**Charles Madge (1912 – 1996)**

Charles Madge is best known as a founder of Mass Observation, but he was also an accomplished poet, a journalist, and a social scientist. Madge was born in Johannesburg and educated at Cambridge (he never completed his degree) where he learned from I.A. Richards and came into contact with surrealism. T.S. Eliot championed Madge’s poetry and published *The Disappearing Castle* (1937) and *The Father Found* (1941). Madge’s verse was deemed exemplary enough of his era to be included in W.B. Yeats’ *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1938). With Eliot’s help, Madge secured a job as a reporter for *The Daily Mirror* in 1935 and he became increasingly aware of a breach between the daily lives of British citizens and the operations of those in power. With Humphrey Jennings and Tom Harrisson, Madge launched Mass Observation in 1937, hoping to marshal poetry, sociology, and anthropology to reconnect the desires of the population with the workings of the state. Madge and Harrisson’s personalities were often in conflict during the early years of Mass Observation. Madge left Mass Observation and took up more mainstream research work with J.M. Keynes at the National Institute for Economic and Social Research from 1940 to 1942. Despite his lack of academic training, Madge assumed the first chair in sociology at the University of Birmingham in 1950, a position he held for twenty years.

**Selected Works:**

Poetry:

*The Disappearing Castle* (1937)

*The Father Found* (1941)

*Of Love, Time, and Places: Selected Poems* (1994)

With Mass Observation:

*Mass Observation* (1937)

*May the Twelfth* (1937)

*First Year’s Work* (1938)

*Britain by Mass Observation* (1939)

*War Begins at Home* (1940)

**References and Selected Further Reading:**

Charles Madge Archive (SxMs71) at the University of Sussex Library Special Collections. http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/specialcollections

Connor, Steve. “’A Door Half Open to Surprise’: Charles Madge’s Imminences.” *New Formations* 44 (Autumn):

Hubble, Nick. (2006) *Mass Observation and Everyday Life: Culture, History, Theory.* NY: Palgrave.

Mengham, Rod (2001) “Bourgeois News: Humphrey Jennings and Charles Madge” *New Formations* 44 (Autumn): 26-33.

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