To many people the name McClellan recalls the career of George B. McClellan—"Little Mac," as his troops affectionately called him—whose brilliant successes at the very beginning of the Civil War led to his swift promotion to the rank of general. Toward the close of the war he ran for President of the United States, losing to a redoubtable opponent—Abraham Lincoln. Later, however, as Governor of New Jersey, General McClellan again had an opportunity to demonstrate his exceptional talents for organization.

To New Yorkers his son, George B. McClellan (1865-1940), is equally well known. He, too, distinguished himself early in public life; for at twenty-seven he was President of the Board of Aldermen, at twenty-nine a member of Congress, where he served for eight years, and at thirty-seven Mayor of New York. During two terms as mayor (1903-1909), he used his intelligence, initiative, and determination toward securing various public benefits, such as the development of the Catskill water supply and the construction of the Williamsburg, Manhattan, and Queensborough bridges. Unwilling to bow to political expediency, Mr. McClellan finally turned from these activities to scholastic pursuits. For eighteen years he was professor of economic history at Princeton University, his alma mater. He was also one of the charter members of the American Academy in Rome and its vice-president from 1926 to 1940. Meantime, in the first World War, he rose to the rank of colonel. For ten years before his death in 1940, he and Mrs. McClellan made their home in Washington.

Increasing periods of leisure and travel gave Mr. McClellan opportunity to pursue more steadily than before an avocation dear to his heart. The elder McClellan had formed a collection of German porcelain during years spent abroad in the 1860's and 1870's, but unfortunately it was destroyed in a warehouse fire in 1881. His son inherited from him, however, a number of pieces and also a tremendous enthusiasm for this particular material. Especially between 1925 and 1935, Mr. and Mrs. McClellan availed themselves of every opportunity to visit the great European collections, to buy pieces which attracted them, and to build up a library on their chosen subject. In Mr. McClellan's own words, "for financial reasons the collecting of figures was quite out of our reach, for before the depression a good example of Bustelli or Kändler would bring anywhere from $2,000 to $5,000." They therefore contented themselves instead with tablewares representative of various German and Austrian factories of the eighteenth century. Happily they were in perfect accord in their collecting and not only went about it with zest and intelligence but also took the keenest delight in the pieces they brought home to study and enjoy. A year after Mr. McClellan's death, Mrs. McClellan presented the collection to the Metropolitan Museum, but because during the war years the exhibition in the Museum of material as fragile as porcelain was thought inadvisable, it will be shown for the first time in a special exhibition opening on November 8 in Gallery E 15.

Mr. McClellan found the development of European porcelain in the eighteenth century a story of absorbing interest. As he considered no other variety as beautiful as that made at Meissen during the first fifty years of the factory's operation, most of the pieces in his collection represent characteristic productions of this period. He added, however, for purposes of comparison a number of pieces made at other factories in Germany and at Vienna. Most of these enterprises had directly or indirectly obtained from Meissen the all-important secrets
ABOVE: Red stoneware tea caddy and white porcelain vase, made by Johann Friedrich Böttger at Meissen about 1710-1719. They represent the early styles of this factory. BELOW: Meissen porcelain covered cup and caddy made about 1720-1725, with chinoiseries in gold painted at Augsburg by independent decorators, or “Hausmaler,” about 1730-1735
Meissen cup and saucer with yellow ground and medallions enclosing chinoiserie in colors and gold, about 1730-1735. Meissen early distinguished itself for its colored grounds.

Meissen covered pots, with painted decoration. At the left, scenes in the manner of Watteau within gold and black scrolled frames, about 1740-1745; at the right, flowers in Oriental style in iron red, blue, green, deep violet, and gold, about 1740. The influence of the rococo is shown not only in the elaborate enframement of the medallion but also in the scrolled handles.

The pieces shown above, and those on the preceding page, are from the George B. McClellan collection of German and Austrian porcelain, presented to the Museum by Mrs. McClellan in 1941. An exhibition of the collection will be held in Gallery E 15, beginning November 8.
of its paste and its high-temperature firing and had followed closely in its traditions.

The McClellan pieces here illustrated suggest various phases of an evolution which, at the beginning, was profoundly influenced by importations from the Orient. The red stoneware caddy (p. 58) not only borrows its shape and its relief patterns from a Chinese model but in its material closely resembles Chinese wares of the Yi-hsing type, which had been brought to Europe somewhat earlier by Dutch traders. The caddy was made by Johann Friedrich Böttger, an alchemist working at Meissen, whose researches had begun with attempts to transmute base metals into gold but who, failing in this, had succeeded about 1708 in producing a stoneware so hard and of so fine a grain that it could be polished on glass-engravers’ wheels. When so cut it took on the brilliant appearance of a semiprecious stone. Almost simultaneously Böttger learned how to make a porcelain similar in composition to the Chinese, a discovery which made possible the amazing rise of the Meissen factory and its long domination of the European market. A vase (p. 58) of this early porcelain shows the dependence of the new craft upon forms already established. Just as the earliest automobiles were in truth horseless carriages with dash-boards and lamps, so some early porcelain shapes and applied designs were carried over from contemporary silver.

The European imagination had been captured by travel books describing life in the Orient; their illustrations, often fanciful and highly diverting, set the pattern for the chinoiseries that appeared in so many forms, but nowhere more charmingly than they did on Meissen porcelain of the 1720’s and 1730’s (p. 59). The same fashion found favor among independent decorators at Augsburg, where it took the form of chinoiseries in gold silhouette (p. 58). More literal renderings of Oriental patterns, especially those suggested by Japanese porcelain, and contemporary European subjects, such as scenes in the manner of Watteau, provided other popular kinds of decoration (p. 59).

Later Meissen styles and the work of other factories, including Vienna, Höchst, Frankenthal, Ludwigsburg, et cetera, are represented among the two hundred and eighty-seven pieces comprised in the McClellan collection. The visitor will take delight in the array of teapots, caddies, cups, and saucers with their clean, bright colors and fresh designs. The student will find here much information. To help those who might be interested in tracing the story of European porcelain, Mr. McClellan in the two years before his death wrote a short guide, or résumé, based largely on the books he himself had found most informing. This guide makes special reference to pieces in the McClellan collection and illustrates forty-eight of them. Its printing has been made possible through the generosity of Mrs. McClellan.