

GOZO SUPPLEMENT

The setting up of a Gozo Civic Council in April 1960, with limited powers for the planning and execution of certain public works, may be considered as a milestone in the history of this small island lying about four miles to the north west of Malta. The setting up of this Council has focussed the attention of Malta on this charming sister island, on its needs and potentialities. Hence this new section in THE MALTA YEAR BOOK devoted exclusively to Gozitan history and interests.

A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although structurally, economically, ethnically and politically Gozo is part of Malta and has gone through the same joys and tribulations as the bigger island, it has its own particular traditions and cultural variations. One of the things in which it surpasses Malta is, undoubtedly, the number of legends that enshroud Gozo's early history. It is strongly maintained, for example, that Gozo was Circe's abode in the days of the adventures of Ulysses, and a cave in a beautiful inlet is affectionally known as *Calypso's Cave*. Gozo itself is very often called *Calypso's island* — a romantic title which in many ways fits this small 26-square-mile island.

Gozo possesses the same kind of prehistoric remains as Malta, though not as many. The name of their wonderful neolithic temple is *Ggantija* or *the place of the Giants*, because the stones of which the temple is built are so huge that only supermen could have moved them into position. Gozo, like Malta, passed from Phoenician to Carthaginian, and from Carthaginian to Roman hands.

It was the Romans who first established a "municipium" in Gozo and with it the power to elect local magistrates and representatives. This gave Gozo a form of self-government and a certain political independence of Malta. Of course, Gozo could afford to be considered *independent* at a time when travelling, both by land and by sea, was difficult and hazardous. The remoteness of Gozo and the seclusion of its few inlets provided excellent haunts for the pirates and corsaires who lived on the loot of the Mediterranean trade-routes from Byzantine times onwards, and for many centuries, life in Gozo was concentrated

in and around the fortified citadel now known as Victoria. For many centuries the island's shores were almost completely uninhabited, and it was natural, therefore, that Gozo should, have its own internal government.

Gozo's municipium was revived in the form of a *università* (or Council) in Norman times, after the Arabs were overthrown by Count Roger. The status of this Council was not that of a General Council (as was prevalent in Malta) but that of a *particular* or city council. From this time onwards, the general administration of the Maltese Islands was ruled from Malta, while Gozo had a form of special council to look after its own immediate needs. This Council functioned right up to 1798 when the Knights were expelled by Napoleon.

When the Knights of St. John came to Malta in 1530, they fortified Gozo. In a terrible piratical attack in 1551, the capital was captured and the whole population was either killed or taken prisoner. This is the most brilliant page in Gozo's history. Gozo has had a peaceful life little troubled by war ever since. The Gozitan fortresses held out for a very short time against Napoleon in 1798. During World War II only a few bombs fell on the island, but naturally, like Malta, Gozo suffered moral and physical hardships, and many Gozitans served in the Army and the Navy. Others bravely maintained the supply-route to Malta and offered their services for the needs of the sister-island.

In recent history, Gozo has always been considered an integral part of Malta. The *università* was abolished when the British took over, and Gozo became a separate electoral district, sending its own representatives to the Maltese parliament. Without good harbour facilities in Gozo, no big industries could possibly be set up, and the smaller island has always been content to remain as Malta's lander — a fertile island which supplies much of Malta's foodstuffs. This has helped to maintain in Gozo a quiet and peaceful way of life which contrasts so much with the hustle and bustle of Malta. "Far from the madding crowd" is the appropriate phrase to describe the serenity that reigns over Gozo: the island, in fact, enjoys the beauty of Malta's old capital, Md'na, without its sepulchral silence, and the briskness of Valetta without its noisy crowds.

HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AND PLACES

1. The Citadel of Victoria — with its mediaeval Cathedral, Courts of law and prison, the bastions and ruins.
2. The Museum, Victoria.
3. The Public Library, Victoria.
4. Il-Ġgantija — megalithic temple.
5. Calypso's Cave and Għar ta' Ninu — stalactitic and stalagm'itic formations.
6. The parish churches in Gozo afford beautiful paintings and monuments of Gozo's cultural heritage. Of these the Sanctuary at Ta' Pinu may be singled out as an example of exquisite workmanship in stone.

GEOGRAPHY

What strikes the visitor as soon as he lands in Gozo is the topographical differences that exist between Malta and the smaller island. Gozo is very much more hilly, and the uneven skyline, which is almost nowhere found in Malta presents the first big contrast.

