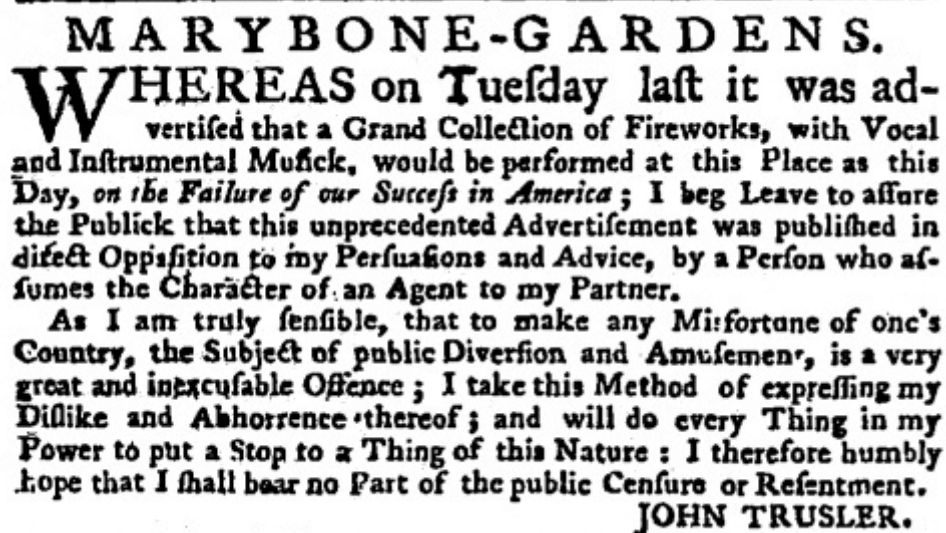
A Fresh Start

The result of the auction seems to have formally ended the partnership between Sherratt and Trusler. Sherratt moved on to hosting entertainments at Epsom during

⁷ London Evening Post, July 30th 1754.

race meetings⁸ and Trusler retained the running of the Gardens.⁹ Just over a month later, in late October, it was announced that “The Justices have granted Licences to the Proprietors of Ranelagh, Vauxhall, Marybone and Sadlers-Wells, for the ensuing season,”¹⁰ paving the way for a return to musical entertainments for the 1755 summer season. With both Ranelagh and Marybone having their licences refused, summer musical entertainments north of the Thames for 1754 had been severely limited, so news of the full complement of attractions for the upcoming season must have been welcomed by London society.

Possibly chastened by the twelve-month enforced sabbatical, John Trusler’s return to Marybone Gardens is unheralded during this season. The newspapers are noticeably quiet, with no publicity for the entertainments at the Gardens save for this single advertisement [Figure 5]:



MARYBONE-GARDENS.
WHEREAS on Tuesday last it was advertised that a Grand Collection of Fireworks, with Vocal and Instrumental Musick, would be performed at this Place as this Day, on the Failure of our Success in America; I beg Leave to assure the Publick that this unprecedented Advertisement was published in direct Opposition to my Persuasions and Advice, by a Person who assumes the Character of an Agent to my Partner.
As I am truly sensible, that to make any Misfortune of one's Country, the Subject of public Diversion and Amusement, is a very great and inexcusable Offence; I take this Method of expressing my Dislike and Abhorrence thereof; and will do every Thing in my Power to put a Stop to a Thing of this Nature: I therefore humbly hope that I shall bear no Part of the public Censure or Resentment.
JOHN TRUSLER.

Figure 5: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, September 4th, 1755

Perhaps the strategy was initially to keep a low profile – challenging if you’re in the entertainment business – and make it through the season without annoying anyone who might oppose their licence application for the following year.

It is clear from the advertisements placed in 1756 that under John Trusler’s stewardship, Marybone Gardens were to be presented in a new and individual way.

8 A newspaper advert in the Public Advertiser for May 6th 1755 reads: “To the Company at Epsom, and the Nobility and Gentry who intend to Honour the Meeting with their Preference. Mr Sherratt from Marybone Gardens having taken the Upper Long-Room, which is fitted up in an elegant Manner for their Reception, has engaged an excellent Band of Musick, and Servants for compleat Attendance. There will be a Ball and an Assembly with Card Tables, every Night during the Meeting. The Subscription for the Meeting is Half a Guinea; Non-Subscribers pay Half a Crown each Time.”

9 John Trusler was assessed for the rates of the Gardens from 1746-1763 with the exception of 1756 when his partner Sweedes was listed alone. “The Eighteenth Century Pleasure Gardens of Marylebone 1737-1777”, Molly Sands, 1987, p33.

10 Whitehall Evening Post, October 29th, 1754.

The emphasis was firmly towards high quality catering in pleasant surroundings, in small parties and on a grander scale[Figure 6].

MARYBONE - GARDENS are now
opened for Reception of Company, where Gentlemen and Ladies may every Morning Breakfast of Tea, Coffee, or Chocolate, with the finest Butter, Cream, and New Milk, Cows being kept for that Purpose ; and Afternoons and Evenings be entertained with Coffee, Tea, Cakes, Pastry, and all Sorts of Wines and other Liquors.

There are two large Rooms genteely fitted up, for Assemblies, Balls, Concerts, or Public Dinners ; and the Proprietor being by Profession a Cook, any public or private Entertainment, will, upon proper Notice, be provided and dress'd in the best Manner.

Those Gentlemen and Ladies who shall favour him with their Company, may depend upon the best of all Kinds of Provisions and Liquors, as reasonable as at any other Place ; and that to please and give Satisfaction, will be the constant Study and Endeavour of
Their most obedient humble Servant,
JOHN TRUSLER.

Figure 6: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, July 12th 1756

Fashionable Success

With his forte being the refreshments, John Trusler wisely brought in others to see to the musical arrangements. The arrival of the Italian Stefano Storace as Musical Director in 1758¹¹ was to raise the profile of the Gardens significantly. Storace was responsible for introducing the burletta to English music society. These short comic operas were originally used between acts in *opera seria*. Storace translated *La Serva Padrona* (The Servant Turned Mistress), assisted by John Trusler's son, and it became quite the sensation of the 1758 season. At just 45 minutes long, it was the perfect length, and with the lyrics being in English, was accessible to all.

La Serva Padrona debuted on the 8th of June and within days, word of mouth of this new diversion started spreading though polite society. The frequency with which advertisements for the Gardens were placed rose to several times a week. In July, there was a Royal Command Performance for Princess Amelia of Great Britain (daughter of George II) and her nephew Prince Edward (younger brother of George III), which sealed its approval. It is conceivable that it was this particular performance that was the catalyst in creating the fame and fortune subsequently enjoyed by Miss Trusler: the influx of nobility and gentry, the convivial surroundings, the popularity of the burletta together with the refreshments for which she was responsible and which had become synonymous with the Gardens.

11 A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800: Volume 14, S.Siddons to Thynne, SIU Press, 1993, p295.

Five weeks later, the attraction of the refreshments available at Marybone Gardens was being advertised alongside *La Serva Padrona*, with almost equal emphasis [Figure 7].

The Public Advertiser.

MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 1758.

