

OIFIG NA NOIBREACHA POIBLÍ  
(OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS)

BRAINSE NA SÉADCHOMHARTHAÍ NÁISIÚNTA  
10 SRÁID HIÚM  
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2  
Teileafón: 67541 - 60



NATIONAL MONUMENTS BRANCH  
10 HUME STREET  
DUBLIN 2  
Telephone: 67541 - 60

5th April, 1968.

Dr. Bernard Wailes,  
University of Pennsylvania,  
Department of Anthropology,  
University Museum,  
33rd and Spruce Streets,  
PHILADELPHIA 19104.

*c. 35 acres*

Dear Dr. Wailes, DÚN AILINNE, Co. Kildare: HILL FORT

Thank you for your letters dated 26th February and 30th March.

I am sorry to have left it so long before writing but I was waiting until the funds and rates etc. for this year's programme had been clarified.

To reply specifically to your letter of 30th March:

1. The Minister approves of the proposed exploratory investigation at Dún Ailinne in 1968.
3. (a) Yes (especially since you are able to spend a day or two in Dublin in mid-late May).
- (b) This Department will pay the full costs of:
  - (i) labour, tools, plant, site offices and sheds etc.
  - (ii) contribute towards the out-of-pocket expenses of the excavator and assistants (the students) at the rate of £12.8s. per week (which would first about pay for ordinary accommodation and food.)

/over...

- (iii) Surveying equipment and film can be provided by this office.
- (iv) Travel within the country to and from the site.
- (v) Compensation to landowner for disturbance.

It seems that you will have to ask your Board to contribute towards the cost of travel to and from Ireland for your Party and some other personal out-of-pocket expenses.

I enclose 2 maps of the site and a copy of the Instructions to excavators: I suggest that you leave over until your visit in May such matters as licence, recruitment of labour, permission of landowner etc. These and other administrative matters can best be dealt with from Dublin and I will be glad to assist you where I can.

Hoping to see you in May.

