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# Protecting the Troops? Phallic Carvings in the North of Roman Britain

Adam Parker

*Phallic imagery is recorded throughout the Roman world and it is generally considered to be apotropaic in nature. Very few archaeological studies have attempted to better contextualise aspects of this imagery, either in isolation or in regional studies. This paper collates the evidence for phallic carvings on stone in the north of Roman Britain and assesses them contextually, stylistically, spatially and chronologically. It is argued that there are three major stylistic category of phallic carving, as well as a nuanced range of places where phallic carvings are appropriate inclusions and that their spatial use relates to liminal places within the built environment of Roman Britain.*

## Introduction

Phallic carvings are, generally, very simple individual sculptures. The iconography is conspicuous and the content obvious to the viewer. Most commonly, the phallic image (on its own) is recorded in the form of small pendants and amulets in copper alloy (Plouviez 2005; Zarzalegos *et al.* 1988; Pozo 2002), bone (Crummy 1983, nos. 4255-59; Deschler-Erb and Božič 2002) and gold (Johns 1982, 66, pl.10; Johns and Wise 2003). The less common phallic ‘petrosomatoglyphs’ (carvings on stone) are generally understudied as a group.

A cohesive study of the stone carvings in a province, incised or in relief, has not yet been undertaken, nor is this the intention of this paper. It is the explicit intention of this paper to collate an initial catalogue of the examples only from the north of Roman Britain and briefly examine some aspects of their significance in a contextualised frontier setting, as well as recording and discussing iconographic and metric details. Context is key for any interpretation of these sculpted objects; the isolated or unstratified examples tell us very little in comparison to an *in situ* example. Unfortunately, as will become clear, useable contextual information is very difficult to access for many of the recorded examples.

In its various forms the apotropaic functions of the phallic image were, perhaps, best conceptualised by Ralph Merrifield: In his important volume on Roman London, he described the phallic image as a kind of ‘lightning conductor’ for bad luck in the Roman world (Merrifield 1969, 170). Alluding to the lack of contextual study into apotropaic icons, he later hoped that ‘a case had been made for the proper recording and publication of evidence for ritual activity arising from superstitious belief, at all periods down to the present day’ (Merrifield 1987, 192) - it is hoped that this paper will add a little extra colour to the borders developed by Merrifield. Few contextualised investigations into phallic images have tackled the variability in form but some excellent studies do exist which encounter aspects of the phallic image: Johns (1982) remains the *de facto* introduction to the image; Del Hoyo and Hoyes (1996) attempted a typology of the portable

objects; Plouviez (2005) and Pozo (2002) discussed regional collections and datasets.

All forms of phallic images may have had utility as apotropaic icons in Roman Britain, but they do not exist in isolation. Although the following explicitly considers the carved stone examples, one must recognise that phallic imagery occurs on numerous different platforms in Britain. Small gold rings bearing phallic symbols, like those from London (Merrifield 1969) and Faversham (Henig 1984, 186) are clearly intended to be worn by children - a type correlated by Varro (On the Latin language, 7.97) and recently associated in Britain with gold phallic pendants such as those from Knaresborough (PAS: SWOYR-E56143) and Braintree (Johns and Wise 2003, 275). The range truly is great; phallic images can be seen on antler roundels (Greep 1994), *tintinnabula* (Blazquez 1985) and even as a decorative motif on ceramics (Webster 1989, 9). New evidence for the distribution, forms and range of the portable phallic charm has been provided by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which at the time of writing (and this is liable to change), lists over fifty individual pendants/amulets, at least eight mounts, five harness pendants and ten miscellanea which might be termed ‘phallic’ demonstrating the range of this image within Roman Britain.

Nominally the phallic image is used as one of the ‘enemies’ of the Evil Eye and fits within a wider provincial and cultural understanding of these icons. The Eye (*malus oculus*) is the Roman personification of ‘bad luck’, rightly feared and respected in various capacities by Plutarch (*Quaes. Conv.* 7.5) and Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist.* 7.2). The stone examples will be addressed in the following, but the imagery showing an Evil Eye under attack can take many forms – of note in Britain is a gold earring from Norfolk (PAS: NMS-B9A004; Worrell and Pearce 2014, 419, no. 20, fig. 20). The phallic image is shown to physically attack images of the Evil Eye in images across the Empire, such as with the phallic carving from Leptis Magna (Fig. 1) in which a zoomorphic phallic beast ejaculates into the Evil Eye with its secondary phallus. A ceramic example of this image can be seen in a first century BC terracotta depicting two phallic men sawing the evil eye in half (Johns 1982, fig. 51).

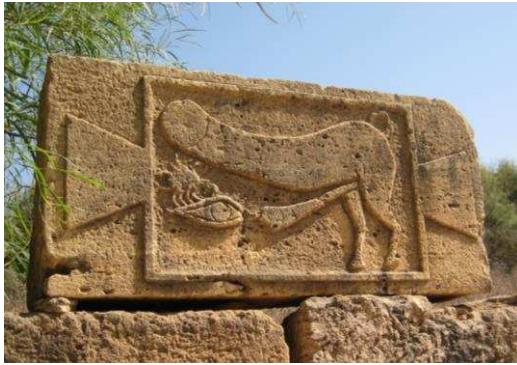


FIGURE 1: A ZOOMORPHIC PHALLUS ATTACKS THE EVIL EYE. LEPTIS MAGNA. IMAGE ©WIKIMEDIA COMMONS [CC BY-SA 4.0].

