



Founder of the Hash House Harriers

Alberto Estaban Ignacio Gispert, hash name "G", (his surname is pronounced with a Ja as in juice), was born on the 31st July 1903 to Arthuro and Remedios Gispert y de Puiguriguer. He was born at 80 Breakspear Road, Brockley, Kent (actually on the corner of Harefield Road!) which is now part of the London Borough of Lewisham but previously the Metropolitan Borough of Deptford. The family were Catalan Spanish and maintained the house in Breakspear Road and at least one other in Barcelona. They moved to Brockley sometime in late 1891 or 1892. Alberto was the youngest of seven children, the third to be born in the UK.

Alberto Estaban Ignacio Gispert,
1903-1942

The young Alberto, although described in later life by Cecil Lee (one of the other original members of the first hash) as the 'perfect English Gentleman' was brought up in a household that spoke little English. His mother, Remedios, spoke no English at all so the household language was Spanish. Alberto was sent to the local Roman Catholic school, [St Joseph's Academy](#) in Blackheath. Here Alberto learnt the basics of non-competitive running following paper trails which was a common sport in English schools at that time. This may be where the idea of hashing was first formulated to reappear many years later in Malaya, as it was then called.

Following his schooling Gispert joined H S Baker & Co and became a Chartered Accountant in 1928 and applied for an overseas posting with Evatt & Co (later to become Price Waterhouse) who sent him to Kuala Lumpur. He married Eve in 1937 and his son, Simon, was born in the same year.

Along with "Torch" Bennett, Cecil Lee and a few others, "G" founded the Hash House Harriers at the Selangor Club in late 1938, the name being taken from the local nickname for the Selangor Club.



Gispert family grave

Also in 1938 he had joined the part-time militia, the Federated Malay States Volunteer Reservists, reaching the rank of Captain. He was on leave in Australia when the Japanese invaded in December 1941. Although his wife and son had safely returned to England by then "G" rushed back to Malaya and was seconded to the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders regiment as a Second Lieutenant. He was killed in action in the Battle of Singapore on 11th February, 1942. The family memorial shown here is in Brockley Cemetery, South London. Take a beer for him if you visit.

The above details are taken from research undertaken by [Iain "Amnesia" Belton](#) and the late Tim "Magic" Hughes.