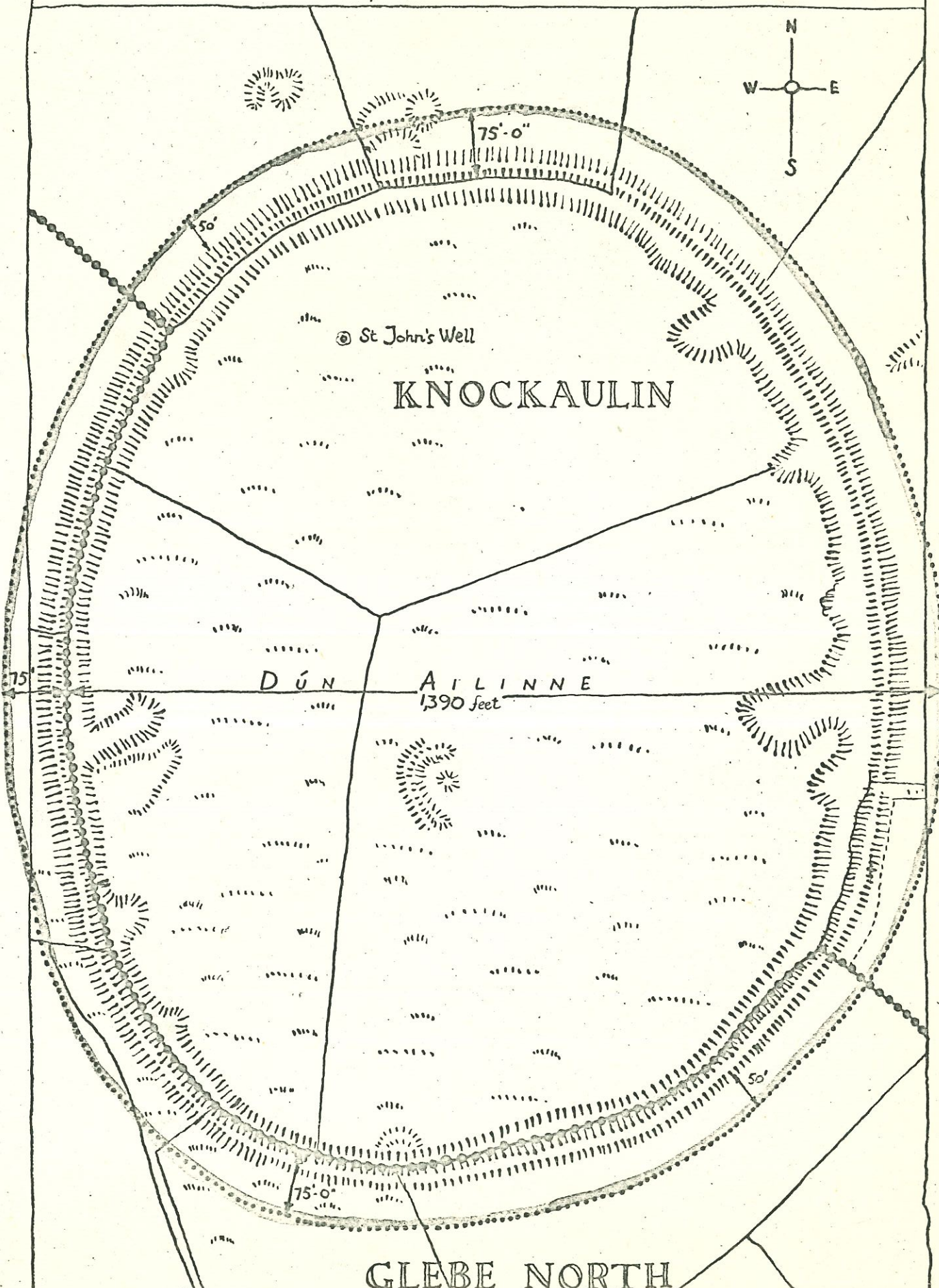
With best wishes,

*Marcus Ó hEochaidh*

Marcus Ó hEochaidh  
Assistant Inspector of National  
Monuments

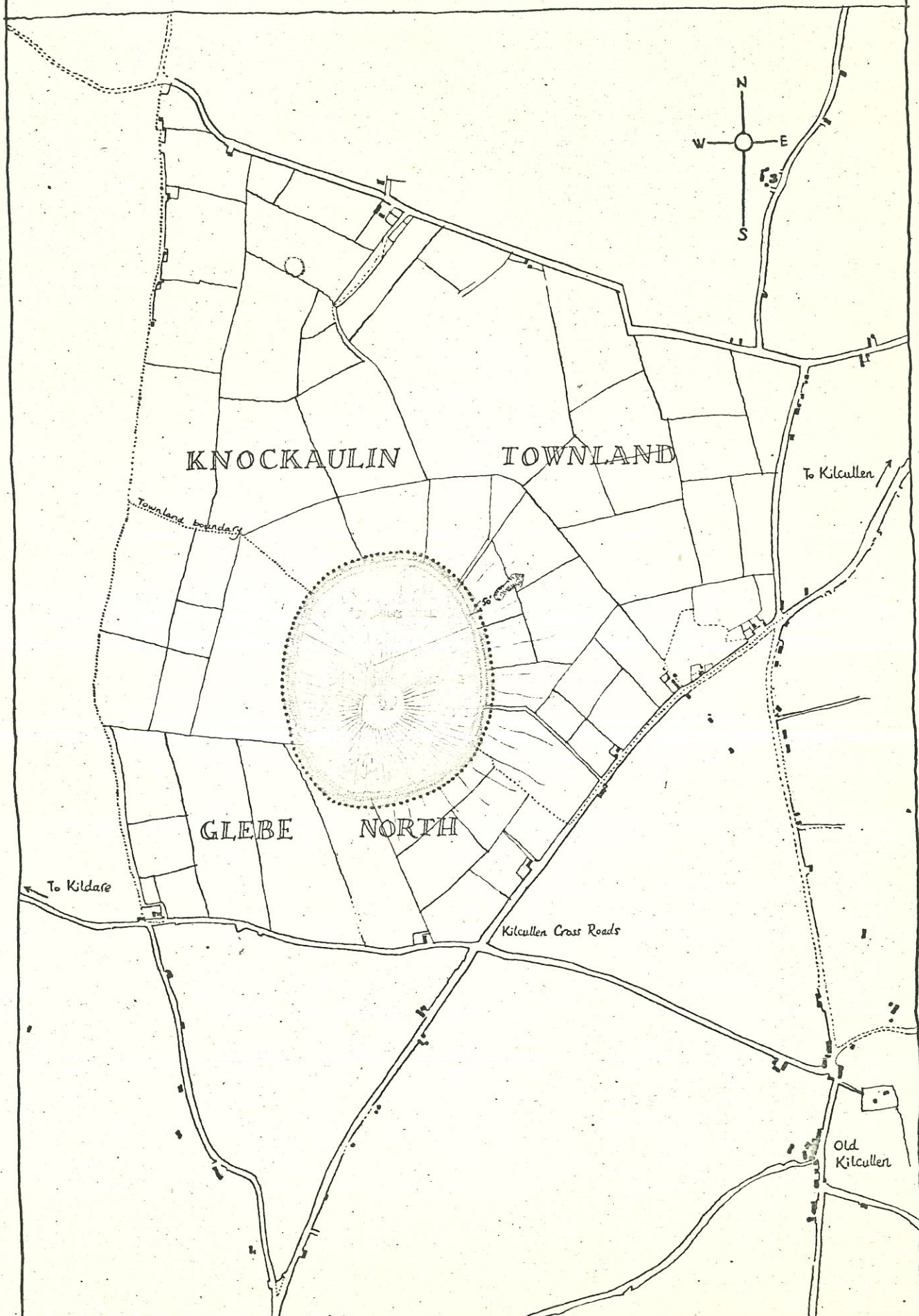
5TH FEBRUARY, 1953.

