

Epicurean Rings / Jewelry / Coins / Mementos

Post by "Joshua" of May 7, 2021 at 10:48 PM

William Bligh's ring, revisited;

Quote

Don: "Far be it from me to second guess the museum, but..."

Quote

Me: "The ring was made by John Miers of London, "No. 111, Strand, opposite Exeter Change." Miers lived between 1758 and 1821."

I've been looking into this, and I am even more baffled than I was before.

I've spent hours chasing down examples of John Miers' work, and I've reached a startling conclusion—I don't think he made this ring.

[John Miers](#) was a sort of jeweller. He just wasn't really a jeweller who worked with...well, with jewels. John Miers was a profile painter who specialized in "Shades"—that is to say, in silhouettes. These were enormously popular, and he was and still is regarded as the finest painter of silhouette miniatures in his day. His miniatures adorned locket, brooches, and rings. The bulk of his work was in framed wall hangings, usually a "his and hers" that would hang prominently in the house.

There are countless surviving examples of his profiles. He advertised in newspapers a 'sitting time' for a portrait of under a minute. Goodness knows how many thousands of silhouettes he and his associate John Field cranked out. And these specimens are highly regarded by collectors; several examples of his work hang in the National Portrait Gallery in London. It is all the more surprising, then, that I cannot find a *single other example* of a John Miers intaglio ring.

It strikes me now as increasingly plausible that the Bligh ring was simply tucked into an old ring-case for lack of anywhere else to put it. Which puts me even further to the wrong side of square one than I was when I started.