

TECNOLOGIE & TRASPORTI MARE



ASSOCIAZIONE NAVALE

M/V Norse Mersey



Owner

Levantina Trasporti
Bari

Shipyard

C. N. Visentini

Propeller

Wärtsilä Propulsion
Type PR 108/4H

Main engine

Wärtsilä Vasa 9R 46
8.145 kW at 500 RPM

Norse Mersey: an elegant ro-ro ferry for Irish Sea charter

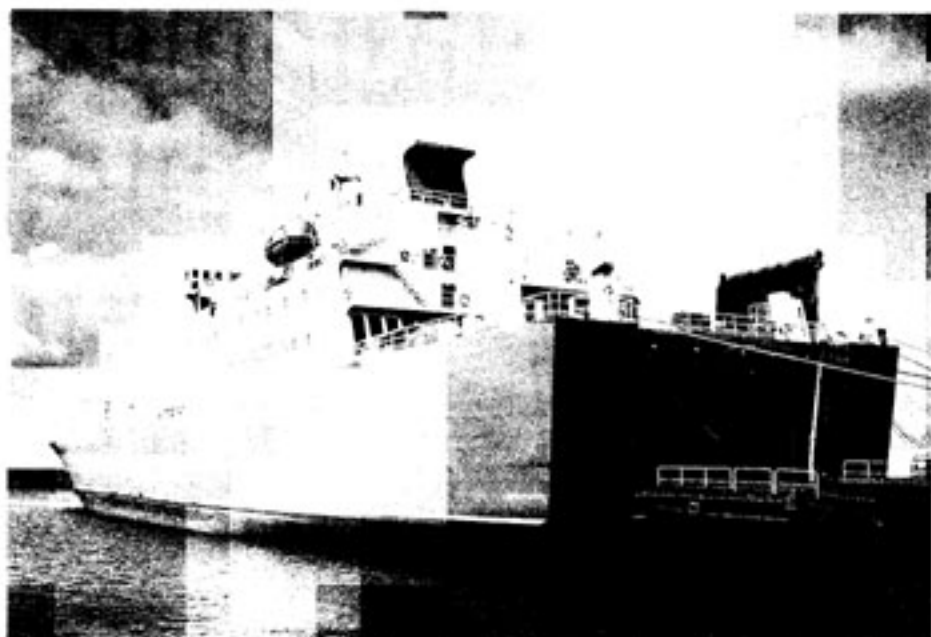
An 11,000dwt Italian designed and built ship from the Visentini yard offers simple attractions for both shorthaul or longer voyages

AT the same time as some inefficient shipyards are going through periods of contraction, other smaller yards, capitalising on special market niches, are expanding their facilities while still maintaining remarkable levels of productivity. The Italian Visentini shipyard at Donada near Venice is just such an example. Its most recent delivery, the *Norse Mersey*, is actually the first ro-ro vessel to be delivered for operation outside of the Mediterranean. This will be followed next year by a similar vessel which has been purchased by DFDS. The family-owned Visentini shipyard entered the ro-ro arena with the construction of double-ended ferries for the Straits of Messina. Starting in 1979 with the *Bridge*, Caronte has taken delivery of a total of eight sisters from Visentini, clearly a reflection of customer satisfaction. These 92.0m long by 17.0m beam sisters can accommodate 120 cars or 250 lane metres of trucks.

Subsequently, Visentini built its first pure ro-ro ship in 1981, the *Aldo*, which was specifically designed to cater for the need to transport economically trailers or containers. The major premise was that the vessels should be as simple as possible, hence the single-screw, single-engine choice. Likewise, a fixed internal ramp was incorporated which began its ascent at the stern threshold. This class of ro-ro ship was very popular, finding employment all over the Mediterranean for charterers such as Grimaldi, Tarros, CNAN, Tirrenia and Sudcargo.

The new *Norse Mersey* and her sister, the *Linda*, are a development of the successful ro-ro ship *Toscana* built for Tirrenia. As Visentini has gradually expanded its berth size and capacity, so the size of ships constructed has gradually increased to the extent that vessels presently under construction have an overall length of 186.0m and a 25.6m beam. These will be side launched and then completed in Visentini's newly extended building dock which is

Norse Mersey has two stern accesses: this 12m wide MacGregor door/ramp and a 7.5m wide starboard door/ramp in the side shell (just visible).



Norse Irish Ferries' new Italian-built ro-ro ship Norse Mersey berthed in Liverpool. A fine hull form with a single propeller gives attractive fuel consumption figures.

PRINCIPAL PARTICULARS NORSE MERSEY

Length, oa	174.90m
Length, bp	160.50m
Breadth	24.50m
Depth, to main deck	7.50m
Depth, to upper deck	14.40m
Draught, max cargo ship	6.82m
Draught, passenger ship	5.60m
Deadweight, max cargo ship	11,080dwt
Deadweight, passenger ship	7,200dwt
Gross	14,820gt
Lorry capacity	1960 lane metres
Passenger capacity	62
Container capacity	750TEU
Main engine	Wärtsilä 9R46
Output	8145kW at 450rev/min
Speed, service at 85% mcr	19.50 knots
Classification	Registro Italiano Navale +100A, 1.1, NAV.1.L, 1A01, T.P.

spanned by a 300 tonne capacity gantry crane.

Norse Mersey has been designed by NAOS, a Trieste-based consultancy company. She and her sister are designed very flexibly to satisfy the demands of the ro-ro

charter market. For example, the 750TEU capacity and 11,000dwt is well suited to the longer inter-Med or Med-West Africa liner trades operated by the likes of Grimaldi or Messina while the 2000-lane metre trailer capacity is also very acceptable for short distance and even coastal ro-ro services especially as there is provision for 62 drivers in four- and two-berth cabins.

Charter attractions for Norse Irish Ferries

It was on the basis of the latter facility that Norse Irish Ferries entered into a long-term charter agreement for the vessels to operate between Liverpool and Belfast. This service was started in November 1992 as a joint venture between the Norwegian Roed group and a consortium of Irish hauliers who were discontented with existing ro-ro services on the Irish Sea. The overnight operation has used a pair of very

Looking forward inside the main vehicle deck and showing the fixed ramp leading to the lower hold. The watertight cover is end-hinged.

