



## **GRAPES OF WRATH**

**J**ohn Steinbeck recalled the dust bowl:

*"To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma, the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth . . .*

*"In the last part of May the sky grew pale and the clouds that had hung in high puffs for so long in the spring were dissipated. The sun flared down, . . . the surface of the earth crusted, a thin pale crust, . . . and in the water-cut gullies the earth dusted down in dry little streams . . .*

*"Every moving thing lifted the dust into the air: a walking man lifted a thin layer as high as his waist . . .*

*Now the wind grew strong and hard . . . Little by little the sky was darkened by the mixing dust, and the wind felt over the earth, loosened the dust, and carried it away . . .*

*"The dawn came, but no day. In the gray sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk . . . Men and women huddled in their houses, and they tied handkerchiefs over their noses when they went out, and wore goggles to protect their eyes . . .*

*"In the morning the dust hung like fog, and the sun was as red as ripe new blood. All day the dust sifted down from the sky, and the next day it sifted down. An even blanket covered the earth . . .*

*"The men sat in the doorways of their houses; their hands were busy with sticks and little rocks. The men sat still — thinking — figuring . . ."*

— The Grapes of Wrath<sup>10</sup>