This is due to the fact that denudation in Gozo is very recent and still active. The original flat-topped Upper Coralline layer is being dissected very fast into the flat-topped hills which are so characteristic of Gozo, and steep sided V-shaped valleys.

There exists, besides, a thicker layer of blue clay which, when mixed with the lower layers of globigerina limestone, makes very fertile soil.

The second big contrast between Malta and Gozo is that the latter is, on the whole, much greener. The flat tops of the hills are nearly always very bare, affording little vegetation except for pasturage. So the Gozitans have built most of their villages on these hill-tops, and Nadur, Għarb, Zebbug and Xagħra enjoy marvellous views of the surrounding valleys and rolling plains.

The steep sided valleys are intensely cultivated. Everywhere there is evidence of hill terracing, of irrigation and of great economy in the use of land. Fruit trees abound along the sheltered sides of the cliffy hill-tops, vines form field-boundaries and hide the stone walls with their foliage and intense farming exploits the fertile red soil. Agriculture which is the main industry of Gozo, is very firmly established indeed.

The configuration of the coastline allows of very few inlets, but they are all exceedingly interesting from the geographical point of view and afford very beautiful views to the casual visitor. Mgarr, the landing place for the ferry service that runs between Malta and Gozo, is the only port. Like all other inlets in Gozo it supports a substantial fishing industry. It is always busy because from here the island exports its daily produce to Malta and imports its many other needs from the sister island. Marsalforn, a noted holiday resort and another fishing village, is situated in a bay; Xlendi, picturesque and romantic, is wedged between the majestic cliffs of Ta' Ċenċ; Ramla, not so easily reached, is a feast of golden-red sand and blue sea. A very curious and interesting place is Dwejra where the sea has cut into the cliffs and formed a sort of small inland salt lake. The rest is sheer cliff, in many instances over 500 feet high.

The town of Victoria is the island's nerve centre. As in Malta, all activities and transport radiate from the capital, with the difference that while Valetta is situated on the coast, Victoria is in the centre of the island. It has a beautiful cathedral and houses the main government departments. Its markets are more interesting and the many small shops are very busy all the time. Its population is a little over 6,000.

As in Malta, the population of Gozo lives in a number of town-like villages and the dispersal of population is not very much greater than that of the sister-island. The Gozitans, however, generally own larger farms than their Maltese counterparts, and in many instances their fields are very far apart. Fresh food, fruit, vegetables, eggs, poultry, milk and cheese are Gozo's main exports to Malta. Malta supplies Gozo with almost all other needs.

No geographical description of Gozo would be complete without mentioning the famous lace industry of the island. Malta lace is mostly made in Gozo. The women there seem untouched by the advance of the mechanical age and still seem to have time to indulge in this very fine art. It is only in Gozo that the tourist can see the home industry carried out in its original form. Another important industry is tomato canning and the manufacture of tomato sauce.

POPULATION OF GOZO

Victoria	6,485	Xaghra	4,067
Kercem & Sta Lucia	1,207	Xewkija	3,371
Zebbug	1,212	Nadur	4,149
Ghasri	464	Qala	1,585
Gharb	1,254	Ghajnsielem & Mgarr	1,854
San Lawrenz	480	Comino	30
Sannat & Munxar	1,686		
		Total	27,794.

THE TOURIST IN GOZO

A brief trip, at least, to Gozo must never be omitted by any visitor to Malta. Whatever its length, it will never fail to leave a lasting impression.

Gozo is so different from Malta, in spite of the history and culture they share in common. Most probably it is because life in the smaller island — still unspoilt by the mechanical age — has a unique flavour. The tourist discovers this when he meets people who, though enjoying a great cultural heritage and most of the benefits of modern civilisation, are still, in the best sense “primitive”. It may be that Gozo, being so small, affords bigger contrasts in a smaller area; geographically this is strikingly true. Whatever may be the reason, one cannot help noticing this great difference.