SITE PLAN



JANUARY 31, 1953.

SITE PLAN.



# UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA 19104

## *The College*

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY MUSEUM  
33rd and Spruce Streets

18 September 1967

Miss E. K. Ralph  
c/o Sig. Enrico Mueller  
Cassano Ionio  
Cosenza  
Italy

Dear Beth,

I was approached this summer by the National Monuments Branch (branch of what, I'm not quite sure) in the Irish Republic about the possibility of excavating one of the traditional royal sites: namely, Dun Ailinne, which is not too far S.E. of Dublin, and close to the Curragh. There is, in addition, some reason to believe (i.e. a school of thought that argues) that this site, and not Tara, was the traditional seat of the 'High Kings'. On this I don't feel competent to judge, except to note that, archaeologically, Tara has proved something of a headache, what with Late Neolithic passage-graves and all.

Anyway, I was invited over to have a look at the place in June. It is remarkably similar to the Navan - a rounded, quite steep, hill with a roughly circular bank and ditch (ditch inside bank, as Navan) enclosing quite a large area (guess - 30 acres ??). The only internal feature is a 'thing' on the crest of the hill which I (& the National Monuments Branch) think must be an old gun-emplacement - perhaps from 18th century? No mounds or little raths, as at Navan; some irregular pits just inside the ditch - my guess is that these are just quarry pits, tho' whether ancient or recent heaven knows. Of this substantial internal area, roughly half has been 'rotovated' (not apparently ploughed, but sort of lightly turned over) and has good grazing grass on it; the rest is under scrub vegetation - gorse, brambles, bracken, patches of coarse grass, etc.

My reaction to all this was, obviously, to ask for (a) aerial photos, and (b) to suggest that an instrumental survey should be undertaken over at least a substantial portion of the interior. Without any advance clues, as you can see, digging would just be a 'needle-in-a-haystack' business. In addition, one really has no definite evidence that these 'royal sites' ever did, in their original state, have any buildings whatsoever. As far as I can make out, everyone has assumed that they were royal residences - but I wonder if they mightn't have been 'sacred' areas, perhaps where people forgathered every so often for this or that; i.e. they might never have had any permanent occupation in their original state! Just a thought, but I had to point out that there would be no guarantee of anything there at all that could be revealed by excavation! Of the other 'royal sites' Tara has heaven knows what, going back to Late Neo.; Cashel is quite covered by ecclesiastical buildings, from about C.10/11 onwards; Navan we know @ mound & rath; Dun Rig is unexcavated, as far as I know; Cruachan ditto; Wisneach had some occupation revealed by 1929 excavations. There does not, in fact, appear to be sufficient evidence to date to warrant any sensible suggestions, in advance of excavation, as to what

~~END~~

one

/should expect to find in an excavation, let alone what part of the site one should start looking for it.