Examples of phallic carvings on stone in the north of Roman Britain have been recorded from Adel (no. 1) Barcombe Hill (no. 2), Benwell (no. 3), Binchester (no. 4), Birdoswald (nos. 5-8), Birrens (no. 9), Carlisle (nos. 10-11), Carrawburgh (no. 12), Castlecary (no. 13), Catterick (no. 14), Chesters (nos. 15-19), Corbridge (nos. 20-22), Halton Chesters (no. 23), Housesteads (no. 24), Loftus (no. 25), Maryport (nos. 26-28), Rudston (no. 29) South Shields (nos. 30-34), Vindolanda (nos. 35-42), Wallsend (no. 43), Westerwood (no. 44), Willowford (no. 45), York (nos. 46-48), and one unprovenanced from the Hadrian's Wall region (no. 49) (Fig. 2). For the full catalogue see Appendix. The catalogue covers the area north of a point marked by the River Humber in which forty-nine individual phallic carvings were recorded (as stones not as individual phalli on a single stone), ranging in size, form, physical location, and contextual location. A treatise on the phallic image in *Britannia* as a whole is a thesis to which this investigation does not intend to aspire, but it is hoped that the methodology may yet apply itself to wider study of the carvings in the future.

Note that the 'axis measurement' in the Appendix records the direction the carving is pointing within the carved block, taken from a static viewpoint directly in front of the object - the numbers refer to an analogue clock face, in the manner of the die-axis measurement used in numismatics, so 12 is up, 6 is down, 9 is left and 3 is right. It is intended to offer an additional level of metric investigation for the dataset, and one that may not have been previously considered for a group of this material.

## Location

The relatively small number of stone carvings are focussed on the urban sites of the study area, primarily those associated with active military settlements. There is a clear relationship between phallic carvings and military sites (Fig. 2), particularly on the Hadrianic frontier where a significant density of military installations remained in operation for several centuries. Clearly the presence of a permanent structure constructed in stone was a key factor in the development of the phallic carving in the north of

Roman Britain. The existence of wooden versions of the phallic image, adorning the first phase timber pre-cursors of many of the sites in the study areas might be considered conjecturally, though it is currently an idea without basis in the material culture. The wide availability of appropriate building stone and basic skills in stonemasonry might otherwise suggest that the carvings should be found over a wider range of geographical contexts, but this is not the case. The discovery of two examples at villas at Loftus (no. 25) and Rudston (no. 29) demonstrates that the image retains its efficacy in rural/non-military settings as well, though its use in such locations is certainly not the norm in Roman Britain. At least four examples are clearly from the extra-mural settlements of established fort sites (nos. 16, 37-39), in comparison to at least twenty-six clearly from a fort/fortress.

It has previously been suggested that the phallic image appears in liminal or transitional places (Johns 1982, 64) but the extent of this demonstrated here (see Appendix) is prevalent. Physical boundary points are sources of focus for the Evil Eye (Johns 1982) and this idea has been variously interpreted throughout the north of Roman Britain. The inclusion of a phallic carving in boundary walls is a well-documented phenomenon in the Roman world, so it should come as no surprise that we find them in the monumentalised linear boundaries in the region (nos. 5-6, 46-48; Figs. 3 and 6). The image can also be used at minor boundary points within a single building - the inclusion of an incised carving on a window arch voussoir at Birdoswald (no. 8) is a quite specific example of the use of the phallic image in an internal boundary space. This extrapolation of contemporary ideas of the nature of protection onto boundary places (Willmott 1997, 63-65) helps to show the great variety of physical places where a phallic image can be utilised. Perhaps the best application of the belief in the apotropaic qualities of the phallus at boundary places is when it appears on bridges (nos. 15 and 45). A bridge is a physical crossing, traversing a potentially dangerous environmental feature. An inability to swim might, perhaps, reinforce a natural fear of a fast-flowing river. The probable Evil Eye figure included in no.15 enhances the apotropaic connection between phallic carving and protection in this instance. Although reused as a road edging stone, no. 14, from Catterick, is likely to have come from a bridge abutment (Parker and Ross 2016).

The examples associated with a *Principia* (nos. 11, 17, 33; Fig. 4) might be seen as affording additional protection to the beating-heart of the working fort and to those working within. The *Principia* itself is a prominent focal point, the religious centre of the fort and the most architecturally ambitious building within the average Roman fort (de la Bédoyère 1991, 47-51) and would invite a great deal of footfall in a working day. The re-use of a phallic stone in the drain of the 4th Century *Principia* at Vindolanda (no. 36) could be considered a deliberate and appropriate re-use of such a stone. Given the quantity of material that is lost in Roman drains (e.g. MacGregor 1976) they themselves might be considered as transitional places.

