*Migrant Child*

We watched the Devil Wind come, blowin' harder day by day,  
Picking up the top soil, and blowin' it away.  
Dryin' up the corn and cotton, and destroyin our well.  
No, we have not forgotten, The Great Dust Storm From Hell.  
So Daddy said we'd have to leave, and my Mama, meek and mild,  
Tried not to show how much she grieved, and I became, a migrant child.  
Daddy said we'd head out west, but he said "I'd better warn ya,  
It's gonna be a long, hard trip, from here to California.  
We had precious little money, when we hit Route Sixty-Six,  
We took tires and tubes and patches, for the flats we'd have to fix.  
My Mom had canned some berries, that I had picked myself,  
She had nearly thirty jars, sittin' on a kitchen shelf.  
These, she traded for some chickens, which she fried that very day,  
Making sure that we'd have something to eat along the way,  
One ten-gallon keg of water, Daddy strapped on back,  
All our dingy quilts and pillows, and of course our cotton sacks.  
What clothes we had, all threadbare, some assorted pots and pans,  
Now we were packed ready, to find that Promise Land.  
The trip was long, and tiring, sometimes traveling night and day  
And we left a lot of blown-tires, strewn all along the way.  
The fried chicken was delicious, but it played out way too soon,  
So then we ate baloney, ate it mornin' night and noon.  
I'll say this much for my Pa, he didn't dilly-dally,  
Six days later, we saw Weedpatch, in the great San Joaquin Valley.  
We started followin' the drops, everything was strange and new,  
Pickin, peas, and beans, and 'taters was, all we knew how to do.  
One day I told my Mama, "You know MOm, I'd take a lickin,  
To have just one more little piece, of that travellin' fried chicken!"  
I won't bore you with details, I'll just that we survived,  
And this poor migrant child had had, a long, and happy life.  
sure, they jeered and called us Okies, which kinda hurt my Pa,  
But not once did he mention, goin' back to Sallisaw.  
The Okie kids, they went to school, earning honors and degrees,  
And became respected citizens, Man's and Pa's were very pleased.  
Yes, I was a migrant child, but I think I've paid my dues,  
I still eat that ol'fried chicken, sometimes baloney too!  
   
                                                    Ron Langley

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