The aerial photos that they showed me, by the way, didn't seem to show anything very obvious; but then there is no vast series of photos of the site taken at different times of the year etc etc.

My reaction to all this was:

- (a) to say that, provisionally, I was interested
- (b) the first step was instrumental survey, which I would try to arrange, plus examination of further aerial photos (if any), which they would arrange
- (c) if any survey seemed the least promising, I would provisionally committ myself to directing a limited excavation of an exploratory nature
- (d) this would of course depend on support of my Institution
- (e) if everything went well and promisingly, I would continue directing the excavat~~ion~~

I wrote asking for your whereabouts & address, but by the time I received an answer, the data sent indicated that you were back in the US - evidently not much point in writing if that were the case, so I decided to shelve it until we met in September, on my return. So then of course I find that you are back in Italy !

Fro got back after I did, but I have had a brief word with him, & he has no objection whatsoever to us getting involved, on the right terms, anyway. Apropos an instrumental survey, he is willing for you to do it on your way back to the US, provided, of course, that this is convenient for you.

SO, after all that, the \$64,000 question - would you be willing/able/etc to do such a survey ???? If it seems possible that you might be able to fit this in, presumably after Sybaris, & on your way home, could you perhaps contact Mr oh Eochaidh (details on attached sheet) directly ? I would, of course, be glad to know myself what goes on, if anything. The Minister of Finance HIMSELF, Mr Haughey, is pushing this whole scheme - I was taken to see him in June, after I had visited the site - so I don't doubt that you/we will get every co-operation & facility within reason. e.g. I expect that Mr oh Eochaidh will rustle up people to help with survey, etc, transport, accommodation, and the rest. We discussed general principles of the financing of a possible excavation, but not (my oversight, I'm afraid) the finances of a possible instrumental survey - if you write, perhaps it would be as well to clear this up in advance ?

If you can do this survey, I don't see that there would be any advantage in my being present, do you ? No doubt I could skip a few days of classes, but I don't exactly see Fro sanctioning \$350-odd for the fare, just for that ! Needless to say, I should be delighted to do it !

If you are unable/unwilling, perhaps you could also let me know - then I can write to Martin Aitken, to see if he would be interested.

By the way, I visited South Cadbury ("? Camelot") in August, & had a long chat with Leslie Alcock: he is still interested in the possibility of your doing a Caesium mag. survey if & when a mutually convenient time can be arranged. He had a soil conductivity survey done this past spring, along with Martin's mag. survey, with remarkably consistent results - on excavation, however, it seemed that that instrumental surveys had erred by giving insufficient data - i.e. they found more pits, ditches, holes etc. on excavation than the surveys had indicated. It occurred to me that if you did this Irish trip en route homewards, you might also wish to re-open contact with Alcock ? I have put his address on enclosed sheet also.

Finally, if you can't make the Irish thing this fall, would you sooner try to fit it in next spring, say, or would you rather I asked Martin ? The Irish, especially Mr Haughey, are all fired up to start things as soon as poss. but, from our point of view, if we are going to get involved in a possibly juicy site, it might be nicer to have done everything ourselves (& possibly more useful to us in terms of excavation).

With best wishes from all, + please give my regards to Sig. Muller - Bernard.

P.S. fro is rather keen to try infra-red aerial photos  
of Dun ~~Ailinne~~ Ailinne! (rather these were  
of some interest at Sybaris?)

on second thoughts, it might be better to write to LeClerc, as the senior man - I imagine he will pass it straight on to oh Eochaidh.

Marcus oh Eochaidh (don't ask me how it's pronounced !)

