HELEN PINKERTON

"She is a master of poetic style and of her material. No poet in English writes with more authority."
—Yvor Winters

"Her poetry, in form and in content, is both traditional and original. In the best sense of the word, it is poetic."
—John Baxter, in Sequoia

"However belated the publication of this book, time is on Pinkerton’s side."
—Timothy Steele

Though Helen Pinkerton’s work has won the attention and praise of serious readers, who tracked her poems as they appeared in such journals as the Paris Review, the Sewanee Review, and the Southern Review; this is the first trade edition of her collected poems.

Writing on themes that have historically been the subject of poetry—the individual’s relationship to God, love and its costs, friendship, the beauty of works of art, death, and war and politics—Pinkerton brings a rare depth and seriousness to even her earliest works. Primarily lyrical and devotional, they touch on the larger issues of human struggle and conduct. More recent poems exhibit a stylistic as well as a thematic shift, moving away from the rhymed forms of her devotional works into a blank verse marked by a quiet flexibility and contemplative grace.

Swallow Press is pleased to publish this half-century of poems by a woman who has lived fully and observed acutely and who has set the life and observations down in memorable verse.

HELEN PINKERTON is a poet, essayist, and scholar of American and English literature. She has taught at Stanford, Michigan State, and other universities. In 1999, she was awarded the Allen Tate Poetry Prize for her poem “Alike and Yet Unlike: General Richard Taylor Writes to Henry Adams,” about two American Civil War figures. She lives in Palo Alto, California.

HELEN PINKERTON poems

TAKEN IN FAITH

AFTERWORD BY TIMOTHY STEELE