<p>N E Y, ER, Friends and Iden Anchor, oppo- bor opposite Aldgate Manner of carrying your him with their rest Prices. res of a Shop which</p> <hr/> <p>DROPS e Bottle, n before making Use s Shop, Bell-Savage</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MARYBONE - GARDENS, THE Entertainment of LA SERVA PADRONA, continues to be performed every Night with the usual Applause; to a numerous and polite Company. Signora SARATINA and Mr. REINHOLD, greatly excel in per- forming their Parts; and notwithstanding it is translated from the Italian into the English Language, it is so well adapted to the Music, that it is by the best Judges reckoned to be extremely soft and harmo- nious.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Admittance 2s. 6d. each, Tea and Coffee included. Books of the Performance to be had at the Bar of the Gardens, Price Six-pence.</p> <p>Mr. Trusler's Daughter continues to make the Rich Seed and Plumb Cakes, so much admired by the Nobility and Gentry. They are made in a square Form, and will cut out in as large Slices as those of four Times the Price. They are always kept ready made, and will be sent to any Part of the Town when bespoke, at Half a Crown each.</p>	<p>by a Body of getting ready t cret Expedition near Deutry, w der the Marqui <i>Brasselt, Aug</i> wife, that M. 10,000 Men, a <i>Rurmonds,</i> Allied Army q berg, and enca of Swalmen, w kenbofch; and lenraldt. Nex decamp, and f but at Ten Coi</p>
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Figure 7: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, August 14, 1758

This advertisement is the first to mention not only the types of cakes available, but the baker herself. Admittedly, it is not by name, but this might be a deliberate desire to appear modest, and to show daughterly deference to her father, John Trusler, very much the man in charge at the Gardens. In addition, there is the unusual mention of the shape of the cakes. To modern eyes, it is obvious that a square is a much more efficient shape to carve into slices if you're catering to large numbers of guests, but in 1758 it was novel enough to warrant reference in an advert. Finally, the real stroke of genius is the offer of delivery. As already mentioned, travelling to the Gardens at night held its perils, although armed guards were laid on for the protection of guests. For those either unwilling or unable to attend in the evenings, or for those who, having seen the performance, had no wish to see it repeatedly, they could still enjoy the refreshments offered without having to step outside their front door. The placement of the advertisement is also impressive: front page, front and centre, underneath the banner header. Previous advertisements for the Gardens had been in later pages or, if on the front, off to one side. No doubt a premium was paid for having this prime position in the paper, which only goes to further attest the importance of these attractions in the success of the Gardens.

The dual success of the novelty of the burletta, together with the baking of Miss Trusler, permitted the 1758 season at Marybone Gardens to extend well into autumn. Advertisements in late September inform the public that the Gardens will remain open for visitors with all the usual refreshments [Figure 8].

MARYBONE - GARDENS

THE MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT
 being over there for this Season, the House and Gardens will be kept open to receive Company, where they may be entertained with Tea, Coffee, Cakes, and every other Thing as usual; fine Epping Butter, and Cream, which Ladies and Gentlemen may be supplied with by sending their Servants for it, being in much greater Perfection than in any other Place about Town.

Figure 8: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, September 30th, 1758

It is unclear whether these new opening hours persisted throughout the winter, but there was definitely an early start to the 1759 season, as well as a new menu item from Mr Trusler's Daughter. In April, a revamped version of *La Serva Padrona* was staged indoors, in the Great Room, and Miss Trusler was now offering small almond cheesecakes ' hot every day at one o'clock.'¹² The Gardens opened for outdoor entertainment in May, with a new burletta offering from Stephen Storace of *La Ciccisbea Alla Moda: or The Modish Coquette*. The Garden now also boasted its own cows for the production of fresh cream,¹³ and fine Epping butter, both of which were also offered for delivery.¹⁴

The season proceeded at a brisk pace, with the Gardens being opened for breakfasting in the morning, and afternoon and musical entertainments of the two burlettas alternating in the evening throughout the season, all catered by Miss Trusler's industrious efforts in the kitchen. By December, she has broadened her repertoire to include bespoke Christening Cakes¹⁵ and finest sixpenny Mince Pyes, with tongue, a butter crust and all the finest of ingredients.¹⁶ These advertisements are still placed with a heading of MARYBONE GARDENS, however they are solely concerned with promoting the baking output of Miss Trusler's kitchen [Figure 9].

MARYBONE - GARDENS.

MR. TRUSLER's Daughter continues to make the rich Seed and Plum Cakes, so much admired by the Nobility and Gentry; they are kept always ready made, and will be sent to any Part of the Town when ordered, at 2s. 6d. each.

She will likewise during the Christmas make Mince Pyes, and flatters herself will not be equalled by any unless where the Nobility and Gentry have them made at home; the Meat that is put into them is Tongue, and the Crust made with the finest Epping Butter, and all the other Ingredients of the finest Sort; they will be Six pence each, or larger Sizes when bespoke.

The finest Butter may be had at any Time.

N.B. It is desired the Orders that are intended to be given for mince'd Pyes on Christmas-day may be sent the Day before.

Figure 9: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, December 22nd, 1759.

12 Public Advertiser, April 12th, 1759.

13 Public Advertiser, May 7th, 1759.

14 Public Advertiser, May 10th, 1759.

15 Public Advertiser, December 11th, 1759.

16 Public Advertiser, December 15th, 1759.

Nor is there any letup. January 1760 brings continued mince pie production and the addition of fresh batches of seed and plum cakes for Twelfth Day. Fine French Rolls are added to the breakfasting menu in March, and in May advance notice is given of the Fruit Tarts that will be made during the season with fruit grown in the Gardens themselves. The beverages offered include tea, coffee, chocolate 'in the utmost perfection' and wine.

Although the burlettas were still offered during this year's high summer season, there appears to have been a conscious move away from musical productions to a gentler enjoyment of the gardens themselves and their refreshments. Prior to this season, the Gardens had charged an entrance fee for all evening entertainments and had been closed on Sundays, but in June of 1760 they were opened free for genteel company to walk, and enjoy the refreshments, with no musical accompaniments.¹⁷

When the musical season finished, Miss Trusler's catering continued unabated, supplying the genteel customers who attended the Gardens, now free of charge during the winter months, to walk amongst its tree-lined avenues and partake of refreshments throughout the winter. Delivery of her cakes, pastries, cream and butter continued to satisfy customers across the city. Miss Trusler's baking year, adapted to the seasonal produce of the Gardens and celebrations of the calendar seemed to run like a well-oiled engine.

Perhaps it is this consistent and continued success that emboldens Mr Trusler's daughter to begin placing and owning her own advertisements for the Christmas season [Figure 10].

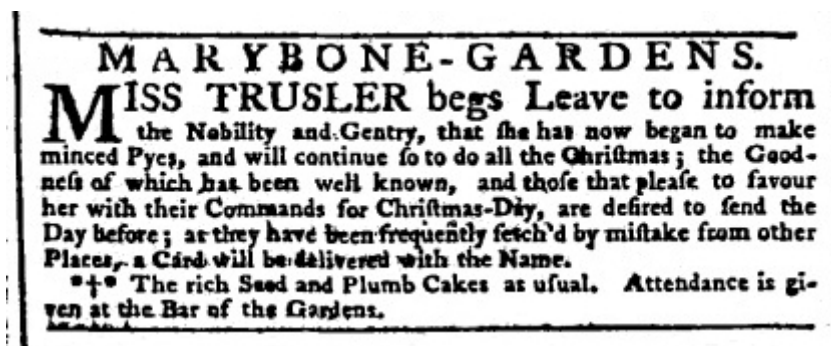


Figure 10: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, December 19th, 1761

This change in emphasis for the Gardens becomes more pronounced the following year where the advertising is distinctly different to that previously [Figure 11].