National Monuments Branch

10 Hume Street

Dublin 2

he is fellow perhaps slightly older than I am, & seems to be the chap that we would be effectively dealing with

<sup>Percy</sup>  
Mr LeClerc (pronounced leclair)  
as above

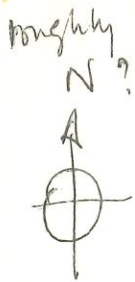
- oh Eochaidh's boss; perhaps head of National Monuments Branch ?

you are bound to hear of, if not meet:

John P. Cohane  
Holly Park  
Kilcornan  
Co. Limerick

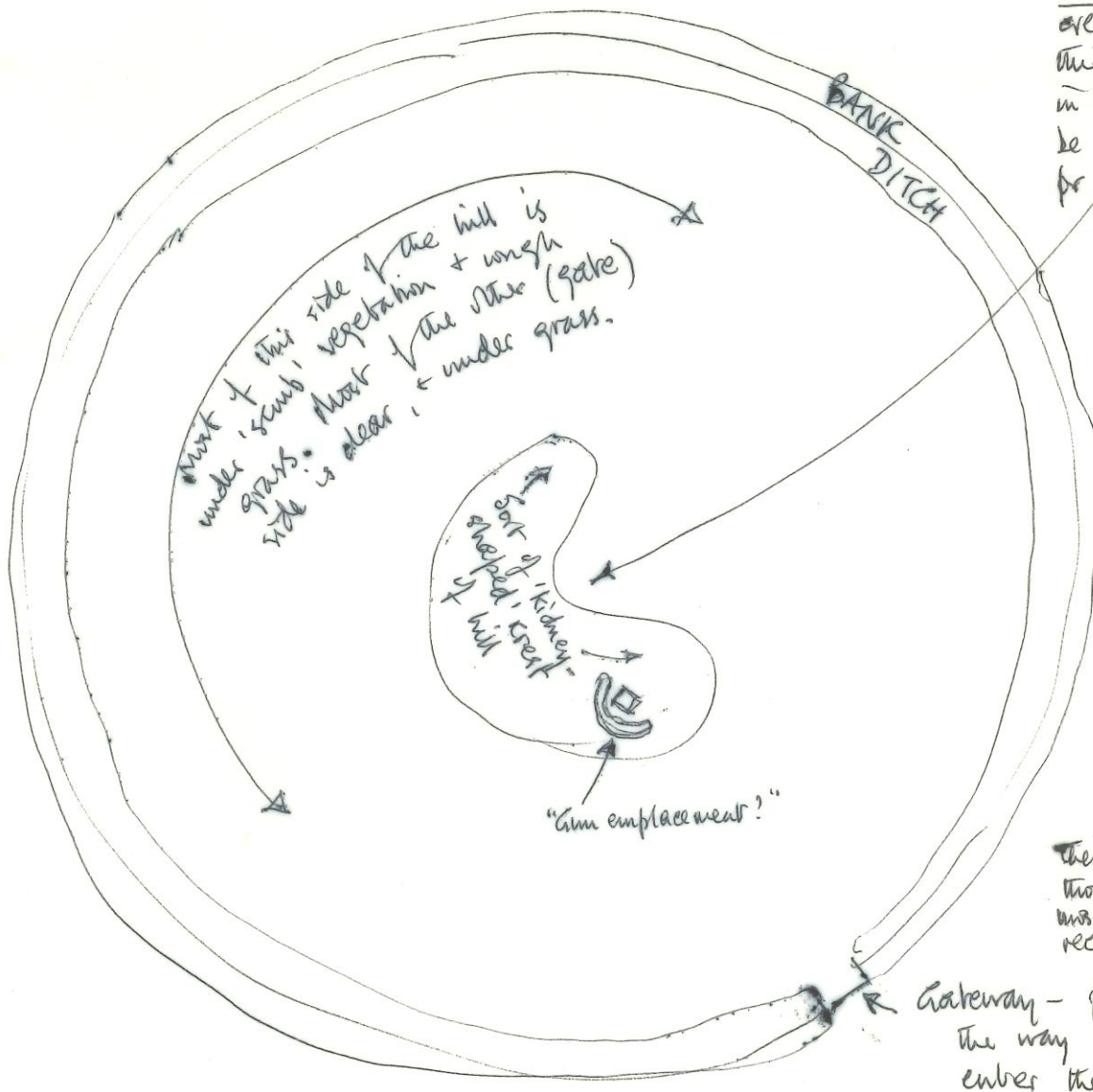
American, now living in Ireland. Evidently well-to-do; one puts him in the general class of fairly wealthy Irish-Americans resident in Ireland. Chum of Haughey's. Largely Cohane's instigation that this Dun Ailinne 'project' has been started - now you can see why I was approached: Cohane (who may well be putting up some of the money, I don't know) wanted to get an American archaeologist involved, & Yale (his Alma Mater) for some reason put him onto me ! Incidentally, everyone from Haughey down to oh Eochaidh seem to actively wish for outside people to dig in Ireland - I got the strong impression that there is a sort of 'wind of change' blowing through the Republic - suddenly feeling that they have been a backwater too long; trying to make contact with political/academic/economic opposite numbers in other countries, and so forth.