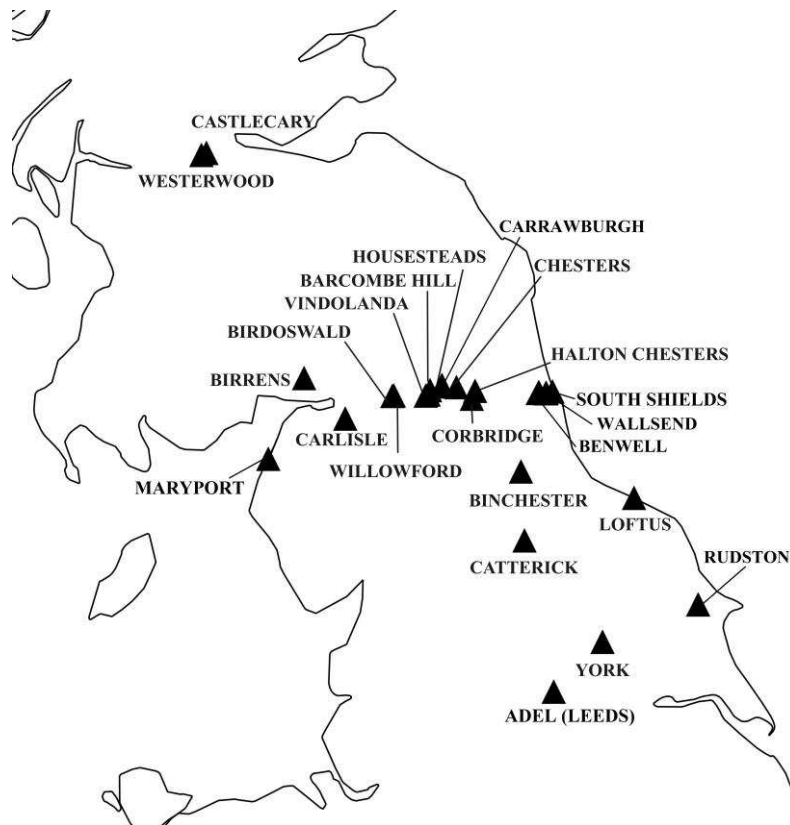


FIGURE 2: MAP OF SITES WITH PHALLIC CARVINGS IN THE NORTH OF ROMAN BRITAIN. IMAGE BY THE AUTHOR.

A small number of the catalogued examples can be associated with economic enterprises. No. 38 from the Vindolanda *mansio* is one such example. Although a question mark can be raised over the correct attribution of many such sites as *mansiones* (Mattingly 2007, 259; Bishop 2014, 46) the *mansio* is a nexus for trade and economic activity and, like the *Principia*, should be seen as a vibrant, busy place and thus a potential focus for physical accident, theft, unfortunate meetings and other such things which may need to be protected against. Supporting this role of trade are no. 37, which is an unusual stylised phallic carving (the two sides of which do not meet) from a large flagstone floor in a building in the Vindolanda *vicus* described as a probable 'storehouse', and the large chalk trade weight incised with a phallus from Rudston villa (no. 29). Additionally, no. 2 might also be associated with economic concerns as an incised carving on the face of a quarry has, at least circumstantial links to trade.

Nearly all of the catalogued carvings were prominent in frequently accessed buildings or architectural features - walls, doorways, windows, businesses, storehouses and not hidden away in private or difficult to view places; this conspicuousness is part of their efficacy. There is little evidence to suggest that the carvings are physically interacted with in any way, with the exception of those on the floor being walked over (Chester's no. 17 probably represented a considerable trip hazard to the unwary - see Fig. 4), so instead we must think of the interaction as a very passive engagement. Thousands of individuals passed

beneath or over each of these images *in situ*. The re-use of carvings (e.g. nos. 4 and 14) removes the conspicuous aspect of the phallic image and breaks a direct association with a building; it is difficult to see a continuing efficacy for these examples, where the use or importance of the image is no longer relevant to the structural development of the site. It is, perhaps, surprising that a greater contextual relationship does not exist between phallic imagery and funerary iconography in Roman Britain. Philpott records only five inhumation graves in which phallic pendants have been discovered as part of the grave assemblage (Philpott 1991, 161), two of which were related to young children. Phallic imagery on the side of a building stone of the Shoreden Brae (Corbridge) Mausoleum (no. 22) is, thus, of particular interest. The Mausoleum contained a single inhumation of an adult (Gillam and Daniels 1961, 58). The phallus is rarely used as an apotropaic device in funerary contexts, but recent research into the group of fist-and-phallus pendants from an infant grave at Catterick by the author (one of Philpott's five inhumations containing such imagery) argues for a greater appreciation of the chthonic application of phallic imagery (Parker 2015) and it is in this light that we might view the Shoreden Brae carvings.





FIGURE 3: PHALLIC CARVING FROM THE FORTRESS WALL AT YORK, DEMONSTRATING THE 'BASIC' PHALLIC CARVING NOW IN THE YORKSHIRE MUSEUM. IMAGE ©YORK MUSEUMS TRUST [CC BY-SA 4.0]



FIGURE 4: PHALLIC CARVING *IN SITU* IN THE *PRINCIPIA* AT CHESTERS FORT. IMAGE ©WIKIMEDIA COMMONS [CC BY-SA 3.0].



FIGURE 5: STYLISED PHALLIC CARVING FROM BATH-HOUSE RUBBISH PIT AT BINCHESTER. IMAGE COURTESY OF DAVID PETTS (UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM)



FIGURE 6: PHALLIC CARVING *IN SITU* IN HADRIAN'S WALL, EAST OF BIRDOSWALD. IMAGE COURTESY OF DAVID BREEZE.

The surviving contextual information relating to the physical position of phallic carvings does not offer us any indication of whether there were physical places where the inclusion of such imagery might be inappropriate. Nor are we aware of any physical relationship that might exist between carvings and people - could a touch or glance be directed towards the image when passing past, over or through? Are carvings on the floor designed to be walked over or is their physical space respected? *Tintinnabula* are designed to move, and worn pendants do the same (Whitmore 2017), so are carvings to be considered entirely static when used as an apotropaic image?

