



# The Unthronged Oracle: A study of the poetry of Laura Riding

*Jack Blackmore*

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Laura Riding was a major poet whose poems, though widely admired and influential, have been little understood. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s she was 'a devout advocate of poetry' believing that 'to go to poetry is the most ambitious act of the mind'. Her subsequent renunciation of poetry in the 1940s gave rise to bemusement. Jack Blackmore tackles the causes of the neglect of Riding's poetry and establishes new and productive approaches to the poems. His close readings of fifteen poems demonstrate the progress of Collected Poems and the remarkable range and scope of her poetry. He establishes both the strength and unity of the poems and the continuity between them and her 'post-poetic' work, in particular her spiritual testament The Telling. Mark Jacobs's vivid memoir of a visit to the author in later life at her Florida home complements the work on the poems. 'These essays are interesting and you have done well... You seem to me fair and just in what you say about her work.' - Robert Nye 'This is ambitious work, full of insights.' - Professor Michael Schmidt



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