

# Discovering The Grand Canyon

2016  
100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the  
U.S. National Park  
System

North Rim

South Rim

Indigenous People



Spanish Explorers



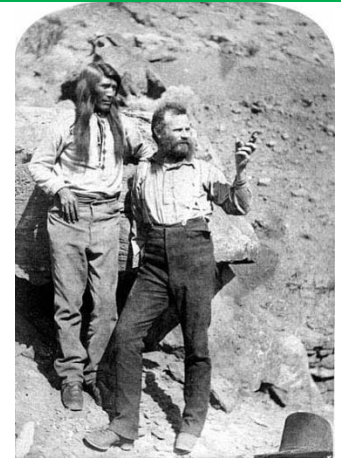
Western Explorers



Lee's Ferry



John Wesley Powell



Thomas Moran



Archaeologists have found evidence of human use of the Grand Canyon dating back at least 13,000 years to the last Ice Age.

At least nine contemporary Native American tribes have cultural links to the area, and their oral histories are rich with references to the creation of that great chasm and torrential river. From the sixteenth century on, Native Americans familiar with the region were indispensable guides and informants for Spanish and later Euro-American explorers.

The first Europeans to view the precipice were Spanish explorers under the command of Francisco Vazquez de Coronado.

When Coronado's men led by Garcia Lopez de Cárdenas followed a Native American guide to the South Rim, it was the river below that interested them. They spent three days trying to descend the gorge, only to give up and leave.

The vista itself so unimpressed Cárdenas that he made no mention of the trip in his accounts.

It would be more than 200 years before any more non-indigenous people traveled to the Grand Canyon.