17 Public Advertiser, June 28th, 1760.

MARYBONE GARDENS, by much the
 pleafantest Place about Town, (the new City Road leading to
 it, and being a pleafant Airing) is now in perfect good Order; the
 Trees in full Leaf, and the Shrubs in full Bloom, which renders
 them more immediately sweet and refreshing in the Morning; and
 their being fo near Town, are thought by most of the Nobility and
 Gentry to be very commodious and agreeable for Breakfasting at.
 Mr. Trusler, to render them more fo, will take care that no improper
 Company shall be admitted, and the very best Tea, Coffee, Cream,
 Butter, &c. may be depended on as usual. They are also open every
 Evening, where Tea, Wine, Cakes, &c. may be had.
 Miss Trusler continues to make the rich Seed and Plum Cakes, fo
 much admired, at 2s. 6d. each, which will be sent to any Part of the
 Town. Her fine Almond Cheesecakes are hot every Day at One
 o'Clock, and sold at 2 s. per Dozen; rich Cream and Epping Butter
 also sold. **A good Waiter is wanted.**

Figure 11: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, July 3rd, 1762

The Gardens are now presented as the ideal setting in which to relax and enjoy the peaceful and attractive surroundings. A new road has improved the access and the quality of the flora in the mornings for breakfasting is especially emphasized. The refreshments, courtesy of Miss Trusler, maintain the high standard that has already been established, her seed and plum cakes, and almond cheesecakes, also available for delivery. No music is mentioned, either daytime or evening. The Gardens must have been a delightfully calm and peaceful oasis into which the gentry could escape the hustle and bustle of London. From a financial standpoint, it also made a great deal of sense. No concerts meant no musician or singer salaries to pay. The Trusler family business was serving refreshments, and business was good.

A New Conflict

Which makes the almost complete lack of publicity from Miss Trusler in 1763 all the more perplexing. The only advertisement for the season was placed in early March [Figure 12].

Compared to previous adverts, it's rather bold. Reference is made to the high standing in which her cakes are viewed by the nobility and gentry, and that it is her cakes that are served at all the very best social gatherings and entertainments. It is very much in the vein of: if you want to be seen to be part of the best society, then these are the cakes you will need in order for your entertainments to be judged as meeting the standard. She is deliberately, and confidently, appealing to those interested in social advancement: 'I'm not saying these cakes are the best, but they ARE the cakes served and admired by People Who Matter, and they are available at such reasonable rates, and can be delivered straight to your door.' People didn't need to attend the Gardens in order to enjoy the refreshments. It is a Georgian humble-brag of splendid proportions. However, this advertisement might have been

the cause of some friction between the Truslers and what appears to be a new business partner in Marybone Gardens.

MARYBONE – GARDENS: Mifs

TRUSLER continues to make the rich Seed and Plumb

Cakes so much admired by the Nobility and Gentry she being the only one in London that makes this Sort and Size; they cut in very handsome Slices for a Plate at Tea or Breakfast, and are used for the Basket at most of the Routs and Affsemblies amongst the Quality. They are sold at 2s. 6d. each and when ordered will be sent to any Part of the Town. She has now begun and will continue every Day to make her fine Almond Cheefecakes, that cannot be equalled: They are Hot at One O'clock. Six or Eight make a Dish for a Second Course, or Supper and are sold at 2s. a Dozen.

**** Attendance is constantly given in the Garden, where Coffee, Tea, Chocolate, Wine, Cakes, &c. as usual.**

Figure 12: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, 11th March, 1763

Eight days later Mr Thomas Lowe, a well-known and well regarded tenor from Vauxhall Gardens, placed an advertisement claiming to have taken both lease and licence on the Gardens.¹⁸ Since the catering business was booming, John Trusler may well have sublet responsibility for the entertainment in the Gardens to Mr Lowe, and since he wished to put on musical performances, the licence would have been compulsory: the Truslers had no need of a licence to serve refreshments in the Gardens.

Whether there was an argument over the supply of refreshments to the Gardens, or whether there was some jealousy regarding the fame of Miss Trusler's baking, is difficult to say. What is plain is that there were no more advertisements for cakes or pastries that season. Mr Lowe, on the other hand, was a big fan of placing advertisements. He took out advertisements for the many musical performances he arranged and also performed at, being careful to place his own name first in the list of performers. He placed advertisements thanking and name-dropping members of high society and masons for attending various performances. There were, in addition, articles mentioning who Mr Lowe would shortly be dining with, as well as reports of who Mr Lowe had dined with. Not one of them mentioned the food and drink at the Gardens. What did appear in print, however, were several supposed 'letters to the printer' and the like, either praising Mr Lowe or casting aspersions on the scandalous prices of refreshments offered at the Gardens. It is not inconceivable that these were planted by Mr Lowe himself, in order to take a disagreement with the Truslers over the refreshments to a public forum.

¹⁸ London Chronicle, 19th March, 1763.

OBSERVATIONS of our CORRESPONDENTS

VERITAS represents the prices charged at Marybone-Gardens for many articles of refreshment as enormous. He has sent us a bill of the several particulars that were supplied by a company of three persons, which, if a true one, does appear in some particulars indeed extravagant. We know not what the practice is at that place, but at Vaux Hall the prices of things are commonly stuck up in several parts of the garden, by which means all pretences of imposition are removed, because all people may see what they are to pay for things if they order them, and as there is no obligation to call for any thing if its charge is thought too great, it is at the choice of the guests to be what they may think imposed upon or not: and if such is also the practice at Marybone, we must think there are no just grounds of complaint; because every one may know what he is to pay for things if he has them; and if he does not like their prices he can let them alone. Though, upon the whole, it must be allowed that any of these places are not proper resorts for such persons as are, or ought to be, on the frugal scheme in expenses.¹⁹

A FRIEND TO ALL HONEST PUBLICANS has sent us an accusation of extortion in the keeper of Marybone Gardens, in the price of a glass of brandy, which we do not insert at length, as it has already appeared in another paper; though such complaints are, we think, not of a nature to produce any good effects by being made public.²⁰

Dear Mr Printer,

YOU must know I am a young girl who frequents all public places of diversion, and amongst the rest Marybone Gardens has been one, where I through curiosity, went. To be sure, Sir, the songs and music are good, and Mr Lowe is a dear creature. Miss Catley is tolerably handsome; Miss Plenius is well enough; and the entertainment is on the whole agreeable, but the expences are monstrous; a fowl 3s. A short quart of poor small beer, 6d. A slice of bread 2d. Heart cakes, 3d. And all other articles in proportion. These, my good Sir are the prices which on an average are dearer by ten per cent. than any other gardens, which have twice the trade, and more pleasant. I hope this short essay will make them alter their prices, or stick a bill up, to prevent imposition in the Gardens, as we poor girls can't always come prepared with cash to defray so exorbitant demands; or otherwise I must stay at home and read the songs as they come out in your paper, which will save expences to your humble servant.