## Iconography

Looking only at the northern examples, ignoring those from the south and other provinces, it is inappropriate here to enter into a full typological consideration for this imagery. Whilst a discussion of artistic style is hampered by the lack of clear-cut contextual and chronological information, the imagery of phallic carvings in this catalogue can be loosely grouped into three groups: the 'basic', in which the phallus is carved simply, in relief or incised, onto a block or within a circular frame (e.g. nos. 5-7, 10-13, 17, 21, 23, 27-29, 36, 39, 45-49); the 'stylised' (e.g. nos. 2, 4, 8, 9, 14, 25, 31, 37-38; Fig. 5), in which anatomical accuracy is not necessary but it is clear that a phallus is being represented; and the 'scene', in which the phallic relief is alongside additional carvings or an inscription (e.g. nos. 1, 15-16, 18, 19, 26, 30, 35, 44). In all cases, the phallus is ithyphallic. This assessment does not include phallic images forming a part of a larger human or animal figure in the usual anatomical way; deliberate omissions of this type include the incised ithyphallic horse at Birdoswald (Wilmott 1997, 319) and the Priapic figure from Vindolanda (Birley 2007, 142).

The 'basic' phallic carvings are anatomically unadventurous, depicting at least a shaft (occasionally including the glans) and testes and are usually bordered only by the tooled edge of the stone upon which it was carved (Figs. 3 and 6); an observation paralleled most famously in Pompeii (Moser 2006, 40). The depth of carving varies amongst the examples, but only two of the 'basic' type include the image within a circular frame: one example from Carlisle (no. 10), although fragmentary, was carved within a circular depression and one of the Chesters phalli (no. 17) was raised on a circular dais.

The loose 'stylised' category is the most amorphous of the groups and includes a range of imagery, from the incised carvings appearing as a pair of 'closed scissors' (Gillam and Daniels 1961, 51-52) where the two sides of the shaft don't join together at the glans (nos. 4, 22, 37), to the group of prominently curving phalli (nos. 2 and 25). Stylisation in these instances represents a variable interpretation of the phallic image over both distance and time as well as, perhaps quite importantly, the artistic ability of the carver.

Catherine Johns commented that, even in antiquity, there may be those who would find such images amusing or embarrassing (Johns 1982, 75). The image was largely

imported in the first century by the Roman Legions, but over the course of three and a half centuries *Britannia* became a hugely cosmopolitan place and, as such, there was inevitably a huge range of physical, thoughtful or emotive reactions to a phallic carving. The carving of a petrosomatoglyph also requires a great deal of time committed to it. The relief carvings are certainly not idle doodles, but professionally carved relief sculptures, the individual execution of which requires some training in stonemasonry. It is unclear whether the shallowly incised examples were included as primary or secondary features in the life of an individual building stone; the assumption is the latter. Generally, these lack the same finesse of the carved phalli, begging the question: are these examples just doodles? The Westerwood example shows that even incised images can be quite complex. The assumption that an incised carving lacked the same efficacy or apotropaic influence as a relief carved example is a dangerous one to make and one which is confidently avoided here.

Examples in which the phallic image is included as part of a 'scene' alongside an inscription or additional carving are the most visually complex of the phallic carvings. Six carvings include an inscription as part of the carved scene (nos. 1, 19, 26, 31, 35, 44): no. 44 has an EX VOTO dedication; no. 26 is the 'Phallus of Marcus Septimius'; no. 1 includes the inscription 'Primus (his) phallic charm'. The latter two examples are of particular interest as they name individuals as dedicators, or more grammatically correct - as owners. Both are male and Marcus Septimius, at Maryport, was almost certainly a soldier. Primus' inscription surrounds the central phallic motif in a rectilinear pattern in a manner comparable with the geometric patterning used in other magical literary devices in the Roman world (e.g. *PGM* XVIIb.1-7, see Betz 1992). No. 31 is also undeciphered and, following the same magical logic, may have intended to be non-sensical. Where inscriptions occur within a phallic scene they may be next to, above, below or surrounding the carved image and are always simple dedicators or phrases.

Additional figural elements are included as part of a scene are visible on six examples (nos. 1, 14-15, 18, 26, 35). As with the inscribed carvings, the rarity of these within the study area suggests they should be considered significant. The additional elements can complicate the narrative somewhat. For example, no. 35 is recorded as facing a group of trees. Taking this interpretation at face value is there a connection made between woodland and apotropaic protection? Is the forested area dangerous and in need of extra protection? Is this image a convoluted good luck token for foraging or hunting? Is there an association with Faunus, the woodland figure so frequently associated as a virile divinity (Johns 1982, 45-48)? Perhaps, rather than trees, the angular carved images depict a crude townscape, with roof apices bounded by a curtain wall to the right of the frame and a column at the left. In this context, we might see a phallic symbol used as a guardian for an entire settlement. On no. 15 there is certainly a stylised human figure standing to the left (comparable with the carving of a stylised human figure riding a zoomorphic phallic image from Long Bennington,

Lincolnshire (Moore 1975, 58-59)), but the 'bust' standing to the right (Coulston and Phillips 1988: no 405) might be better interpreted stylistically as a standing altar. The reinterpretation of the object doesn't, however, offer any clearer narrative to the scene. The phallus is the central, largest figure of the three, and points towards the vertical. Perhaps this is a scene of worship, if the human figure be interpreted as a priest? Or a very simplistic festival scene? Or a unique combination of individual religious and apotropaic images designed to maximise efficacy? A complicated visual narrative also exists on no. 1, in which a small incised horse is right-facing and ridden by a human figure. It is unclear whether this rider is macrophallic and is left-facing, or the horse and rider are carved above a previously incised phallic carving some three times larger than them. The reverse may also be true. If it depicts a macrophallic rider, the scene has much in common with the Long Bennington example. The incised depiction of a horse is similar to the ithyphallic horse at Birdoswald.

