

A Late Roman Pewter Vessel from Sandy

STEPHEN GREEP

Early in March 1981 the illustrated pewter vessel (Fig 1, Pl 1) was brought to the Verulamium Museum, St Albans for identification. It was found (by metal detector) at Banks Farm, Sandy. Although a hoard of bronze vessels is recorded from Sandy (Kennett, 1969, 124), this is the first pewter find from the area (cf Peal, 1967, Fig. 1).

The vessel, a small, flanged bowl or cup is c 55 mm in height and has a rim diameter of between 127-137 mm, the exact dimensions being uncertain. It appears to have been hit, and damaged by, a plough while still in the ground which accounts for its oval shape and indented side (Pl 1). It has a wide flanged rim (14 mm in width) decorated by a series of cast raised dots fairly evenly spaced around its outer edge. The base is quite narrow (c 50 mm diam) probably with a low footring although the damaged area partly obscures this, and its underside is incised with a rescored 'X' (Fig 1).

Although most finds of pewter are recovered from hoards of the late fourth century (Brown, 1979,

207) apparently no other vessels were found with the illustrated bowl, nor have any been subsequently brought to the Verulamium or Bedford Museums for identification. The exact form of the Sandy vessel is difficult to parallel although it is similar in shape to the ornate series of Late Roman silver flanged bowls discussed by Strong (1966, 202-3). Pewter vessels from Icklingham, Lakenheath and Wangford noted by Brown (1979, 206) appear to be the closest comparable types, while others possessing a similar shape to the Sandy examples are decorated with internal fluting and cast spots on the internal base (cf Brown, 1979, for a discussion of the type). Although no material was apparently associated with the Sandy bowl its date should lie within the fourth century.

REFERENCES

- Brown, D., (1979) The Pewter Vessels in Clarke, G., The Roman Cemetery at Lankhills. *Pre Roman and Roman Winchester*, II.
Kennett, D. (1969) Late Roman Bronze Vessel Hoards in Britain. *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum, Mainz*, 16, 123-148.
Peal, C. (1967) Romano-British Pewter Plates and Dishes. *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.*, 60, 19-37.
Strong, D. (1966) *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate*, London.



Plate 1 Late Roman pewter vessel from Sandy

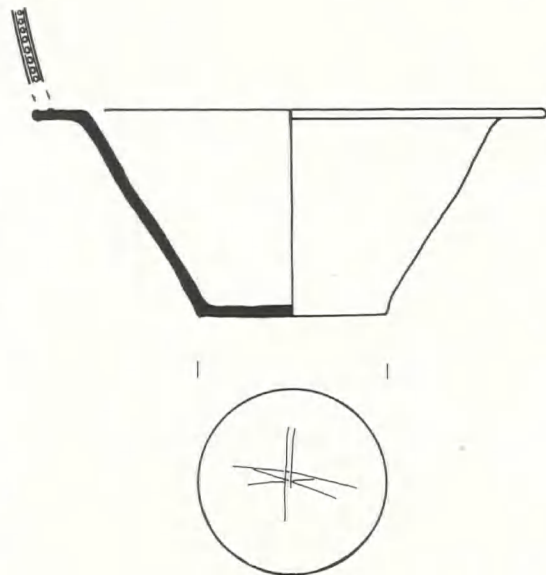


Fig 1 Late Roman pewter vessel from Sandy, 1/2 size