FRANCES TELLTRUTH²¹

19 Gazetteer and London Advertiser, 9th June, 1763.

20 Gazetteer and London Advertiser, 20th June, 1763.

21 Gazetteer and London Advertiser, 21st July, 1763.

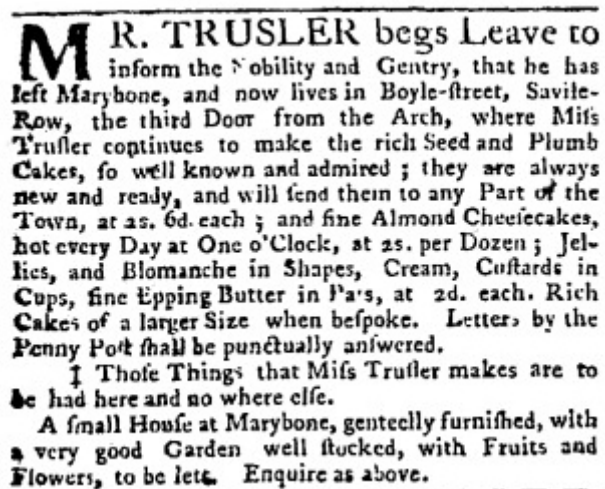
The summer campaign against the refreshment prices either wore down the Truslers or they realised that, having made her name in polite society, Miss Trusler could make a better living for the whole family without the drama Mr Lowe seemed determined to perpetuate, so they left the Gardens. At the tail end of the season, Lowe placed a gleeful and triumphant notice in the papers:

Tavistock-street, Covent Garden, August 30, 1763.
MR LOWE desires to acquaint the Public, and his Friends in particular, that he has taken a Lease of MARYBONE GARDENS, with all the Appurtenances thereunto belonging, from Michaelmas next; and that the Management of the Whole from that Time will be entirely under his Direction, or those Persons he thinks proper to appoint.²²

A New Venture

To start a catering business from scratch obviously required a great deal of thought and planning so it is no surprise that for the next six months all is quiet on the Trusler front. The advertisements placed in the spring of 1764 reveal, to a certain degree, the fruits of these labours.

In early March,²³ Mr Trusler's advertisements inform the public of the family's move to Boyle Street, just off the north end of Savile Row 'the third door from the arch' where his daughter, Miss Trusler, continues to make her seed cakes, plum cakes and almond cheesecakes. The availability of fine Epping butter also continues. In addition, Miss Trusler has expanded her menu of confections available to include hartshorn jellies, blancmange and bespoke pastries.



M R. TRUSLER begs Leave to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that he has left Marybone, and now lives in Boyle-street, Savile-Row, the third Door from the Arch, where Miss Trusler continues to make the rich Seed and Plum Cakes, so well known and admired; they are always new and ready, and will send them to any Part of the Town, at 2s. 6d. each; and fine Almond Cheesecakes, hot every Day at One o'Clock, at 2s. per Dozen; Jellies, and Blomanche in Shapes, Cream, Custards in Cups, fine Epping Butter in Pa's, at 2d. each. Rich Cakes of a larger Size when bespoke. Letter, by the Penny Post shall be punctually answered.

‡ Those Things that Miss Trusler makes are to be had here and no where else.

A small House at Marybone, genteelly furnished, with a very good Garden well stocked, with Fruits and Flowers, to be let. Enquire as above.

Figure 13: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, April 3rd, 1764.

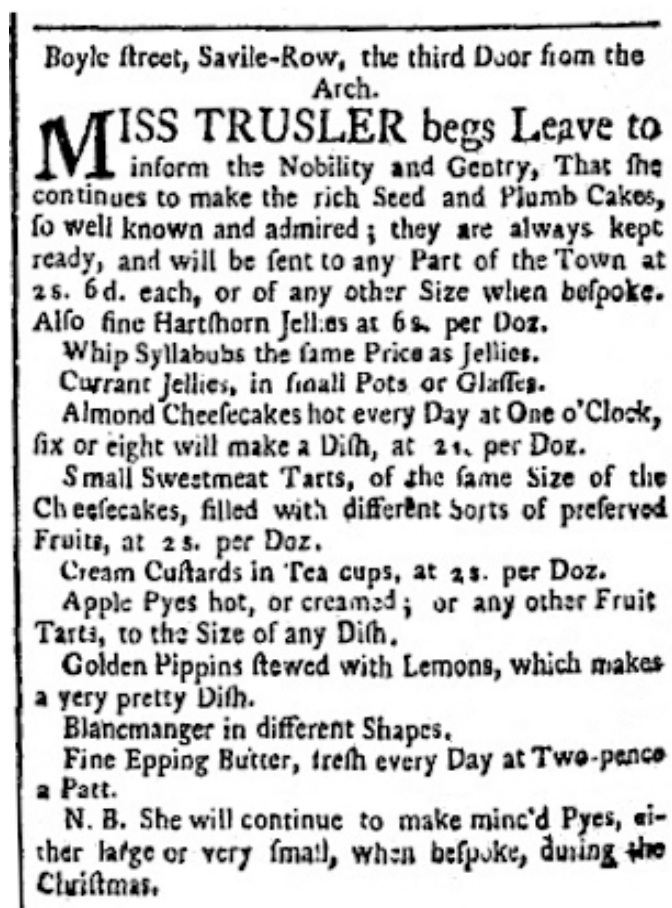
22 Public Advertiser, 2nd September, 1763.

23 Public Advertiser, March 2nd, 1764.

Within a week,²⁴ cream custards in cups had been added²⁵ and by April, the ease of ordering (letters by the penny post), custom ordering (rich cakes of a larger size when bespoke) and the exclusive availability of Miss Trusler's baked goods was being emphasized [Figure 13].

The month of May brings news²⁶ of the first seasonal items, gooseberry tarts, with the promise of additional fresh fruit tarts as they come into season. It must have been a busy summer, for there are no new advertisements from early June until late September where apple pies, both hot and creamed,²⁷ and sweetmeat and preserved fruit tartlets replace the fresh berry tarts as the seasonal items.

As the festive season approaches, more changes are made in the Trusler food enterprise. Mr Trusler's name is dropped from the advertisements, and after almost two years, Miss Trusler once again announces her confections under her own name [Figure 14].



Boyle street, Savile-Row, the third Door from the Arch.

MISS TRUSLER begs Leave to inform the Nobility and Gentry, That she continues to make the rich Seed and Plum Cakes, so well known and admired; they are always kept ready, and will be sent to any Part of the Town at 2s. 6d. each, or of any other Size when bespoke. Also fine Hartshorn Jellies at 6s. per Doz. Whip Syllabubs the same Price as Jellies. Currant Jellies, in small Pots or Glasses. Almond Cheefecakes hot every Day at One o'Clock, six or eight will make a Dish, at 2s. per Doz. Small Sweetmeat Tarts, of the same Size of the Cheefecakes, filled with different Sorts of preserved Fruits, at 2s. per Doz. Cream Custards in Tea cups, at 2s. per Doz. Apple Pies hot, or creamed; or any other Fruit Tarts, to the Size of any Dish. Golden Pippins stewed with Lemons, which makes a very pretty Dish. Blancmanger in different Shapes. Fine Epping Butter, fresh every Day at Two-pence a Patt.

N. B. She will continue to make minc'd Pies, either large or very small, when bespoke, during the Christmas.

Figure 14: Advertisement placed in the Public Advertiser, December 14th, 1764

24 Public Advertiser, March 8th, 1764.

25 Technically, the phrase "Cream, Custards in cups" was used, as can be seen in Figure 10, but in advertisements later in the year (Public Advertiser, May 7th, 1764 onwards) the erroneous comma was removed, and "Cream Custards in cups" becomes the regular listing.

26 Public Advertiser, May 7th, 1764.

27 Extra sweet apple pies with sour cream topping. The top crust was removed after baking and cream soured with vinegar poured over the fruit, then left to cool. The pies are eaten cold.