What has Gozo to offer the tourist? It is, to begin with, intensely picturesque. Whether you loiter in the streets of Victoria or spend a morning basking in the sunshine of Xlendi; whether your steps take you along the narrow winding valleys or into the wonderful churches in the quaint little villages, you are surrounded by the picturesque: by beautiful sometimes rugged, views, by shy women in country costume, by philosophical farmers hard at work with hoe and spade or silently meditating on their growing crops, by busy vendors in the markets. One is struck by the absence of buses — so interesting a picture of Maltese life — for it is easier and more convenient to travel by taxi in Gozo; one is struck by the purity of the air, the absence of smoke, the almost complete lack of noise from engines and machines. One is interested, intensely interested, with the individuality of the houses; there are no rows of iden-

tical buildings, a feature of the modern age. One is haunted by the winding roads and the narrow streets..... This is Gozo.

Apart from all this, there are certain other advantages. Life is comparatively cheaper than in Malta. There is more "tourist life" in Gozo in as far as many Maltese visit Gozo for their holidays and for a change. The sea-side resorts and the country-side are still in many ways unspoilt and virgin. There are many places where one can enjoy a cool swim or a quiet sun-bathe without being surrounded by hundreds of others. And there are a number of good hotels where one can eat good food, drink good Gozo wine, and enjoy intelligent and courteous company.

Above all, there is, as in Malta, the hospitality of the people which is traditional; Gozo is so small that everybody gets to know everybody else; one can soon pick up the ever helpful guide who will take great pleasure in showing the beauty of his country to the visitor and cherish the memory of having made a new acquaintance.

PLACES TO VISIT IN GOZO

1. Victoria — the citadel with the cathedral of Gozo, the law courts and the prisons; the Public Library; the British Institute; the churches of St. George and Sta Sabina; the market place and it-Tokk; the Bishop's Palace; the Salesian Oratory; the Rundie Gardens; a walk to Gelmus Hill where one can enjoy a marvellous sunset.
2. Swimming and Bathing — Marsalforn (equipped with good hotels), Xlendi (equipped with good hotels), Ramla, Mgarr, Mgarr ix-Xini, Dwejra.
3. Churches and Villages — Nadur, Ghajnsielem, Qala, Xaghra, Xewkija, Gharb, Zebbug, Sannat, Kerem, Ta' Pinu.
4. Interesting Walks — Fort Chambray, Ta' Canè Cliffs, Qala tad-Dwejra and Qala, Hondoq ir-Rummien, Wied il-Ghasri, San Blas Valley, Dbiegi, Gurdan Lighthouse.
5. Comino — excellent swimming at St. Mary's Bay and Bejn il-Kmiemen.

MALTA — GOZO FERRY SERVICE

Winter Time-Table: 15th September — 30th April

	Boat Leaves GOZO	Boat Arrives MARFA	Last Bus from VALETTA	Boat Leaves MARFA	Boat Arrives GOZO
Mondays	6.15 a.m.	6.45 p.m.	6.15 a.m.	7.30 a.m.	8.00 a.m.
to	1.00 p.m.	1.30 p.m.	12.30 p.m.	1.45 p.m.	2.15 a.m.
Saturdays	4.00 p.m.	4.30 p.m.	3.15 p.m.	4.35 p.m.	5.05 p.m.
Sundays	7.00 a.m.	7.30 a.m.	6.30 a.m.	7.45 a.m.	8.15 a.m.
and Holy Days	2.00 p.m.	2.30 p.m.	1.30 p.m.	2.45 p.m.	3.15 p.m.
of Obligation	4.00 p.m.	4.30 p.m.	3.15 p.m.	4.35 p.m.	5.05 p.m.

Summer Time-Table: 1st May — 14th September

Mondays	6.15 a.m.	6.45 a.m.	6.15 a.m.	7.30 a.m.	8.00 a.m.
to	9.00 a.m.	9.30 a.m.	8.30 a.m.	9.45 a.m.	10.15 a.m.
Saturdays	1.15 p.m.	1.45 p.m.	12.45 p.m.	2.00 p.m.	2.30 p.m.
	5.30 p.m.	6.00 p.m.	5.00 p.m.	6.15 p.m.	6.45 p.m.
Sundays	6.45 a.m.	7.15 a.m.	6.30 a.m.	7.45 a.m.	8.15 a.m.
and Holy Days	9.45 a.m.	10.15 a.m.	9.15 a.m.	10.30 a.m.	11.00 a.m.
of Obligation	3.00 p.m.	3.30 p.m.	2.30 p.m.	3.45 p.m.	4.15 p.m.
	5.30 p.m.	6.00 p.m.	5.00 p.m.	6.15 p.m.	6.45 p.m.

The Marfa-Gozo ferry service can load a number of cars for transport to and from the island. Early booking is advisable. Telephone: Gozo 59.

