



GEORGE BRINTON McCLELLAN (December 3, 1826–October 29, 1885) was the son of George McClellan, a prominent Philadelphia physician. Choosing a military career, he went to West Point, from which he graduated in the top 5 percent of his class. He participated in the Mexican War and served as a military observer in the Crimean War. In 1857, for financial reasons, he resigned his commission and became chief engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad; in 1860 he became president of the eastern division of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad. That same year he married Ellen Mary Marcy. The couple had a son and a daughter.

When the Civil War broke out McClellan rejoined the army. He quickly became one of the most prominent Union generals and received command of the Army of the Potomac, but he failed to prosecute the war to President Lincoln's satisfaction and was removed in 1862. This ended his military activities. In 1864 he ran for president as a Democrat but lost to Lincoln by a wide margin, winning only the electoral votes of New Jersey and two border states. Between 1864 and 1877 he traveled through Europe, served as a consultant on a variety of engineering projects, held the position of chief engineer of the New York City Department of Docks, and participated actively in the affairs of the Democratic party.

Highly popular in New Jersey, where he maintained his residence, he was nominated for governor by the Democratic party in 1877. His selection, however, largely resulted from the maneuverings of key members within the party who wanted to prevent the frontrunner, Leon Abbett, from gaining the nomination. At a crucial moment an unidentified delegate took the convention by surprise and put McClellan's name up for consideration; in a wild scene of well-planned en-

thusiasm, all other contenders were forgotten, and the ex-general received the prize by acclamation. During the campaign his Republican opponent, William A. Newell, charged that McClellan was not really a resident of New Jersey, but McClellan, who had a home in Essex County, refuted this accusation with little difficulty and won the election by a large majority. So many people sought to attend the inaugural ceremonies in January 1878 that the proceedings had to be held out of doors in front of the state house.

In spite of his highly successful campaign and widespread personal popularity, the course of events quickly diminished whatever opportunity McClellan might have had to exert strong executive leadership in controversial issues. Largely as a result of the size of McClellan's victory, the Democratic party controlled both houses of the legislature for the first time since 1870; the governor, however, quarreled with influential members of the senate over appointments and patronage and lost standing with that body. At the assembly's instigation, moreover, the legislature enacted several highly partisan measures designed to insure that the Democrats would remain in command of the state for years to come. These bills, of which one flagrantly gerrymandered assembly election districts and another disfranchised college students (who tended to vote Republican), so antagonized the voters that they elected Republican majorities to both houses for the remaining two years of McClellan's term. In general, his relations with the legislature were strained.

As governor, McClellan urged the reduction of the people's tax burden. Entering office while New Jersey still suffered the results of the panic of 1873, he announced in his inaugural address that the most urgent matter before the legislature was "to give the people of this State the greatest possible relief from their burdens during the financial depression, and to do all in our power to hasten the return of a better state of affairs." He advocated caution in expenditures so that the state

tax, a revenue measure that helped to pay the ordinary expenses of government, could be cut in half; in 1880, he recommended that the tax be abolished, and noted that he saw no reason to impose it as long as appropriations were confined to reasonable levels. At the end of his term, there was no direct tax on the people for state purposes.

McClellan devoted special attention to measures he felt would help foster the state's prosperity, and his annual messages to the legislature outlined specific ideas to accomplish this end. The abolition of the state tax constituted an integral part of his overall plan, for, as he pointed out, "it is far better for us to leave the money in the pockets of the people, for by them will it be best employed in increasing the wealth of the State and in the development of its resources." More positively, he urged in 1878 that New Jersey follow the example of Massachusetts and institute a Bureau of Statistics of Labor and Industries to gather information on industrial affairs and to serve as a resource in the preparation of legislation; the agency was established during his first year in office. In 1879, he called for the creation of an agricultural experiment station to provide farmers with examples of the benefits of scientific cultivation, and the legislature followed this recommendation in 1880. McClellan felt that specific industries, such as silk culture and sugar growing, should receive the government's encouragement. Similarly, he directed the state library to purchase books on pottery and glassmaking that New Jersey artisans could use for ideas on design, and he called for the creation of a pottery museum to show the finest specimens from Europe, thereby providing actual examples of craftsmanship.