And what an impressive advertisement it is. It is the first to present the delicacies available as an itemised list: previous advertisements consisted of a solid block of text. This new format makes for much easier reading, and the impressive size of the advertisement, with Miss Trusler's name in such a large and striking font, really makes it stand out on the page. New items for the season are whip syllabubs,²⁸ currant jellies and stewed golden pippins with lemon; simple yet elegant dishes that would be ideal to serve to ladies at parties and routs.

And so Miss Trusler's fledgeling business progressed. As the seasons turn, she introduces, or trials, new recipes for her customers. Some remain, some don't, some are modified in some detail. Tanseys²⁹ in general are offered in the spring of 1765, before being refined, or possibly clarified, as 'A Tansey, With Oranges'³⁰ within a month. Dried apples, dried pears and black caps are the other springtime offerings. Although the production of the original seed and plum cakes is constant, advertisements in mid-1765³¹ suggest an availability of 'large rich cakes for christenings' can be ordered. There's no indication as to what type of cakes these are, but later advertisements are changed to read 'Large, rich cakes for Christenings, Weddings &c.'³² so it would not be unreasonable to assume that they are of the heavily fruited variety. The earliness of the advertisement is also noteworthy. Although celebrating a christening with (amongst other things) cake was a long-standing tradition even in the mid eighteenth century,³³ there are few mentions of it in print, let alone evidence of commercial production; it would be another 35 years before a recipe would appear in print.³⁴ Also new this year were queen cakes,³⁵ apple and raspberry puffs.³⁶ Black caps and stewed pears were still available, but only "if bespoke" (i.e. to order).

Creating a Classic?

The following year, 1766, can justifiably be seen as the peak of Miss Trusler's impressive business. The advertisements were the largest, the range of items offered the fullest. Two new items appeared in the advertisements. The first was stewed apples in jelly, not so dissimilar from the ordinary stewed apples already being advertised, and since it was relatively easy to convert liquid syrup to a set

28 Syllabubs come in a range of styles and textures, from liquid to frothy to solid, fresh and cooked. Whip syllabubs were made with raw thick cream, sugar and alcohol, and when whisked to incorporate air, would hold their shape for several days, the sugar and alcohol acting as both flavouring and preservative, an ideal dish for Miss Trusler's catering enterprise. In more recent times they would be known as Everlasting Syllabubs.

29 A sweet omelette. In the 17th century it was flavoured with tansy juice, broadening to include green fruits in the 18th century (apples, gooseberries, etc). Frequently 'greened' with spinach juice.

30 Public Advertiser, March 8th, 1765.

31 Public Advertiser May 29th, 1765.

32 Public Advertiser December 30th, 1765 through to April 14th 1768.

33 In 1666 Samuel Pepys mentions cake at his godson's christening, and in 1730 it was reported that at the christening of Lord Walpole's son in May, "sixty cakes, which cost six guineas each, were given away." (London Evening Post, May 2nd, 1730).

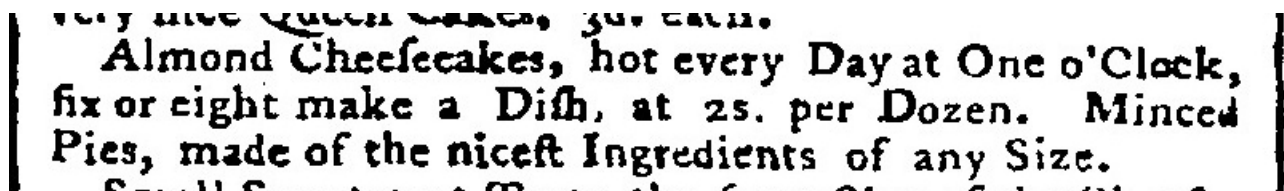
34 "Bride or Christening Cake", The New London Family Cook, Duncan Macdonald, (1800) p289.

35 Small currant sponge cakes, spiced with mace, frequently heart-shaped. See letter by FRANCES TELLTRUTH above.

36 Similar to puff pastry turnovers.

jelly, the transportation and delivery would be much less fraught. The second new item on the menu is of much greater interest. In January Miss Trusler created, or at the very least, began offering, an item that is still enjoyed today. Due to Miss Trusler's prolific advertising, and her loyalty to *The Public Advertiser* in particular, it is possible to narrow down the date of its creation to just a five-day window.

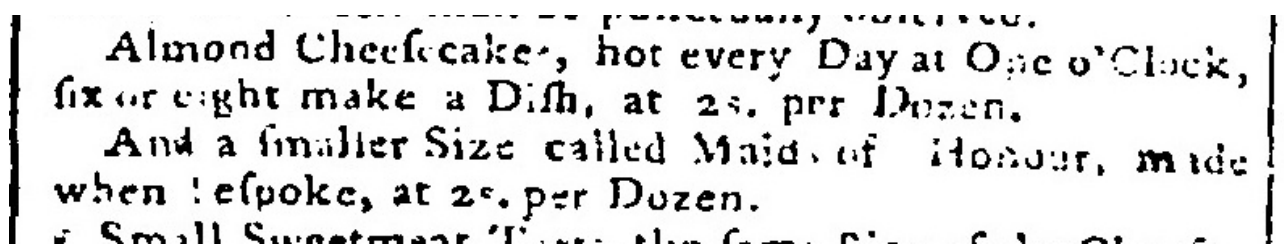
On Monday, January 13th, 1766, Miss Trusler's advertisement contained the following lines [Figure 15]:



Almond Cheesecakes, hot every Day at One o'Clock,
six or eight make a Dish, at 2s. per Dozen. Minced
Pies, made of the nicest Ingredients of any Size.

Figure 15: *Public Advertiser*, Monday, January 13th, 1766

Five days later, the same advertisement was published with the following alteration [Figure 16]:



Almond Cheesecake, hot every Day at One o'Clock,
six or eight make a Dish, at 2s. per Dozen.
And a smaller Size called Maids of Honour, made
when bespoke, at 2s. per Dozen.

Figure 16: *Public Advertiser*, Saturday, January 18th, 1766

For all the urban legends of their being 'invented' by Henry VIII, or Anne Boleyn or Elizabeth I, this advertisement is the first mention in print, yet known, of Maids of Honour. Something happened between these two dates that caused them to be added to Miss Trusler's repertoire. There's no way of knowing exactly, but there is a plausible explanation. Perhaps, whilst making a batch of her famous almond cheesecakes, Miss Trusler ran out of hoops to bake them in, and having both filling and pastry left over, decided to make small versions in patty tins. Perhaps also, when these small tarts were cooling, alongside the larger cheesecakes she, or someone else, thought they looked like a retinue of ladies in waiting, or Maids of Honour, hovering around a queen. Interestingly, Miss Trusler offers them 'when bespoke', that is, to order only, which reinforces the notion that they were, initially at least, a trial item.

Maids of Honour must have proved popular, because they remained a fixture in Miss Trusler's advertisements for the rest of the year and for the first four months of 1767. Then all advertisements abruptly stop. Not even the busy mince-pie season generates any publicity. A similar situation occurs in 1768: advertising for the first

four months, new items of orgeat and lemonade, then silence. Except in December, at the very close of the year, there appears the small advertisement below [Figure 17].

