



History Lab

How do we know so much about weather and storms from the past? Weather records in some parts of the state have existed since 1836. Statewide recording of the weather began in 1887. In addition to official information being recorded, people often wrote about the weather in diaries and journals, or passed down stories of great storms they lived through. Kansans have also documented our incredible weather using photography.

Photographs are considered primary sources. They help us interpret what happened in the past by actually seeing a firsthand account of an event on film. Can you "read" a photograph? Give it a try by studying the picture below. Then answer the following questions.

1. What season of year might this photograph have been taken? _____
2. Can you tell approximately what year it is? Is it the: ☐ 1860s? ☐ 1910s? ☐ 1960s?
3. What do you think happened an hour before this photo was taken? _____
4. What do you think happened an hour after this photo was taken? _____
5. How do you think these men feel? _____
6. Why are these men riding in the car? _____



Now ask your parents or grandparents to dig out some old photos from earlier years. Pick a photo or two to "read." Write down your thoughts. Then check your information with someone who knows the story behind the photographs. How did you do?