Lines of Sight
Also by Frances Presley:

The Sex of Art
Hula-Hoop
Linocut
Neither the One nor the Other, with Elizabeth James
Automatic Cross Stitch, with Irma Irsara
Somerset Letters
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Myne
FRANCES PRESLEY

Lines of Sight

Shearsman Books
Exeter
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for Gavin
my neo-antiquarian and naked boy
Stone settings
Note on stone settings

Neolithic stone settings are arrangements of upright stones places in roughly geometric patterns or apparently randomly. They are unique to Exmoor, where they are by far the most common stone monument, and Hazel Eardley-Wilmot calls them ‘Exmoor’s special puzzle’.
Stones above Porlock

for Gavin and Keith

lent against
finger reach
kneeler
smallest in front peeled stone
cuve out?
  curve out
carved down
caved

sheep shit
drawn reverse quavers
reeds
horizon
drawn reverse quavers
har zone

explain vane
darblade
revels
sp lane  splice  rare
bare  breer bre’er
brother

possibly slopes

ogh am ru in s all the or ies

space  down  hester
brown  each
speworld  lark  bee

25 August 04
Hazel Eardley-Wilmot

The Author

acquainted with vagaries of language
does not claim to be more than a serious amateur archaeologist fifty years the moor’s familiar

finding White Ladder noticing careful thinking unhurried add to the slender knowledge
Stone settings

per pl ex

moor

two three or four
paral lel rows
rec tangles

double square
squat shape

almost regular pattern needs another
stone perceptible just under turf

in drought a patch of starved grass will betray it

in wet weather feel it through soles

Allow! for

s=o=t=v=o=e=n=r=e=s grown
shale y
de composing
re moved
Land Rovered

less
incom   prehen
plete   sible

OUTLIER

guess the riddle
no analogy
slight
resemblance to Scottish *four-posters*
    lack a centre
    a dominant position within the frame

some patterns are completely enigmatic
Stone settings x 3

‘fate derives from fando, that is from speaking’

for Barbara x 2

three rows of
three evenly spaced
well aligned

three and thrice
Thre Werd
Systrys

hand in hand chanting

thrice to thine, and thrice to mine
peace the charm

god desses of
destinie his terrific
daughters wretched old

women arm in
arm ba bar
bar(e
i an
White ladder

entirely chance

cold spring

short grass

double row

quartz stones

sandstone slabs

one stride

two

between

ladder like

slow search

not wall

not bank

not boundary

shining stone

ploughed out
road metalling

one by one

deceptively swallowed

boggy source

Kinsford

Cunet (io)

Girl = Kunti = Spring
Brer

*On Exmoor as well as triangles there are rectangles and parallelograms and rhomboids like a series of Euclidean exercises.* He said that it can’t be Euclidean geometry except by accident and without understanding the angles. Even the Egyptians . . . . and this was so much later and so much less. As for the rhomboid, he can only remember the rhombus, which is a sort of lop-sided square. If it was a rhomboid it would have to be three dimensional and one of the stones would be suspended in the sky. A rhombus is a flat fish. Only those without memories roam the moor at night. An oblique equilateral parallelogram. How can we follow these parallel lives? Lost stag hounds mud red and howling, facing opposite directions. A quadrilateral of which only opposite sides and angles are equal. Quad bike pass by. She is worried that he has no over trousers, but he cannot be threatened by rain or cold. Sphagnum, she says, under our boots, and they seem more precarious and waterlogged. The stones at the circle look smaller than in memory or in the photographs, and are known as miniliths. Lichen micro crusts substitute for decoration, and there is nothing grey in their green. We turn to face the camera hidden in her jacket turning into the wind and rain. *From here to Withypool circle is a precisely straight line of six and a half miles.* But they would not have had lines of sight, he says. They could not have known, and there will always be a straight line between two points.

bre-er
out of the briar patch
sweet brier
out of the bare earth
he came
brer

an edge
merge
an angle