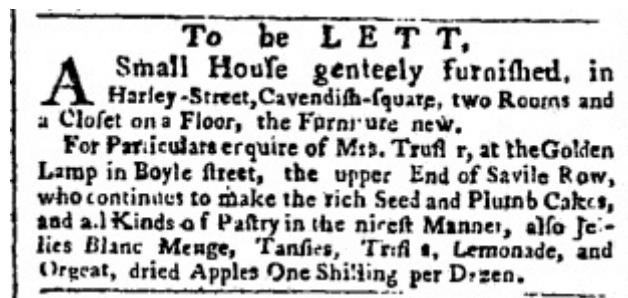


Figure 17: Public Advertiser, December 28th, 1768

Obviously Miss Trusler, or rather as she now styles herself, Mrs. Trusler³⁷ has been distracted by life events, and this advertisement demonstrates by just how much, as her baking is listed almost as an afterthought. This signalled the beginning of a period of reduced advertising, not only in the size of the advertisements, but also the frequency. Even when she was advertising regularly in the early months of the year, Miss Trusler's advertisements were back to the almost solid block of text. There might be nothing concerning about this at all. Business could be so brisk, advertising wasn't necessary. Another consideration is that Miss Trusler had been churning out her baking delicacies for a decade, and could justifiably want to scale her operation down. It is unclear how much help Miss Trusler had in the production of the array of confections. In April and May of 1765 her advertisements had included a notice of a vacancy for 'a good servant woman', but the sheer number and range of items offered would suggest that there was quite the production line on the go at Boyle Street. Later advertisements would stress that this was a private house,³⁸ so in that context, the output from it was truly phenomenal and must have been physically exhausting.

Whilst Miss Trusler still continued her business, the advertising becomes more sporadic. Over the course of the next few years, the compact advertisements appear only during the winter months. This might feasibly be due to business being brisk during the summer months and relatively quiet as the nights draw in. Nevertheless, Miss Trusler continues to introduce new items to her repertoire. Alongside the rest of her range, she offers petit patties,³⁹ lemon cheesecakes, sweetmeat baskets and crocons,⁴⁰ and later a new French pastry.⁴¹ These must have proved popular, for

37 An honorific title, short for Mistress, not at this point in time, indicative of marital status. Samuel Johnson's 1768 Dictionary gives six meanings to the word 'mistress', the most apt here being the second: A woman skilled in any thing.

38 Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, February 28th, 1772, Morning Post, December 12th, 1774, Figure 17, etc.

39 Miniature savoury pies.

40 Possibly a phonetic attempt at 'croquants' - small sweet pastry tartlets.

41 Puits d'amour - puff pastry bouchees or vol-au-vents filled with raspberry or redcurrant jelly. First printed recipe in Vincent La Chapelle's "The Modern Cook", 1733.

they remain available for several years, albeit under a range of spellings: *pac d'amours*,⁴² *peu d'amour*,⁴³ *puis de mours*,⁴⁴ *pies d'inqurs*.⁴⁵

Despite these innovations, the advertisements become smaller and more irregular: four in 1771, just one in 1772 & 1774, two in 1775, four in 1776 and just one in 1777 [Figure 18]. And with that, Miss Trusler bows out of the catering business. Coincidentally, it was around this time that Marybone Gardens ceased to exist. Increasingly surrounded by buildings as London expanded outwards, the regular entertainments had been abandoned and musical performances were sporadic. The

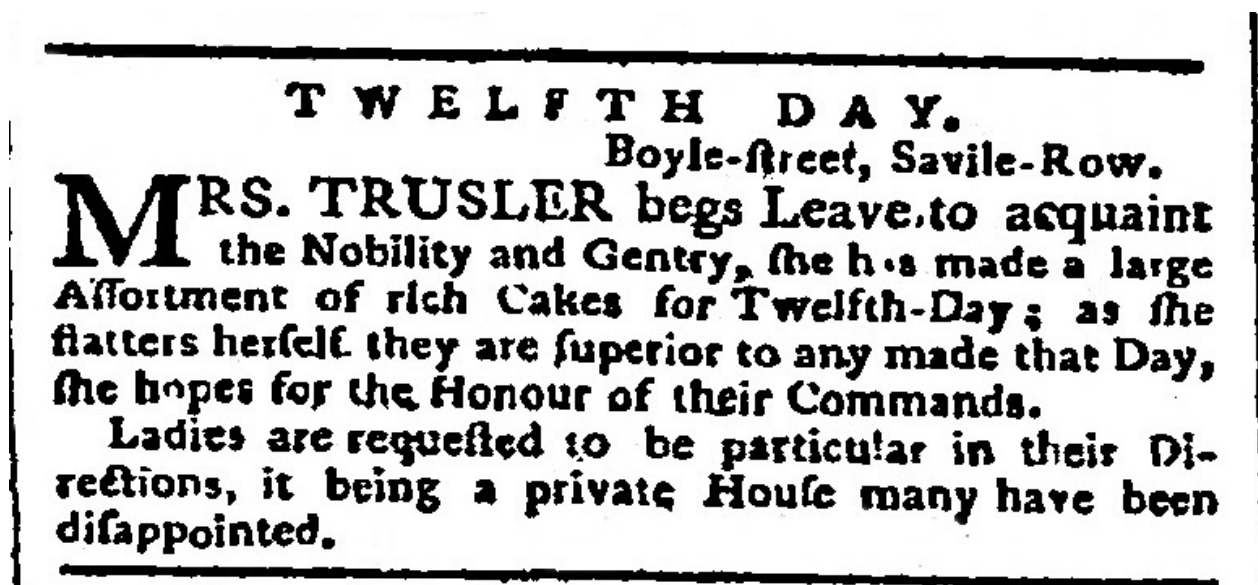


Figure 18: *Public Advertiser*, 6th January, 1777

Gardens closed in September 1776 and did not open regularly afterwards, eventually being let to builders and subsequently built over.⁴⁶ Whatever the reason, nothing was heard of Miss Trusler in public again.

Who was Miss Trusler?

Perhaps Miss Trusler took the demise of Marybone Gardens, where everything started, as a sign. Perhaps, after almost 20 years in both the spotlight and the heat of the kitchen, Miss Trusler decided that it was time to lay down her wooden spoon. Her advertisements in these later years frequently included notices of property to let, so it is conceivable that she had become quite wealthy and no-longer needed to work. The advertisements she placed demonstrated the success of her business but not much about the woman herself, so it will require further digging into the

42 *Public Advertiser*, 4th & 7th January, 1771.

43 *Public Advertiser*, 15th February, 1771.

44 *Public Advertiser*, 28th February, 1772.

45 *Public Advertiser*, 12th December, 1774.

46 *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol 2.(1900), edited by George Grove, p224.

archives to determine if this remarkable woman can be accorded a name. It is necessary to cast a wide net in order to reap the most rewards, but it is also possible to catch the unexpected.

From records of births, marriages and deaths, it becomes clear that the Trusler family was quite extensive. Patriarch John Trusler married Elizabeth Webb at Chelsea in July 1731.⁴⁷ They went on to have a total of seven children: two sons and, frustratingly for this identification purpose, five daughters. The elder son, also named John, became well-known as a Church of England clergyman and author.⁴⁸ In 1806, John Trusler junior (1735-1820) published a rambling memoir,⁴⁹ liberally sprinkled with the names of the great and the good, and also a good deal of gossip. Alas, for a man who loved to name-drop as much as he did, he is exasperatingly vague on the members of his own family. No-one gets a name from Reverend Trusler's pen, merely oblique references such as 'my father', 'my mother', and in a rather callous double "On the death of my wife.....she left me with a son."⁵⁰ Although he acknowledges the brief existence of a brother,⁵¹ of his sisters, there is no mention at all. Mum's the word with Padre Trusler.