Three examples of the 'phallus and Evil Eye' scene are known from the north of Roman Britain (nos. 15, 18, 26). No. 15 is, admittedly, only a 'probable' evil eye; certainly the phallus is directed towards an unclear (or unfinished) oval shape. A clearer version of this scene is no. 18 in which a curved, ithyphallic carving faces right and is joined, at the glans, by a 'coffee-bean' shaped object to an open circular object. The circle represents an evil eye. Whilst the shape of the coffee-bean object is certainly comparable with representations of vulvate images in the Roman world (Johns 1982, 74), it is tiny in comparison to the phallus and is, almost certainly, representing the ejaculate of the phallic image directly 'attacking' an evil eye. The sunken panel in which the eye appears could have lent itself to housing a painted iris and pupil. No. 26 depicts a left-facing phallus joined by an incised line to an ovate panel. Again the latter is likely to represent an Evil Eye as the two features are, again, bridged by ejaculate. The carving of an ejaculating phallus without pointing it towards an evil eye is also visible on no. 14.

It is understood that combining the phallic image with other images of power can be used to enhance the protective capabilities of the icon. The fist-and-phallus combination noted from various sites in Britain incorporates a clenched fist (or a version of the *manus fica*) opposed by a glans and is traditionally, but not exhaustively, associated with the military (Greep 1983, 139-140; Parker 2015). The combined phallic image may alternatively be combined with a zoomorphic image, such as bull's horns, to increase its efficacy (Crummy 1983, 51, fig. 54; Plouviez 2005, 159, fig. 1.7-8) or wings (PAS: SF-EE7435, WMID4035).

It should be noted that other, sculpted, non-phallic apotropaic images existed within fort sites, such as the series of figures of Silenus, from Bar Hill, in which the God has his arms folded across his chest and middle fingers extended (Keppie and Arnold 1988, nos. 97-98).

The recording of metric data in the form of the 'axis measurement' for the phallic carving (see Appendix) does

highlight that, whilst there is variability, in the direction the image faces the majority of examples are lateral in the frame on a 9/3 axis. Of those that can be correctly identified, the 9 axis is most common - nine of the phalli quite categorically face to the left (nos. 4-6, 11, 25-26, 32, 35-36). This information can, perhaps, be used to expand the relationship between phallic carvings and superstition. A complex linguistic association with the left-side and 'evil' or 'bad luck' is difficult to apply to a sculptural fragment, but what is known is the dual-meaning of the Latin word *sinister* as both 'left' and 'unlucky' or, perhaps more accurately, 'inauspicious' due its association with the *auspicia* ('*Nec coelum servare licet: tonat augure surdo, et laetae iurantur aves, bubone sinistro*' (Lucan, *Pharsalia* 5.395)). Directing the carving to the left could be an active attempt to discharge any bad luck heading towards it. In context it is possible that these examples may owe as much to an application of superstitious knowledge as it does to a craftsman's interpretation of a known image or a bricklayer's setting of the stone.

Amongst other apotropaic images within Roman Britain, there can be a complex relationship between certain iconography and the material upon which it is inscribed (Eckardt 2014, ch. 4). Materiality is an important indicator in religious and magical material culture (see Boschung and Bremmer 2015). For example, the combination of a *gorgoneion* and Whitby Jet for a pendant is associated with the inhumation of young women in Britain (Parker 2016) or the direct association between carved amber beads and the protection of infants (Swift 2011, 217). At this time, there is no indication that specific types of stone are more (or less) appropriate for the inclusion of a phallic carving - the pragmatic necessity of access to building stone and its use en masse within a single structure renders this consideration, unfortunately, somewhat moot. Limestone and sandstone are the exclusive materials used for the phallic carvings, but this is not surprising for Roman Britain in which these two materials dominate architecture and statuary. The occasional recording of building stones as 'local sandstone' offers little petrological insight but may demonstrate that whilst materials are locally sourced (and occasionally at very close proximity to the site (McGuire 2011), the image itself has travelled.

