

## THE VINDOLANDA RUN

(Vindolanda was a busy Roman fort close to Hadrian's wall)

*In winter, instead of Roman feet  
tramping the iron frost fields,  
soldiers slid slalom-like over snow  
riding on upturned shields.*

*It was wonderful fun, the Romans could think  
of nothing that they enjoyed more,  
a toboggan run down Cuddy's Crag,  
much better than going to war!*

*And fresh recruits would think it easy  
as off on their shields they flew,  
till they'd hit a rock and topple off  
and the moorland air would turn blue*

*with Latin oaths and the curses they flung  
at an unsympathetic sky-  
then they'd dust themselves off and climb back up  
to the top for another try.*

*In the ice and snow it was all systems go  
for the soldiers patrolling the wall,  
they'd challenge each other to see who could travel  
the longest without a fall.*

*Reputations were made or lost  
on a run that went really well.  
From around the Empire soldiers would beg  
for a post at this once northern hell.*

*And no one thought of war any more,  
Pict bashing had had its day.  
The Romans were far too busy  
inviting their enemies round to play!*

*Brian Moses*