A more productive source proved to be Mother Trusler's will, where she names her son John and five daughters: Bertha, Elizabeth, Mary, Catherine and Sarah. Sadly, it appears that by this time (1766), George Trusler has passed away.⁵²

So which of the five daughters mentioned in Mother Trusler's will might be the lady in question? Two of the daughters married, and although it is not impossible that they retained their maiden names and continued working after marriage, it is unlikely.

The second-eldest daughter, Elizabeth Trusler (1739-1824), married the Italian musical director at Marybone Gardens, Stefano (Stephen) Storace in 1761, and went on to have two musically gifted children in quick succession. Their son, Stephen Storace, born 1762, was a successful composer and their daughter, Anna Selina (known as Nancy) Storace, born 1765, became a famous soprano. Although the Storace family left England for Italy in the late 1770s, just as Miss Trusler's baking business ceased operating, with two small children who began touring and performing at a very young age, Senora Storace probably had her hands too full to have run a baking empire as well, especially given the briskness of the baking output at the times her children were born.

47 Family Search: Individual record for John Trusler <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N26Y-KMZ> Accessed 16/03/2020.

48 Emma Major "Trusler, John (1735-1820) Oxford Dictionary of National Biography <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27777> Accessed 16/03/2020.

49 "Memoirs of the life of the Rev. Dr. Trusler, written by himself", John Trusler, 1806, Bath, John Brown

50 Ibid. p175.

51 "I was born in London, in July 1735, and am the elder son of reputable parents, though in business; I may indeed say the *only* son, my brother dying when a youth." Ibid. p6

52 Parish record entry for George Trusler on Find My Past. Accessed 16/03/2020. <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBPRS/WSMTN/BAP/0257285>

Catherine Trusler (1741-1826) would eventually marry Joseph Legg, a widower curate from Maddington, in 1798, but with two older sisters and her being just five years old when her father took over at the Gardens in 1746,⁵³ would have been too young to be Miss Trusler The Baker.

The remaining Misses Trusler, Mary, Sarah and Bertha, never married. At the end of her life, Sarah lived near, or possibly with, her sister Catherine who, as already mentioned, erected a memorial in St. Mary's church, Maddington inscribed to her "truly affectionate and lamented sister." Either, or possibly both, Mary and Sarah seem to have been teachers, at least for a time. In Nancy Storace's will she leaves a bequest to "*Miss Emma White who was formerly at Miss Trusler's school at Lancaster*".⁵⁴ All of which leaves Bertha as the strongest candidate for the Miss Trusler whose baking skills made her famous.

The case for Bertha Trusler

Bertha was the oldest child of John and Elizabeth Trusler, being born in 1733.⁵⁵ When her father became involved in Marybone Gardens around 1746, she would have been 15 and of an age to be able to help her parents at the Gardens. In 1758, when the staging of the first English language burlettas, together with her baked refreshments, became an overnight sensation, she would have been a responsible 25. When the family left the Gardens in 1763, aged 30, it was her baking business that supported them.

Sadly, two tragedies then struck the family in quick succession. John Trusler senior died in June 1765, leaving everything to his wife, Elizabeth. Mother Trusler then passed away a mere sixteen months later, in October 1766. After token bequests to Bertha's brother and sisters, Mother Trusler's will stated "*all the residue and remainder of all my Goods and Chattels I Give and bequeath to my daughter Bertha Trusler whom I appoint my sole executive to this my last will and testament containing one sheet of paper.*"⁵⁶ By leaving almost everything to her eldest daughter, Mother Trusler gave Bertha the security and the means to continue with her business as well as providing for her younger sisters as the now de facto head of the family. Neither parent gave details of what precisely their estate consisted of, but it is a distinct possibility that the houses to let later advertised by Miss Trusler were a direct result of this bequest.

53 The memorial to Catherine (and Sarah) in St. Mary's church, Maddington claims Catherine died in 1826, aged 75, which would put her birth some during 1751, and just 7 years old in 1758. Her baptism is actually recorded in 1741 (<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBPRS/B/491809088/1> Accessed 16/03/2020), making her 85 at her death. Whether this deception was of her own making, or that of her surviving spouse, isn't known.

54 Anna Selina Storace's Will: Public Records Office, Catalogue Reference: Prob 11/1597.

55 Baptismal record for Bertha Trusler. Accessed 16/03/2020: <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBPRS/B/491673067/1>

56 Elizabeth Trusler's Will proved October 1766: Public Records Office Catalogue Reference :Prob 11/923. The Cumberland Paquet, and Ware's Whitehaven Advertiser newspaper of Tuesday, June 23rd 1795 carries and advertisement for Miss Trusler's Boarding School in Lancaster, but, in what is rapidly becoming a family trait for vagueness, does not elaborate which Miss Trusler it is.

Whilst searching for any and all information on the Trusler family, a few curious pieces of information revealed themselves. Firstly, Mary Trusler. The interesting thing about Mary Trusler is the fact that there is no information about her at all. No birth or baptism record, no marriage banns, no death notices. The only evidence that she existed at all is Mother Trusler's will. Neither Catherine, Sarah nor Elizabeth mention her in their wills. There was a very slight chance that perhaps Mother Trusler was referring to her daughter-in-law Mary, John Trusler junior's wife, however she had been dead for almost four years when the will was written. Now John Trusler junior was very much preoccupied with himself and his own concerns, and as volume I of his memoirs demonstrates, is loathe to drop a family name, but it is difficult to believe that even he would fail to mention a deceased wife for four years. Besides, Mother Trusler made no mention of her son-in-law Stephen/ Stefano Storace, by this time married to Elizabeth Trusler for three years, so mentioning of one in-law and not the other doesn't really hold up under scrutiny.

Another interesting detail was revealed in the search for Trusler family information. Already mentioned was the fact that John Trusler senior, together with his nephew John Sherratt, were listed as bankrupts in 1754. However, his name is also listed as being incarcerated in the Marshalsea Prison for bankruptcy in March, 1761.⁵⁷ It is not clear how long he was at the prison, but the changes in the publicity for the Gardens around this time might have been as a result of this unfortunate situation.

MARYBONE - GARDENS.
MR. TRUSLER's Daughter begs Leave
 to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that she intends to make
 Fruit Tarts during the Fruit Season, and hopes to give equal Satisfaction
 as with the rich Cakes, and Almond Cheesecakes; the Fruit will
 always be fresh gathered, having great Quantities in the Garden, and
 none but Loaf Sugar used and the finest Epping Butter; Tarts of a
 Twelvepenny Size will be made every Day, from One to Three o'Clock,
 and those that want them of larger Sizes to fill a Dish, are desired to
 speak for them, and send their Dish or the Size of it, and shall be made
 to fit. The Almond Cheesecakes will be always hot at One o'Clock as
 usual; and the rich Seed and Plum Cakes, sent to any Part of the
 Town, at 2s. 6d. each. Coffee, Tea and Chocolate at any Time of the
 Day; and fine Epping Butter may always be had.

