

# *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

Paravane

Myne

**FRANCES PRESLEY**

**Lines of Sight**

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### **Acknowledgements**

See page 114.

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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 placed 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  
reeds  
horizon  
har       zone

drawn reverse quavers

explain vane  
darblade  
revels  
splane splice rare  
bare breer bre'er  
brother

possibly slopes  
*ogham ruins all theories*

space down hester  
brown each  
sp|ce 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  
e  
merge  
an angle