## Chronology

Explicit dating evidence for the majority of these carvings is less than satisfactory. *In situ* relief carvings at least offer the opportunity to associate the stone upon which they are carved with a particular phase of building construction, but residuality and re-use of these stones is a somewhat problematic issue which cannot yet feasibly be resolved without discounting a large proportion of this dataset. Where useable contextual details may offer an insight into the inclusion of a phallic stone within a sequence or phase of building, it is here recorded. The CSIR takes the (not unreasonable) approach that unstratified, stone, relief carvings on frontier structures are dependent upon the reconstruction of military buildings in stone and thus offers a general 2nd-4th Century date for such examples and this range is paralleled in other contextualised

examples. Incised, rather than relief, carvings are even more problematic given their potential inclusion as an image at, more or less, any point in a building sequence. The example of an incised phallus at the quarry site at Barcombe Hill (Tomlin and Hassall 2003, 366) highlights that such images could even be included at source. Representing the phallic image in this way is a Roman import to the province, and at least geographically related to many of its late first and second century military sites in the north - a secondary phase of its use in civilian environments copying a military import is a possibility, but one that cannot be reliably shown without the assessment of a much larger geographical area. A chronological date-range for the use of the phallic carvings in the north is, thus, little less than the duration of the entire Roman period in the north. Contextual use of the image between the 2nd and 4th Centuries AD currently suggests a long duration of use, although both considerable re-use and disposal of examples in fourth century structures (nos. 4, 14, 35-36) may suggest that its popularity was at least waning at that point. Two questions that this paper is unable to answer then arise from this conclusion - what is the earliest datable example of a stone phallic carving in Roman Britain and, conversely, what is the latest example of a carving installed in its primary sequence?

## Conclusions

It seems a soft conclusion to make that there is evidence to suggest that phallic relief carvings do occur in liminal places worthy of apotropaic intervention (bridges, walls, windows, gateways), but it is one such conclusion based on a brief contextual review of the evidence in this region; highlighting that the image is an additional element in a complex relationship, in the Roman period, between apotropaic imagery and physical space. Clearly there is a considerable range of architectural points at which phallic carvings may be included and nothing concrete to suggest that there are explicit points at which phallic imagery might be considered inappropriate on military buildings in the north of *Britannia*. Our current understanding is that they are conspicuous, static, and permanent in their location and thus must be interacted with in a passive manner; their efficacy is explicitly linked to location and iconography rather than to any direct human interaction.

Artistically, the brief catalogue represented in this study does suggest that the phallic imagery is often enclosed within the boundaries of its rectangular frame and in a simple, anatomical state - its technical representation owing much to the necessity of the shape and size of the building stone. Various examples of the image are visible within the archaeological record accounting for both a long chronological duration of its use and variable, individual interpretations of the image. Many examples do exist which further develop the idea of 'apotropaic iconography' through the inclusion of inscribed text or figurative additions to create a 'phallic scene', variously incorporating human figures, a city scene (?) and the Evil

## Appendix

Eye alongside a phallic carving - themselves potentially representing a plethora of personal, spatial, economic, artistic, religious, or superstitious influences.

The methodology of utilising a selective geographical dataset is, of course, open to criticism, but the casting of the net in this area has shown an aspect of the supernatural world of Roman Britain uniquely within the context of its regional comparisons. Observing this data from a regional perspective may limit the understanding of the image so, moving forwards, a complete catalogue of phallic carved imagery from a cross-provincial study area would offer a significant database from which greater chronological and stylistic conclusions might be garnered. The author, at least, aims to cover the entire province of *Britannia* as part of his going PhD studies.

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TABLE 1: CATALOGUE OF PHALLIC CARVINGS IN THE NORTH OF ROMAN BRITAIN RECORDING METRIC, SPATIAL AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION.

No.	Site	Description	Context	Year	Axis (1-12)	Date	Notes	Reference
1	Adel (Leeds)	Incised carving, pointing upwards surrounded by inscription PRIMI/NUS/MIN /TLA ('Priminus, his phallic charm'). 58 x 61cm.	-	Before 1816	12	-	Now in Leeds City Museum.	RIB 631.
2	Barcombe Hill	Incised carving of a right-facing, curved phallus. 41 x 28cm.	Quarry wall, overlooked by a timber tower within an Iron Age univalate enclosure (Birley 1961, 147); tower probably Flavian in date (Woodfield 1966, 76-7).	-	2	3rd Century ?	The Barcombe Hill quarries are considered to have been used in the Severan rebuilding of the nearby fort at Vindolanda (McGuire 2011, 2, 18-20). A carving of the numeral XIII was recorded 6m away (Tomlin and Hassall 2003, 366).	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 442.
3	Benwell	Incised carving, incomplete. Testes and lower shaft only. 22 x 15cm.	Fort.	-	-	Early 2nd – Late 4th Century	Found <i>in situ</i> during watching brief.	Stewart 2007.
4	Binchester	Incised carving of a stylised left-facing phallus. Testes do not join.	Fort. Residual in bath-house rubbish dump.	2010-2014	10	2nd - mid 4th Century	-	David Petts, <i>pers. comm.</i>
5	Birdoswald	Relief phallus, lateral in block. 41 x 18cm.	Curtain Wall.	-	9	2nd Century	Incorporated into the curtain wall east of Birdoswald, 193m west of Milecastle 49. <i>In situ.</i>	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 458.
6	Birdoswald	Relief phallus, lateral in block. 32 x 19cm.	Curtain Wall.	-	9	2nd Century	Incorporated into the curtain wall east of Birdoswald, 375m west of Milecastle 49. <i>In situ.</i>	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 459.
7	Birdoswald	Relief phallus, lateral in block. 24.5 x 13 x 4cm.	U/S	-	9/3	-	-	Wilmott 1997, 317.
8	Birdoswald	Incised phallus. 30 x 19.5/30 x 25cm.	Incised on a voussoir from a window	1987-92	2	2nd-4th Century	Only example from a window arch.	Wilmott 1997, 65, fig. 39.