Figure 19: Public Advertiser, May 7th, 1760

The previous year, under the heading of MARYBONE GARDENS, advertisements customarily began "MR TRUSLER'S Daughter...." [Figure 19]. In May, there is an abrupt two-week silence, which is then followed by a restyled advertisement for the Gardens. Mention of Miss Trusler and her baking is in small letters and moved to a later paragraph. The emphasis becomes the Gardens themselves, with Miss Trusler's contribution, or at least the Trusler name, being much more low key [Figure 20].

57 London Gazette, 24th March, 1761.

MARYBONE GARDENS.

ON Monday the 26th Instant the Gardens will be opened, with the usual Evening Musical Entertainments; the Gardens are greatly altered and improved, and are now very delightful and pleafant. Gentlemen and Ladies may walk in them Evenings and Mornings till the Opening, and be accommodated with Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate, Wine, Cakes, &c. and Mr. Trusler's Daughter continues to make the rich Seed and Plumb-Cakes, and fine Almond Cheefecakes, fo much admired by the Nobility and Gentry; the Cheefecakes are hot every Day at One o'Clock, and are fold at Two Shillings per Dozen: The Cakes are always ready, and will be sent to any Part of the Town at Two Shillings and Six-pence each.

Figure 20: Public Advertiser, May 22nd, 1760

Were the family practising a form of damage control, lowering the profile of the Trusler name whilst still maintaining and promoting the Gardens as a business? Perhaps the emphasis on the Gardens being a pleasant place to take the air and enjoy delicate refreshments was less a dream of John Trusler senior, and more Bertha's efforts to maximise the money-earning potential for the sake of the family, with her father languishing in the Marshalsea Prison.

After months of searching numerous sources and potential leads, the answer to the mystery of what happened to Bertha Trusler was discovered in plain sight, in the records of Somerset Burial Index. Listed on either side of the record for the baptism of her niece,⁵⁸ are the bookends of her life, revealing that Mrs Bertha Trusler, born in 1733 in London, passed away in 1785 in Bath [Figure 21].

3 results

Last name	First name(s)	Year Of Birth	Year Of Death	Year	Record set	Location
Trusler	Bertha	1733	—	1733	Westminster Baptisms	St George, Hanover Square, Middlesex, England
Trusler	Emily Bertha	—	—	1774	England Births & Baptisms 1538-1975	Cobham, Surrey, England
Trusler	Mrs Bertha	—	—	1785	Somerset Burial Index	Bath, Somerset, England

Figure 21: Search result www.findmypast.co.uk, accessed 19/03/2020

The Trusler family had close connections to Bath,⁵⁹ so it is conceivable that Bertha decided to retire there to take the waters and enjoy both the city and the social life that was blossoming in the city. Perhaps it was even to cast a professional eye over examples of the city's burgeoning baking fame in the form of Sally Lun buns, Bath buns, Bath cheesecakes and Oliver biscuits.

58 John Trusler junior's daughter with his second wife, Elizabeth.

59 Catherine Trusler got married in Bath, and John Trusler junior spent his last days there. Also see Footnote 1.

Bertha's Baking Legacy

Is it possible to determine the recipe for Bertha Trusler's Maids of Honour pastries?

The modern notion of cheesecakes is very particular in that, whether baked or set with gelatine, there is a large proportion of cheese, usually cream cheese, occasionally curd cheese. Cheesecakes of the eighteenth century were a much more fluid affair. The Wellcome Collection has digitised numerous 18th century household manuscripts and made them available online.⁶⁰ The cheesecake recipes found therein contain a variety of non-curd ingredients for texture such as pounded almonds, cake crumbs, biscuit crumbs, breadcrumbs, hard-boiled yolks, mashed potatoes and ground rice.

The key detail in understanding Bertha Trusler's Maids of Honour lies in the phrasing of her advertisement [Figure 16]. "*Almond cheesecakes, hot every day at one o'clock, six or eight make a dish, at 2s per dozen. And a smaller size called Maids of Honour, made when bespoke, at 2s. per dozen.*" The clear implication is that Maids of Honour are smaller versions of the almond cheesecakes, which at least narrows things down.

Due to the popularity of recipes and even individual ingredients waxing and waning with fashion, in attempting to determine the style of cheesecake, it is important to try and limit the focus to recipes within the particular time-frame of interest.

Published at a time when the Trusler's were first establishing themselves at Marybone Gardens, Hannah Glasse's recipe for Fine Cheesecakes⁶¹ includes some details on variations. Along with common ingredients of egg yolks, sugar, butter, nutmeg and perfumed plumbs she notes:

- Fine Cheesecakes are made with curd cheese and either almonds & Naples biscuit OR macaroons, and currants.
- Saffron Cheesecakes are made with curd cheese, macaroons and saffron.
- Macaroon Cheesecakes are made with curd cheese and macaroons.
- Almond Cheesecakes are made with curd cheese, almonds and Naples biscuit.

In contrast, of the many Almond Cheesecake recipes in the Wellcome Collection manuscripts, those in manuscripts dated between 1700 and 1775⁶² were examined and found to consist of just four main ingredients: almonds, eggs, sugar and butter.

60 <https://wellcomelibrary.org/collections/digital-collections/recipe-books/> Accessed 21/03/20.

61 Hannah Glasse "The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy", 1747, p174

62 Sixteen in total.

The incidentals include, in descending order of popularity, orange-flower water, rosewater, lemon or orange zest, sack, cinnamon and nutmeg. None of these recipes contained actual cheese, curd or otherwise.

At least one form of Maids of Honour are still sold today, the most well-known originating a little further afield than Marylebone, at Newen's Tearoom & Bakery, in Richmond. The Maids of Honour recipe used there is a secret, however, as with numerous recipes, there are several versions that have appeared in public over the years, some of which may be quite close to the version made by Miss Trusler.

A strong claim of knowing the Richmond version is made by Harris & Borella in their early 20th century baker's handbook "All About Pastries".⁶³

"The only claim for authenticity made for the formula appended is the fact that it is the one actually used by the writer for the purpose many years ago at a hostelry at Richmond that is world-known and world-famous."⁶⁴

The recipe that follows includes ground almonds, curd cheese, lemon zest and juice, nutmeg, cream eggs and sugar, with almonds forming the greater part over the curds.

It is difficult to say whether Bertha Trusler's almond cheesecakes followed the 'traditional' 18th century recipes without curd cheese, or Hannah Glasse's fashionable variation, of which the modern Maids of Honour might be a descendant. As an aside, it is interesting to note that of the 36 named recipes Bertha Trusler includes in her advertisements, two-thirds of them are for items which appear in Hannah Glasse's *Art of Cookery*. It is therefore not inconceivable that Bertha Trusler based at least some of her baking on the recipes in the most popular cookery book of the time.

Conclusion

John Trusler had a dream of making high quality catering in elegant surroundings. Alas, his enthusiasm and aspirations weren't matched with business acumen, and he found himself bankrupted twice and ultimately ousted from his beloved Gardens. His eldest daughter, Bertha, initially contributed to his venture, then when circumstances overcame the family, took advantage of the renown she had garnered for her own efforts in supporting her father's vision, to fend for both

63 All About Pastries by H.G.Harris and S.P.Borella, undated (circa 1900), published by the Offices of "The British Baker", London.

64 Ibid., p23.

herself and the family in trying times. Bertha Trusler was a skilled baker, a canny businesswoman and a catering innovator. She created, or at the very least, popularised, a classic British pastry that has endured for over two hundred and fifty years, and she deserves every bit of recognition and acknowledgement of her remarkable career as Britain's first celebrity baker.