GOZO SPECIALITIES

Gozo lace and Gozo wine are the two most prominent articles that Gozo has to offer to the visitor and which enjoy quite a wide reputation. Fruit is very abundant in Gozo, especially melons, which provide a very satisfying food in the hot summer months. For the gourmet there is plenty of fresh cheese, and a form of dried, fresh-cheese preserved in vinegar and pepper known as "ġbejniet tal bżar" which is highly appreciated. Unpreserved dried, fresh-cheese is also abundantly available. Tomato paste for export is now being produced in two modern factories.

BUSES AND TRANSPORT IN GOZO

All main villages enjoy good road services to the main town but the bus-services are not very frequent since the movement of population in Gozo is not very great. There are plenty of taxis, however, which can take the visitor anywhere on the island at all times of the day. Taxis are quite cheap and very convenient since they are more frequently used than in Malta.

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN GOZO

Gozo is governed from Valetta and enjoys the same rights and duties as Malta. It forms one of the eight electoral districts of Malta and used to send five representatives to the Maltese Parliament under the previous self-government constitution. There are no special Government departments in Gozo, though most Government departments have district offices on the island. The administration of the island is looked after by a Commissioner for Gozo.

A Gozo Civic Council was set up by order of His Excellency the Governor as per Government Notice 139 of the 14th March, 1960. This Government Notice states:

1. His Excellency the Governor has approved that, with effect from the 4th April, 1960, the Gozo Civic Committee shall be replaced by a Gozo Civic Council and that the supervision for certain subjects normally administered by the Government shall be entrusted to the Council as from that date.

2. There shall be three Committees of the Council which shall be responsible to the Council for the following subjects:

Public Health: a) Public Sanitation; b) The maintenance

and running of cemeteries; c) The maintenance and running of district dispensaries.

Roads Committee: a) Improvements to and re-surfacing of roads; b) The extension of street lighting.

Finance and General Purposes: a) Public Library and Library service; b) Museum and Monuments; c) The extension of sewers; d) The free extension of water mains; e) The maintenance of Playing Fields.

3. Funds for the above mentioned services will continue to be made available by the Government in the normal way through the Departmental Estimates in the Recurrent Budget in accordance with the approved policy of Government.

4. Government Servants of the Departments concerned will remain responsible to their own Heads of Department. But they will be encouraged to fit in with the desires of the Council and to work with it in such a way as to make the Council aware that it is the supervising and directing force in relation to the above subjects.

5. By arrangement with the Commissioner for Gozo, the Council will be given facilities to visit Government offices and institutions in Gozo and to receive information from Departmental Heads in Gozo on the activities of their departments.

6. The Commissioner for Gozo shall be the Principal Adviser and Chief Executive officer of the Gozo Civic Council.

COMMISSIONER FOR GOZO

Chev. Edgar Cassar, 139 Racecourse Street, Victoria — (Gozo 1).

GOZO CIVIC COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

President: Chev. Dr. Anton Tabone M.D. *Vice-President:* Mr. Anthony Buttigieg. *Treasurer:* Mr. Joseph J. Vella. *General Secretary:* Mr. Joseph Vella Muskat. *Member:* Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cauchi Ph.D., Lic. Sc. Soc., Parish Priest.

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

His Lordship the Bishop of Gozo: Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cauchi Ph.D., Lic.Sc.Soc., Parish Priest; *The College of Parish Priests:* Rev. Can. Espedito Tabone, Parish Priest; *Victoria:* Chev. Dr. Anton Tabone M.D.; *Gharb:* Mr. Salvu Portelli; *Nadur:* Mr.

Joseph Said; *Xaghra*: Rev. Emmanuel Galea; *Xerckija*: Mr. Joseph J. Vella; *Sannai*: Mr. Joseph Buttigieg B. Educ; *Zebbug*: Mr. Joseph Galea; *Ghajnsielem*: Mr. Joseph Cauchi; *Qala*: Mr. Anthony Buttigieg; *Kercem*: Mr. Anthony Vella; *San Lawrence*: Mr. Lawrence Apap; *Fontana*: Mr. Emmanuel Schembri; *Ghasri*: Mr. Joseph Grech; *Munxar*: Rev. Dr. Fenech S.Th.D., Ph.D., Parish Priest; *Co-opted*: Mr. Joseph Vella Muscat.

