

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARKS

MINES BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 24, 1916.

My dear Mrs. Willson:

I only wish I could help you in your good work for the Seminoles. The Association is the thing, but of course you must have two or three men who are willing to contribute a little money toward the machinery of it, and who will lend their support and advice. Now, I would know where to go to find men interested in National Park work, but I would not in the least know to whom to apply for help on the Seminoles. You certainly should know after the years of work you have done yourself. It seems to me that that is the practical way to go at it. Such an association could be run very cheaply, and it would gradually gather a membership paying one or two dollars a year, which would supply money for publicity, stenographer, etc. Many of the most active and useful associations have no offices. The members take care of the clerical work with their own office staff, and are reimbursed for their expenditures out of dues of the members and contributions of larger size which an association secures as it goes along and shows it does good work.

Without such an association, I do not believe that you will get anywhere, for all your good work, in the face of the public apathy about the Seminoles. There is this about your particular cause which is not true of other Indian tribes; namely, that the tragedy and the romance associated

Mrs. James M. Willson, Jr.

with them is capable of being made a strong pull. Organization, however, is necessary, and some men of means should be found who would underwrite the beginnings of the Association until it was able to support itself.

It might be of use to you to run down to Washington and see the people here. I do not know that Hon. Cato Sells, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, would be able to do anything, but at least you would be getting your cause directly before the practical executive in charge of Indian work. I have an idea that Secretary Lane might become interested, and if so, you would have a strong backer - not, I mean for the association, but for the cause. I could get you introductions to both.

There is an Indian Commission outside of Government, but supported by the Government, which has an office here in Washington in charge of Mr. Malcolm McDowell, whom I know very well indeed. I scarcely think you would be able to stir this Commission to do anything, but at least Mr. McDowell might give you some information about individuals who are interested in Indian work, whom you might later induce to form an association with you. It seems to me that this is the practical way of going about it.

I expect to be in New York again this month and will try to see you. I can not promise, however, as my trips are exceedingly full of pressing business. At any rate, I will try to get you on the telephone.

Under another cover I am sending you a copy of "Glimpses of our National Parks" and a copy of the National Parks Portfolio as an example of what we are doing here.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. James M. Willson, Jr.,
Care Hotel Imperial,
NEW YORK CITY.

Robert Sterling Gaud