

## BLIGH, STANLEY PRICE MORGAN (1870 - 1949), landowner and author

**Name:** Stanley Price Morgan Bligh  
**Date of birth:** 1870  
**Date of death:** 1949  
**Spouse:** Matilda Agnes Bligh (née Wilson)  
**Parent:** Ellen Bligh (née Edwards)  
**Parent:** Oliver Morgan Bligh  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** landowner and author  
**Area of activity:** Land Ownership; Literature and Writing  
**Author:** Gwilym Evans

Born 15 February 1870 in Brecon, only son of Oliver Morgan Bligh and his wife Ellen (née Edwards) of Clifton. The first Bligh to inherit the estate of the Price family of Cilmeri near Builth was Thomas Price Bligh : he was succeeded by his brother, Oliver Morgan Bligh, who previously kept a draper's shop in Clifton. They were a branch of the Blighs of Cornwall whose most distinguished member was William Bligh of the ' *Bounty* ', vice-admiral of the Blue.

Stanley Bligh was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Oxford, became a member of the Inner Temple and was called to the Bar in 1895. Until he took over the management of the Cilmeri estate from his mother he practised on the S. Wales circuit. In 1895 he married Matilda Agnes Wilson, daughter of Major John Wilson of the Royal Scots Greys, one of the survivors of the Charge of the Light Brigade. Bligh became interested in the theories of Sigmund Freud, and in order to attend the first conference of psychologists in Vienna in 1908 he acquired a knowledge of German. Under Freud's inspiration he wrote three books, *The direction of desire* (1910), *The desire for qualities* (1911), *The art of conversation* (1912), all published in Oxford. But for the outbreak of World War I, which called for all his energies in food production and land improvement, he would probably have published more. Following the setting up of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station in 1919, Cilmeri could be regarded as an extension of it, for the scientific workers there were willingly given facilities to hold numerous experiments into the improvement of poor grassland on the estate. [R.G. Stapledon](#) (1882 - 1960) considered Bligh to be the most notable pioneer in the improvement of pasture in the country. The agricultural department of the University of Oxford kept a detailed account of all the costs of improvement of the Cilmeri land, and it is shown in the pamphlet *The improvement of upland grazings* by S. M. Bligh and F. J. Prewett in the series ' Progress in English farming systems ' (1930), that the improvements were highly profitable.

[Stapledon](#) and Bligh became close friends and [Stapledon](#) regarded his meeting with him as one of the most important events of his life. He had a great influence on [Stapledon](#)'s way of thinking. He taught him to see what lay behind facts. They had keen discussions on philosophy, psy- chology and agriculture, and would privately exchange poems with one another. For Bligh the pursuits of the country gentry were a waste of time; to them he was a crank or hermit, but for people like [Charles Morgan](#) and his wife, Hilda Vaughan, conversation with him was most inspiring. He had the rare gift of nurturing the minds of others. He was particularly interested in the philosophy of Plotinus. He had freed himself from a large number of social customs. For worship he had no use, but he found relief in composing metrical prayers, and there was a strong element of mysticism in his makeup.

Though a professed Liberal he took little part in politics, but he gave years of valuable service on the county council. When the fourth national conference, *circa* 1893, failed to reach agreement on the matter, Bligh erected his own memorial to [Llywelyn ap Gruffudd](#) on a site on his own land near the place where the prince is believed to have been killed in December 1282.

He died childless, 15 January 1949, his estate was sold in 1950, and in accordance with his will the greater part of the proceeds went to endow scholarships worth £2,000 a year to boys and girls in Brecknockshire who wished to pursue courses of study or research in agriculture, cooperation or forestry.

### Author

Gwilym Evans, (1896 - 1983)

### Sources

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personal knowledge

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