HEALTH COMMITTEE

Chairman: Chev. Dr. Anton Tabone M.D., Rev. Can. Espedito Tabone, Mr. Joseph Debono, Mr. Lawrence Apap, Mr. Emmanuel Schembri.

ROADS COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. Emmanuel Galea, Mr. Joseph Cauchi, Mr. Joseph Grech, Rev. Joseph Curmi.

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Chairman: Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cauchi Ph.D., Lic. Sc. Soc., Mr. Salvu Portelli, Mr. Peter P. Camilleri, Mr. Joseph Buttigieg B. Educ.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Agriculture: Mr. J. Debrincat (*Senior Agricultural Officer*).

Emigration, Labour & Social Welfare: Mr. L. Xerri (*Emigration Branch*): Mr. A. Buttigieg. (*Social & Welfare Branch*).

General Post Office: Mr. A. Tabone (*Higher Clerical Officer*.)

Inland Revenue: Dr. C.M.J. Schembri LL.D., (*Officer in Charge*) Gozo 221. ...

Medical & Health Department: Mr. A. Grech Scerri (*Senior Health Inspector*). Victoria Hospital: Dr. W. Grima B.Sc., M.D. (*Superintendent*). Chambray Hospital: Dr. M. Scicluna M.D. (*Superintendent*).

Milk Marketing Undertaking: Mr. V. Galea (*Executive Officer*).

Public Works Department: Mr. J. C. Huntingford A.C.E. B.E.A. (*Engineer*).

Water & Electricity Department: Mr. J. Cremona.

Information, Dept. of: Mr. G. Pisani, (*Publicity Officer*).

DIOCESE OF GOZO

Gozo forms a separate diocese and has its own bishop and cathedral. The Archbishop of Malta is the senior bishop of the Church in Malta and Gozo and the two dioceses work hand in hand for the common good of the people of the two islands.

PATRON SAINTS OF GOZO

Special Patron: The Most Blessed Virgin Mary in Her Assumption.

Principal Patron: The Apostle Saint Paul.

Secondary Patrons: St. George Martyr and St. Ursula, Virgin & Martyr.

THE BISHOP OF GOZO:

The Rt. Rev. Mgr. J. PACE D.D., J.C.D., Ph.D., G.C.C.J., born in Victoria, Gozo on 30th May, 1890; ordained priest in 1913; appointed Bishop of Gozo on 1st November, 1944; consecrated 17th December, 1944.

Address: Bishop's Palace, Racecourse Street, Victoria. (Gozo 27).

Chancellor of the Diocese: The Canon Penitentiary William Grima J.C.D.

Fiscal Promotor: Mgr. Prof. Saviour Tabone, Cam Sec.

Solicitor to the Fiscal Promotor: Dr. P. Mercieca, LL.D.

THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER

Mgr. P. Cauchi *Archdeacon*, Mgr. G. Cefali *Dean*, Mgr. A. Vella J.C.D., Mgr. M. Cefai *Archpriest*, Mgr. F. Portelli, Treasurer, Mgr. L. Galea, Mgr. A. Mercieca, Mgr. W. Grima J.C.D., Mgr. J. Farrugia, Mgr. J. Grech, Mgr. C. Buttigieg, Mgr. C. Galea Ph.D., Mgr. M. Grech, Mgr. E. Gatt, Mgr. C. Xuereb, Mgr. J. Debrincat, Mgr. G. Mercieca, Mgr. A. Cauchi S.Th.D., I.C.D.

PARISH PRIESTS OF GOZO

Xaghra: Rev. Fr. Can. M. A. Cauchi, Archpriest; *Kerċem:* Rev. Mgr. M.A. Grima; *Zebbuġ:* Rev. Fr. F. Mercieca; *Qala:* Rev. Fr. E. Xerri; *Sanna:* Rev. Fr. G. Debrincat, Archpriest; *Victoria:* Right Rev. Mgr. M. Cefai, Archpriest; *Xewkija:* Rev. Fr. J. Grech, Archpriest; *Għarb:* Rev. Can. Jos. Borg, Archpriest; *Nadur:* Rev. Can. M. Portelli; *St.*

Lawrence: Rev. Can. Hon. G. Vella; *Ghasri*: Rev. Fr. C. Vella; *Ghansielem*: Rev. Can. Hon. E. Tabone; *Fontana*: Rev. Fr. N. Cauchi, Ph.D; *Munxar*: Rev. Fr. A. Fenech, Ph.D., S.Th.D.