			head, pointing away from the interior curve of the arch. The voussoir is part of a series associated with the upper courses of the <i>porta principalis sinistra</i> .					
9	Birrens	Carved or punched phallus in irregular sub-rectangular block. 47 x 12 x 14.5cm.	Fort.	1895	9/3	1st- 2nd Century	Incised with a punch or similar instrument.	Keppie and Arnold 1984, no 28.
10	Carlisle	Carved phallus within circular depression, broken on three edges. 25 x17 x 13cm.	Fort.	1981	-	2nd-3rd Century	Castle Street. Residual in later Medieval layer. Now in Tullie House Museum.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 529; Padley 1991.
11	Carlisle	Carved phallus, prominent glans and testes. Lateral in block.	South wall of <i>Principia</i> (Period 6A), four courses up from foundation.	1998-2001	9	Early 3rd Century	LEG VI inscription on corresponding block in east wall. Now in Tullie House Museum.	Henig 2009, 871, pl. 232.
12	Carrawburgh	Relief carving, lateral in block.	Fort.	-	9/3	Early 2nd – Late 4th Century	-	Rob Collins <i>pers. comm.</i>
13	Castlecary	Low relief phallus, lateral in block, with irregularly spaced, incised diagonal lines radiating obliquely from the central image. 45 x 32cm.	U/S probably from Fort.	-	9/3	Mid-2nd Century	Re-used in west wall of garden at Castlecary Castle.	Keppie and Arnold 1984, no 82.
14	Catterick	Relief carving ejaculating and with triangular carving beneath. 150 x 25 x 60cm.	Reused in side road adjacent to Dere Street. Originally from Bridge abutment.	2014	12	-	RF6010. Currently in post-ex with Northern Archaeological Associates.	Ross 2015, 11; Parker and Ross 2016.
15	Chesters	Relief phallus, facing left. Pointing towards an unclear, ovoid figure; possibly an Evil Eye - the phallus is thus attacking it. 132 x 43 x 25cm.	East bank of the bridge over the North Tyne at Chesters fort, on the fifth course of the north wing.	-	10	Early 3rd Century	-	Bidwell and Holbrook 1989, 19, 142; Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 404.
16	Chesters	Relief of a figure, phallus and bust. Phallus in centre with human figure standing at the	Extra-mural bath-house, in the lowest course of room E1.	1884	12	3rd Century	The 'bust' may be differently interpreted as an altar.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 405.

		left, and a 'bust' to the right. 23 x 13cm.						
17	<b>Chesters</b>	Phallic carving on a raised, circular dais. 75 x 69cm.	<i>Principia</i>	1870-5	-	3rd Century	Remains <i>in situ</i> in the courtyard of the <i>principia</i> .	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 406.
18	<b>Chesters</b>	Incised phallus points right towards 'what may be a vulva or an evil eye'. An annular disc is joined to the phallus by a 'coffee-bean' shaped object. 30 x 15 x 24cm.	-	Before 1902	3	-	The 'coffee-bean' shaped object may be interpreted as ejaculate of the phallus attacking the evil eye. In Chesters Museum.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 407.
19	<b>Chesters</b>	Inscribed below with XXX. 30 x 22cm.	Wall?	-	-	-	-	Budge 1903, 298.
20	<b>Corbridge</b>	Fragmentary relief carving. Testes and shaft fragment only. 14 x 13 x 11cm.	Site VIII.	1908	10/4	2nd-4th Century	Corbridge Museum (CO22974). Fragmentary.	Phillips 1977, no.175.
21	<b>Corbridge</b>	Relief carving lateral in block. 33 x 22 x 13cm	-	-	9/3	2nd-4th Century	Corbridge Museum (CO31136).	Phillips 1977, no.176
22	<b>Corbridge (Shorden Brae)</b>	Six incised stylised phalli on a single block, four on one side and two on another. 105cm (approx.)	Foundation of the Mausoleum.	1958	-	Mid-4th century	-	Gillam and Daniels 1961, 51-52.
23	<b>Halton Chesters</b>	Relief carving, lateral in block.	-	1960	9/3?	2nd-4th Century	-	Phillips 1977, no. 334.
24	<b>Housesteads</b>	Relief carving.	-	-	-	-	In English Heritage stone store (HO349).	-
25	<b>Loftus</b>	Relief carving of a large, stylised phallus with a s-shaped shaft.	-	2013	9	4th century	Street House Farm. On display in Kirkleatham Museum, Redcar.	Sherlock 2013.
26	<b>Maryport</b>	Incised carved, pointing towards an ovoid figure. Surrounded by inscription. VER/PAM/SEPT ('The phallus of Marcus Septimius'). 35 x 17 x 20cm.	Fort.	Before 1914	9	-	Senhouse Museum (MAYSM: 1993.55).	RIB 872; Bailey and Haverfield 1915, 158, no. 86.
27	<b>Maryport</b>	Relief carving, lateral in block. 27 x 12 x 15cm.	Fort.	Before 1914	-	-	-	Bailey and Haverfield 1915, 158, no. 87.
28	<b>Maryport</b>	Relief carving, in sunken panel. 25 x 17 x 33cm.	Fort.	Before 1914	-	-	-	Bailey and Haverfield 1915, 158, no. 88.

