

## Redland Past Revisited for the Redland Directory - No. 17

Yet another Urban Myth? © Julian Lea-Jones. 2009

How many of our readers have noticed that Redland Library on Whiteladies Road is in not in Redland? Whiteladies Road, the boundary between Clifton Westbury Parish is marked by boundary stones which can still be seen at Tyndalls Park Road, Whiteladies Gate, the corner of Chantry Road, and between Woodbury and Lower Redland Roads. So having established that the library is very definitely in Clifton, why is it marked Redland Branch Library?

When I first queried this many years ago, I was told that Clifton residents welcomed a Library, but some felt the appellation 'Free' had unwelcome working class associations. Ever since 1613 there had been repeated attempts to provide libraries for the citizens of Bristol, but it was not until May 1883 that the Council finally agreed to a Library to serve the needs of West Clifton and Redland. Land for the library became available on the corner of Whatley and Whiteladies Road. Stocked with 10,000 volumes and opened in June 1885, it is very clearly marked 'Free Library, Redland Branch', with not a hint of Clifton. So the questions remain; is this yet another urban myth, an example of snobbery or merely an oversight by the stone carver?

Read about other odd facts in 'Bristol Curiosities'. Also 'Enjoyable History' – my programme of illustrated talks - based on project research and my books