CHURCHES IN GOZO

Cathedral — The Assumption; *Basilicas* — Ta' Pinu, St. George, Wied il-Ghasri, *Archparishes* — Gharb, Xewkija, Xaghra, Nadur, Sannat; *Collegiates* Gharb, Xaghra, Nadur; *Sanctuaries* Ta' Pinu, Qala.

NATIONAL FEASTS

Assumption of Our Lady — August 15; *Our Lady of Victories* — September 8.

PARISH FEASTS

Victoria - Assumption of Our Lady (Cathedral) - August 15th. *St. George* - 16th July. *Kerċem* - Our Lady of Perpetual Succour - 9th July. *Sta. Lucia* - Assumption of Our Lady - 20th August. *Ghasri* - Corpus Christi - 1st June. *Gharb* - The Visitation - 2nd July. *San Lawrence* - St. Lawrence - 10th August. *Sannat* - St. Margaret Mary Alacoque - 26th September. *Xaghra* - Our Lady's Birthday - 8th September. *Xewkija* - St. John the Baptist - 25th June. *Nadur* - S.S. Peter and Paul., 29th June. *Qala* - St. Joseph - 6th August. *Għajnsielem* - Our Lady of Loreto - 3rd September. *Fontana* - Sacred Heart - 29th June. *Munxar* - St. Paul - 10th February.

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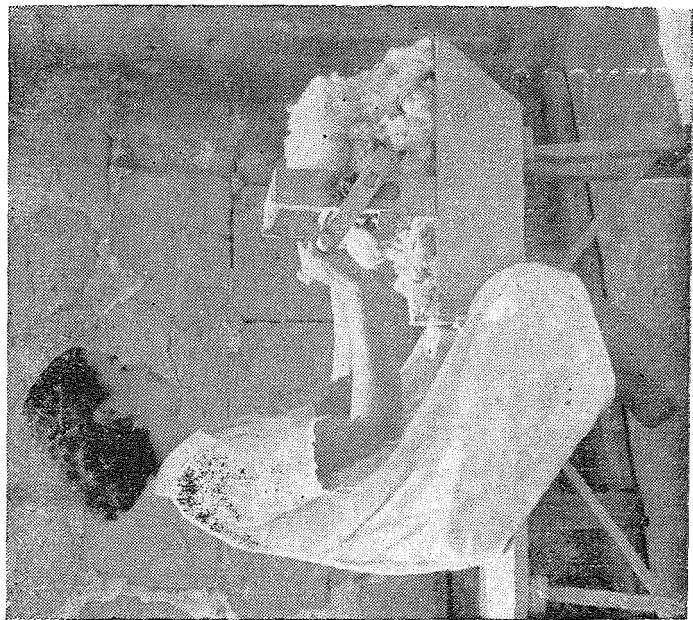
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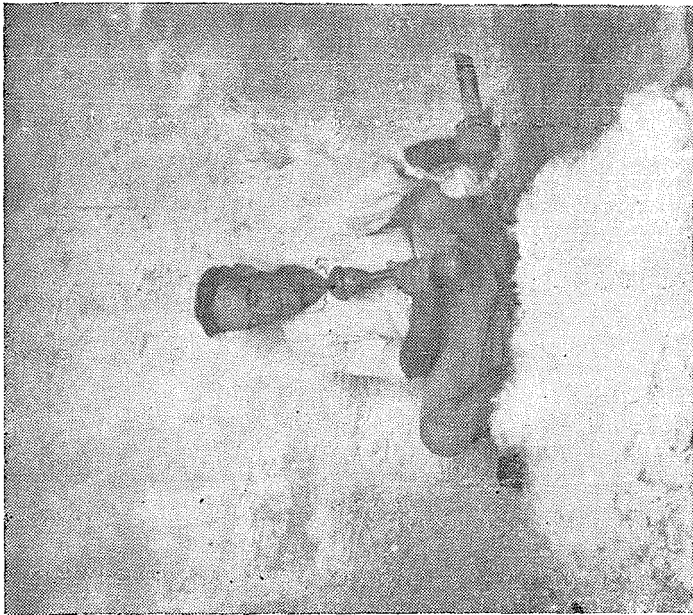
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Cotton Sifting Machine in Gozo



Photos by courtesy of the Dept. of Information
Cotton Beater in Gozo