29	<b>Rudston</b>	Incised carving on large triangular face of trade weight. 25cm (approx).	Villa	-	12	-	In Hull and East Riding Museum. (KINCM: 1986.1826)	-
30	<b>South Shields</b>	Incised carving depicting horse and rider and a large phallus. 36 x 20 x 18.5cm.	Fort. Barrack IX, Centurion's room.	1998	10	3rd Century	Either the rider is macrophallic and is riding the horse backwards or the carving is overlaid on a phallic carving. In Tyne and Wear Museums (TWCMS: 2002.1264).	Croom 1997-98, 68, no.1, fig. 16.
31	<b>South Shields</b>	Incised carving of a highly stylised phallus in the 'closed scissors' form, but with a prominent glans. 31.5 x 29.5 x 17cm.	Fort. Barrack III, Room 4.	1998	3	-	Reverse depicts an ithyphallic man and an undeciphered inscription. In Tyne and Wear Museums (TWCMS: 2002.1263).	Croom 1997-98, 68, no.2, fig. 16.
32	<b>South Shields</b>	Incised carving of phallus, lateral in block. 31 x 24 x 22cm..	Fort. Barrack III, Room 5.	1998	9	-	In Tyne and Wear Museums (TWCMS: 2002.1262).	Croom 1997-98, 68, no.3, fig. 16.
33	<b>South Shields</b>	Incised carving. 61 x 60 x 16cm.	Fort. <i>Principia</i> ?	1990	-	-	In Tyne and Wear Museums (TWCMS: 2011.1008).	-
34	<b>South Shields</b>	Arch-shaped stone with rilled sides. Relief phallus?	Fort.	-	-	-	In Tyne and Wear Museums (TWCMS: T600).	-
35	<b>Vindolanda</b>	Framed panel in block, central image is a carved phallus, facing left towards a group of 'trees'. Inscribed with S(?)ESTD. 40 x 14 x 20cm.	Re-used in the core of the fort wall, near the north-east corner.	-	9	2nd-3rd Century ?	In Vindolanda Museum.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 443.
36	<b>Vindolanda</b>	High relief phallus, lateral in block. 18 x 17 x 25cm.	Re-used in a drain inside the west entrance of the 4th Century <i>Principia</i> .	-	9?	2nd-3rd Century ?	<i>In situ</i> .	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 444.
37	<b>Vindolanda</b>	Highly stylised phallic carving, incised on floor. Opposing, curved d-shaped form is open at the glans. 51 x 40 x 7cm.	Store building (LXXIV) in <i>Vicus</i> .	1972	-	Early 4th Century.	In Vindolanda Museum.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 445.
38	<b>Vindolanda</b>	Incised/punched phallus with large glans. 45 x 29 x 16cm.	<i>Mansio</i> .	1969	12/6	3rd-4th Century	SF52. In Vindolanda Museum.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 446.

39	Vindolanda	Low relief phallic carving lateral in block. 21 x 14 x 26cm.	Collapsed wall in the <i>vicus</i> .	1971	9/3	3rd Century ?	In Vindolanda Museum.	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 447.
40	Vindolanda	Large phallic carving.	Collapsed wall in the fort.	1992	-	Early 2nd – Late 4th Century	SF6000. In Vindolanda Museum.	Barbara Birley, <i>pers. comm.</i>
41	Vindolanda	Phallic carving.	-	1997	-	Early 2nd – Late 4th Century	SF7002. In Vindolanda Museum.	Barbara Birley, <i>pers. comm.</i>
42	Vindolanda	Phallic carving.	-	1998	-	Early 2nd – Late 4th Century	SF7363. In Vindolanda Museum.	Barbara Birley, <i>pers. comm.</i>
43	Wallsend	Incised carving. 25 x 16 x 13cm.	Fort.	1977	-	Early 2nd – Late 4th Century	In Tyne and Wear Museums (TWCMS: 2001.2878).	
44	Westerwood	Incised carving depicting a stylised, vertical phallus in a rectangular block. The letters IVX inscribed next to it. An inscription beneath the testes: EX VOTO.	Fort.	Before 1725	12	2nd Century ?	Now lost.	Keppie and Arnold 1984, no 85.
45	Willowford	Fragment of a phallic relief, cut laterally. Partial shaft and glans survive. 33 x 12cm.	Bridge crossing the River Irthing, immediately east of Birdoswald.	-	9/3?	Early 2nd-Century.	Reused from Bridge 1 in Bridge 3. <i>In situ</i> .	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 457; Coulston 1989, 142.
46	York	Relief carving, lateral in block. 32 x 11 x 21cm.	Fortress Wall (West corner).	Before 1962	9/3	Late 2nd-early 3rd Century	Dating based on re-assessment of wall phasing by Ottaway (1996: 286). In Yorkshire Museum (YORYM: 2007.6142)	Tufi 1983, no. 124; RCHME 1962, 114.
47	York	Relief carving, lateral in block. 21 x 9 x 17cm.	Fortress Wall (West corner).	Before 1962	9/3	Late 2nd-early 3rd Century	" " (YORYM: 2007.6143)	Tufi 1983, no. 124; RCHME 1962, 114.
48	York	Relief carving, lateral in block. 21 x 10 x 16cm.	Fortress Wall (West corner).	Before 1962	9/3	Late 2nd-early 3rd Century	" " (YORYM: 2007.6147)	Tufi 1983, no. 124; RCHME 1962, 114.
49	(Hadrian's Wall region)	Relief carving, lateral in block. 55 x 11 x 22cm.	-	-	9/3	-	Chesters Museum (CH203).	Coulston and Phillips 1988, no. 466.



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