INTRODUCTION 3

PART ONE
A DARKLING PLAIN 9
1. The Black Blizzards Roll In 10
2. If It Rains 26
3. Okies and Exodusters 44

PART TWO
PRELUDE TO DUST 65
4. What Holds the Earth Together 66
5. Sodbusting 80

PART THREE
CIMARRON COUNTY, OKLAHOMA 99
6. Frontier in Ruins 100
7. When the Cattle Ate Tumbleweeds 108
8. Hard Times in the Panhandle 118
PART FOUR
HASKELL COUNTY, KANSAS 139

9. Unsettled Ground 140
11. A Sense of Place 164

PART FIVE
A NEW DEAL FOR THE LAND 181

12. Facing up to Limits 182
13. Learning from Nature 198
14. Make Two Blades of Grass Grow 210

Epilogue: On a Thin Edge 231

Afterword 244
Notes 255
Index 285