

# FREDERICK T GORDON CROSBY

1885 - 1943



Gordon Crosby sketching at Brooklands circa 1938 with Peter his eldest son standing behind.

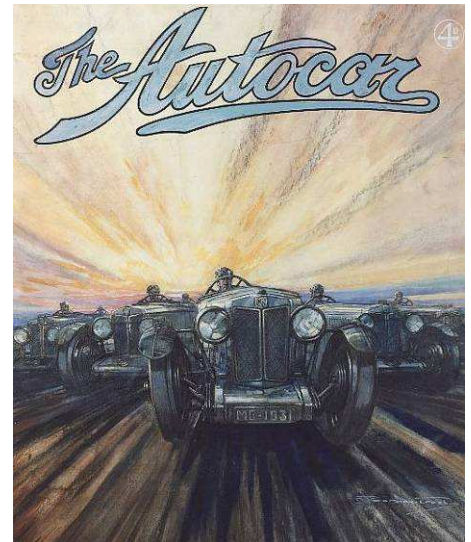
Gordon Crosby was probably Britain's foremost motoring artist and his career spanned the important period from the early days up to the Second World War.

Gordon Crosby was the staff artist with *The Autocar* having started with them in 1905 and was with them until his death at his own hand in 1943. He was a very versatile artist who did a variety of work from major oil paintings, sketches, posters, cartoons and technical illustrations. He assisted manufacturers such as MG and Jaguar with car styling plus bronzes, badges and trophies were made of his art. Gordon Crosby was the artist that covered motor races at both home and overseas, producing weekly illustrations for *The Autocar*. These were mainly charcoal or pencil but occasionally they were watercolours. Because of the publishing deadlines of *The Autocar* he rarely had

time to use oils; these were reserved for longer studies and commissions. Gordon Crosby used watercolours and gouache for the many superb front cover designs for the magazine. These were advertising motor manufacturer's products and mainly showed views of cars.

*The Autocar* often featured his work and issued free prints of his work with the magazine. Besides the conventional motor racing scenes Gordon Crosby also painted a long series of caricatures of famous racing drivers for *The Autocar*.

After his death, the *Autocar* printed and sold two folders of prints containing 24 of his paintings.



The *Autocar* front cover art for MG cars featuring the dawn of a new model in August 1931

These folders were entitled 'The Endless Quest for Speed' and 'meteors of Road and track'.



1925 Brooklands 200 Mile Race

There was a major exhibition of his work in 1978 called "The Art of Gordon Crosby" to mark the launch of the book by Peter Garnier of the same name. There were 124 No pieces of art from "The Autocar" archive on display. The book is essential reading for anybody interested in the work and times of Crosby.

This archive has been subsequently dispersed mainly by auction sales by Brooks (now Bonhams) which does mean that there are considerably more original works on the market.

Gordon Crosby had two sons both accomplished artists and the eldest son Peter was starting to make a name for himself in motoring art before being killed flying in the Second World War. The younger son Michael emigrated in New Zealand soon after the war.



#### FURTHER REFERENCE

**The Art of Gordon Crosby** by Peter Garnier published by Hamlyn 1978