

feature - a brand new water wheel.

Owners of the mill, Mrs. Ann Davies and her husband, Phil, are reconstructing the wheel as part of their restoration work which has been in progress since they purchased it some seven years ago.

A water mill has in fact been on that site on the River Lud for 900 years, and the old wheel which has been taken off, in a state of rot, was 200 years old.

It was 11ft in diameter, 8ft wide and had 32 buckets to scoop up the water. These were made of wrought iron and elm board, and the side of the wheel, which would have been made on site, is of cast iron.

The Davies' are now fitting the buckets on to the new wheel and hope to have it ready so that they can open the mill to the public on Good Friday, April 4.

In the make-up of the wheel, as near to the original as possible, is a ton of metal and no fewer than 1,000 bolts.

The mill is in fact operational, and Mrs. Davies grinds barley for animal food while her husband and their sons Simon (17) and Oliver (18) carry out the restoration work.

They have put on a new roof and restored all the windows before embarking on their present project.

Funds for the work have come out of their own pocket and the entrance fees charged to people who look around the landmark.

Many schoolchildren have visited it and already there are several bookings for the summer.

At one time there were no fewer than 13 mills on the River Lud in the three miles between Louth and Alvingham, but the Davies' mill is

now the only example left which is operational. There are, however, a few of those mills still standing.

Although Mrs. Davies is busy enough with her work, she hopes soon to start writing a book on the mill's history.

Viking writing

A LINCOLNSHIRE man has contributed to the new light being thrown on the Vikings.

Dr. Richard Bailey, head of the School of English Language and Literature at Newcastle University, has written a new book on Viking-age sculpture which confirms that the Vikings were as much artists and craftsmen as they were fearsome raiders.

Dr. Bailey, the elder son of Mr. William Bailey of Ashby Road, Spilsby, who for many years was chief public health inspector of the old Spilsby RDC, has spent free weekends and holidays over the past 10 years scouring the north of England for Viking relics.

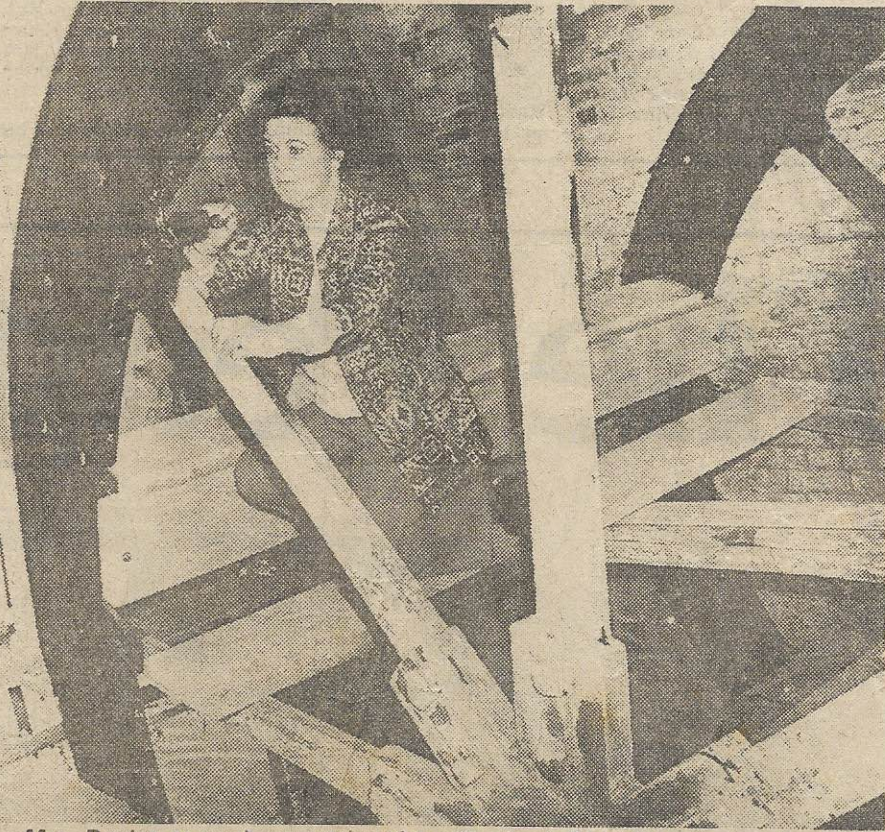
He says the sculpture of the Viking period offers a wealth of insight into the nature of the invaders.

The sculptures range from the work of itinerant craftsmen and village masons to the work of professional artists in the Viking cities of York and Chester.

His book - published by Collins - comes out when there is a large Viking exhibition at the British Museum and when the BBC is due to start a series on the Vikings for which

New feature

VISITORS this summer to the 17th-century Alvingham Water Mill, near Louth, will see a new



Mrs. Davies at work renovating the mill wheel. See "New feature."