



# Ripping Reads

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Joanna Lloyd  
by Elizabeth Boardman

**I**t was good to see Joanna Lloyd featuring in *Ripping Reads*, in Jill Ashmore's article. I acquired some of her school books in my thirties, given to me by a work colleague who had inherited them from his mother and knew of my interest in school stories. Once read, I set about completing the set, as I was much taken with the writing style. Some children's books are written with a humorous touch which sets them apart from others, and Joanna Lloyd is one such writer; others are Nancy Breary and Ruby Ferguson. Catherine Maitland and her equally absent-minded clerical father are wonderful creations. And I love the way the girls turn the Headmistress' name into an inoffensive oath, saying 'Atherton forbid!' and 'What the Atherton?'. Neither



do the mistresses take themselves too seriously, with house mistress Miss Burgess writing to her married sister: "It is only a matter of weeks before I get the sack. Miss Atherton has been very kind but I have seen her eye fixed on me in a ruminative sort of way ... after a week in my house girls start gibbering and getting delusions. Naturally it makes a head mistress think ... If you hear of any post that has nothing whatever to do with girls in any form let me know. Otherwise you and Horace will probably have to keep me in my old age." (*Jane runs away from School*)

Unlike Jill I also enjoy the crime novels written under her own name of Joan Coggin. As one introduction notes, Lady Lupin is very similar to Catherine Maitland.