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On the Road to Ollie

11/13/03

On the road to Ollie,
A pretty little temple
Perched high on the right.
Gotta get back by sunset
Before the base buttons up
Charlie owns the night.

We're a movin' out,
Thirty five, maybe forty.
Where were the bicycles,
Impossibly piled bundles,
Of charcoal destined wood,
Behind the conical hatted
Rider, putting
Darting chickens and kids
And occasional ancient truck
When Rat Patrol roared on.

But you in Vietnam, GI!
Xin Loi and hit the brakes!
Korean deuce and a halves
Have right of way
Even when they don't.
See that side road. well
One's on fast approach
At dust cloud's head
Won't stop for God
Or Gen'ral Abrams.

Ridin' shotgun 'cause
They don't trust an officer
To drive; though my driver's
Most likely the better shot.
In lack of roads country,
Making the long dogleg
An Khe to English via
Nineteen and One
Twisting down Phu Cu
From highland to plain
With a wave at Qui Nhon,
Past Phu My's pepper fields
And Uplift's notch, then
Straight at the Tigers' main peak,
Till the last turn north
By northwest toward Bong Son
And my temp tin roofed home,

With LZ Ollie on guard,
By its thatched hut village
And elegant tiered pagoda.

On the road to Ollie,
A pretty little temple
Perched high on the right.
Gotta get back by sunset
Before the base buttons up.
Charlie owns the night.

Over the Song Lai
Through Bong Son town,
And up to the gate...
Ten more minutes
And the barriers are down.
Ollie, Ollie Oxenfree.

~Gerald A. Ney~