McClellan also stressed the importance of education in industrial development. The schools should, as far as possible, prepare students for their future work. In farming regions, he felt that public schools had an obligation to instruct boys not only in the basic subjects but also in

the principles of agriculture; in manufacturing regions, teachers should stress the pursuits of manual labor. "It is clearly good political economy," he declared, "in the State which educates its children, to make that education tend, in some measure, at least, to the benefit of the commercial and other industries of the State." The governor realized, however, that the existing school system could not carry out such an important task without assistance. The great need, he noted, was to convert unskilled into skilled labor; the pottery industry of Trenton, for example, could not find enough trained workers to hire. To remedy this problem, which afflicted other areas of the industrial community as well, he called for the creation of technical schools throughout the state; these institutions would help to provide the skilled labor necessary for the growth and prosperity of the New Jersey economy. Although he felt that local associations should begin and operate these schools, McClellan declared that "giving State aid freely, at least in the incipiency of the system, will prove as wise an expenditure as can be made." During his term, a law was passed permitting the establishment of these schools, but McClellan's overall vision was not fulfilled.

A number of important developments occurred while McClellan was governor. An old soldier, he took a special interest in the condition of the New Jersey National Guard and helped to improve its discipline and organization; during his administration two companies were equipped with Gatling guns, regular rifle practice was instituted, a new battalion was organized, and provision was made to supply new uniforms to the troops. Under legislative authority, McClellan appointed special commissions to study the possibilities of revising the state's jumbled and confusing tax laws and of drafting general laws for governing cities; these commissions reported to the legislature, but no positive action resulted from their deliberations. Finally, in his messages, McClellan emphasized his belief in a diligent and alert citizenry as the

best defense against government corruption, and in 1879 a Republican member of the senate introduced a law echoing these sentiments; the financial accounts of local officeholders were made subject to examination by experts whenever twenty-five freeholders should request such a step.

However, few concrete measures resulted directly from McClellan's actions as governor. He tended to stress issues on which most people could agree; abolishing the state tax and improving the condition of the National Guard were recommendations that met with wide popular approval. His major contribution involved suggestions for economic prosperity that in a loose sense constituted a program to foster development; few of his predecessors thought in such overall and comprehensive terms. On the other hand, his ideas in this regard, had they become reality, would no doubt have increased the level of state expenditure greatly. Although he seemed to recognize this fact, McClellan did not address himself to the problem of raising additional revenue; indeed at one point he lamented the fact that teachers, who were crucial to his plans for development, received such small compensation for their labors, but he suggested no remedy for their condition. His messages to the legislature mentioned no issue that might arouse controversy; consequently, he did not concern himself with such topics as taxing the railroads and restraining the political power of corporations. He made little effort to exert an active influence on the deliberations of the legislature, and where his suggestions became law it is highly likely that the measures would have passed without his support; the establishment of a Bureau of Labor and Industries, for example, needed little executive support. At best, his record as governor was mixed.

When his term expired in 1881, McClellan retired to private life. Apparently he found the experience as governor somewhat taxing, for he wrote that he was glad it was over "as it was becoming a

nuisance to be obliged to go to Trenton in all matters." He died in 1885 of heart trouble at his home in Essex County.

Records of Governor George B. McClellan, New Jersey State Library, Bureau of Archives and History, Trenton, N.J.

Myers, William Starr. *George Brinton McClellan*. New York: Appleton-Century, 1934.

Jerome C. Reddy



GEORGE CRAIG LUDLOW (April 6, 1830–December 18, 1900) was born in Milford, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. In 1835 his family moved to New Brunswick, where he lived for the rest of his life. He was graduated from Rutgers College in 1850, and he opened a law practice in 1853. Both his father, Cornelius Ludlow, and his grandfather, Benjamin Ludlow, had been active in the affairs of the Democratic party, and he followed their example; over the next two decades he held a variety of municipal and county governmental positions. As a prominent local member of the party, he was elected to the New Jersey senate in 1876 and chosen its president in 1878. He received his party's nomination for the governorship at the convention of 1880. Although he had the background and experience to warrant the nomination in his own right, his actual selection was largely the result of an alliance between Leon Abbett, one of the most important Democratic politicians in the state, and the so-called "State House Ring," a group of office holders in Trenton determined to prevent the convention from selecting a political rival of Abbett's. The closely contested election was heavily influenced by railroad interests. Ludlow, a private counsel for the Pennsylvania Railroad,