Dust Storm in Baca County, Colorado, 1935

Dust Storm in Eastern Colorado, c.a.1936

Destroyed Orchard in Cimarron County, Oklahoma, April 1936

Proposed Migrant Camps in California for Relocated Dust Bowl Families, 1935

“[Map of California by the Rural Rehabilitation Division showing areas where different crops are grown, proposed location of initial camps for migrants, and routes of migration],” 1935. Courtesy of Library of Congress
Dust Storm in Amarillo, Texas, April 1936

Oklahoma Farm Family on Highway between Blythe and Indio, California, August 1936

Dust Bowl Family from Paris, Arkansas, Leaves on Highway No.1, June 1938

Lange, Dorothea, “On highway no. 1 of the “OK” state near Webbers Falls, Muskogee County, Oklahoma. Seven children and eldest son’s family. Father was a blacksmith in Paris, Arkansas. Son was a tenant farmer. “We’re bound for Kingfisher (Oklahoma wheat) and Lubbock (Texas cotton). We’re not trying to but we’ll be in California yet. We’re not going back to Arkansas; believe I can better myself,” June 1938. 

Courtesy of Library of Congress
Here comes the dust-storm
Watch the sky turn blue,
You better all get quick
Or it will smother you.

Here comes the grasshopper,
He come a-jumpin' high
He hopped away across the state
An' never hate no sky.

Here comes the giver,
It sure knows its stuff,
It takes our blood and money
An' leaves us feelin' tough.

California, California,
Here I come too,
With my coffee pot and stiller,
I'm a-cryin' to you.
"Why We Come to California," 1940

WHY WE COME TO CALIFORNY
Flora Robertson Shafter, 1940

Here comes the dust-storm Watch the sky turn blue.
You better git out quick Or it will smother you.
Here comes the grasshopper, He comes a-jumpin' high.
He jumps away across the state An' never bats an eye.
Here comes the river it sure knows its stuff.
It takes our home and cattle, An' leaves us feelin' tough.
  Californy, Californy, Here I come too.
  With a coffee pot and skillet, I'm a-comin' to you!

Farmer’s Son Playing on a Large Soil Drift in Liberal, Kansas, March 1936

Rothstein, Arthur, “A farmer’s son playing on one of the large soil drifts which threaten to cover up his home. Liberal, Kansas,” March 1936. Courtesy of Library of Congress
Out of the desert's bosom, storm swept with wind and dust; Out of smiles and curses, of tears and cries, forlorn; Mixed with broken laughter, forced because they must; Toil, sweat and bleeding wounds, red and raw and torn. Out on the desert's bosom—a new town is born.

Dust clouds, like brown smoke, rise and swirl and blow. From hidden lairs in icy crags, towering high, Like hungry pack of wolves, the gale sweeps low, Fangs sharp and bored, shrieking to the sky. The guardian peaks emerge, serene and high.

Summer with long, parched nights and days; And heaven's bowl a shimmering blue of heat; The thirsty hills are choked. The sun's hot blaze Before encroaching autumn, once more retreats. King Winter reigns upon his icy seat.

A year is gone. A quickening in the air. The desert stirs beneath the freshening rain. The scent of sage, the wild rose perfume rare, The tumbling brooks break forth in glad refrain. Another spring—perhaps new hope, new life again.