Leslie Alcock Esq., M.A., F.S.A.  
Dept. of Archaeology  
University College  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff

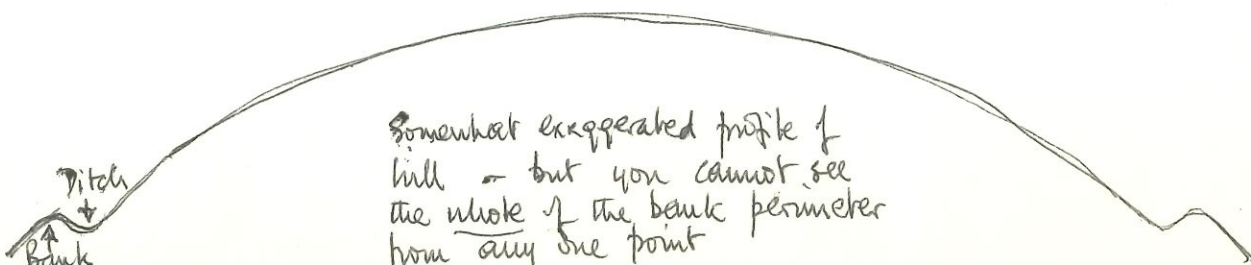


Key rough sketch plan  
of Dun ~~Atine~~ Ailinne

Unless new aerial photos show anything, I have just a hunch that the crest of the hill, & this might follow in the west, might be more likely places for 'features' than elsewhere.



There are various gaps through the bank most probably are recent



6 June 1968

Dear Beth,

Many thanks for your letter, just arrived. Of course, I have efficiently left in Cornwall the two addresses that I have for you in Greece (& it might be too late to wait until I return to write to you), so am hoping that this will reach you all right !

Yes - 20 June would be OK; there is some digging that won't require prior instrumental survey (the 'gun-emplacment' or whatever), and we can do more regular surveying, laying out grid pegs, and all the rest. I don't think we are likely to be held up, knowing what the first few days of a dig are always like !

Please come to Dublin if you can - we are only 30 odd miles south-west of Dublin, while we must be 100-plus miles from Shannon. I could meet you at Shannon if necessary, so don't hesitate to say so if it is necessary, but this would mean taking probably the best part of a day away. Just let me know what flight, what day and what time, and I'll be there to meet you. If I'm not, it'll just mean that I've been held up in the traffic coming through Dublin to the airport (of course, we are on the wrong side of Dublin for this !), so if you wouldn't mind waiting, I'll find you there if this happens - I'll look in the bar first.

Sounds as if things are going well in Greece. Mike Tite and his wife were staying here over the Whit week-end with us, and I wasn't able to tell him much about the caesium magnetometer, of course - he was all agog. In his spare time from teaching regular Physics at Essex University, he is on a private project of trying to make some co-ordinated sense out of the by now considerable number of instrumental surveys that have been carried out at various British sites.

I havn't yet heard definitely if accommodation is fixxd, so Dun Ailinne Excavations, c/o Post Office, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare, Republic of Ireland, remains our address for the time being.

All best wishes from us both,

Bernard

TO OPEN SLIT HERE

Sender's name and address:

Wailes

Dogwood

St Mawgan

Newquay

Cornwall

U. K.



AN AIR LETTER SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY ENCLOSURE ; IF IT DOES IT WILL BE SURCHARGED OR SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL.

SECOND FOLD HERE

FIRST FOLD HERE



Miss E. K. Ralph

Hotel Hellinis

AMALIAS

GREECE