

(Mobile book) On the Dirty Plate Trail: Remembering the Dust Bowl Refugee Camps (Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center Imprint)

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Sanora Babb

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On the Dirty Plate Trail REMEMBERING THE DUST BOWL REFUGEE CAMPS

Texts by SANORA BABB

Photographs by DOROTHY BABB



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#1182708 in eBooks 2009-03-06 2009-03-06 File Name: B00CUP0DPK | File size: 70.Mb

Sanora Babb : On the Dirty Plate Trail: Remembering the Dust Bowl Refugee Camps (Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center Imprint) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised On the Dirty Plate Trail: Remembering the Dust Bowl Refugee Camps (Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center Imprint):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Good book. By Mary Kay Moyer I am reading this book and enjoying the education it is providing. The author went through a lot and came out of it stronger than one would imagine. We need for our young people to be aware of how hard it was to make a living and live through the 30's. This book gives

information that could be used to talk to them about those hard times.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.
Three StarsBy CustomerIt was a gift for someone.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Is it coming back
aroundBy C. R. Nelonpeople today think they have it tough.Take it from this splendid book, if we don't watch out, we
could be living on the Dirty Plate Trail tomorrow!!

The 1930s exodus of "Okies" dispossessed by repeated droughts and failed crop prices was a relatively brief interlude in the history of migrant agricultural labor. Yet it attracted wide attention through the publication of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and the images of Farm Security Administration photographers such as Dorothea Lange and Arthur Rothstein. Ironically, their work risked sublimating the subjects--real people and actual experience--into aesthetic artifacts, icons of suffering, deprivation, and despair. Working for the Farm Security Administration in California's migrant labor camps in 1938-39, Sanora Babb, a young journalist and short story writer, together with her sister Dorothy, a gifted amateur photographer, entered the intimacy of the dispossessed farmers' lives as insiders, evidenced in the immediacy and accuracy of their writings and photos. Born in Oklahoma and raised on a dryland farm, the Babb sisters had unparalleled access to the day-by-day harsh reality of field labor and family life. This book presents a vivid, firsthand account of the Dust Bowl refugees, the migrant labor camps, and the growth of labor activism among Anglo and Mexican farm workers in California's agricultural valleys linked by the "Dirty Plate Trail" (Highway 99). It draws upon the detailed field notes that Sanora Babb wrote while in the camps, as well as on published articles and short stories about the migrant workers and an excerpt from her Dust Bowl novel, *Whose Names Are Unknown*. Like Sanora's writing, Dorothy's photos reveal an unmediated, personal encounter with the migrants, portraying the social and emotional realities of their actual living and working conditions, together with their efforts to organize and to seek temporary recreation. An authority in working-class literature and history, volume editor Douglas Wixson places the Babb sisters' work in relevant historical and social-political contexts, examining their role in reconfiguring the Dust Bowl exodus as a site of memory in the national consciousness.

About the AuthorSANORA BABB (1907ndash;2005) became an acclaimed short story writer, poet, and author of three novels.DOROTHY BABB (1909ndash;1995) frequently collaborated with Sanora in her work.DOUGLAS WIXSON, Professor Emeritus at the University of Missouriindash;Rolla, is the author of *Worker-Writer in America: Jack Conroy and the Tradition of Midwestern Literary Radicalism, 1898ndash;1990*. He currently lives in Austin, Texas.