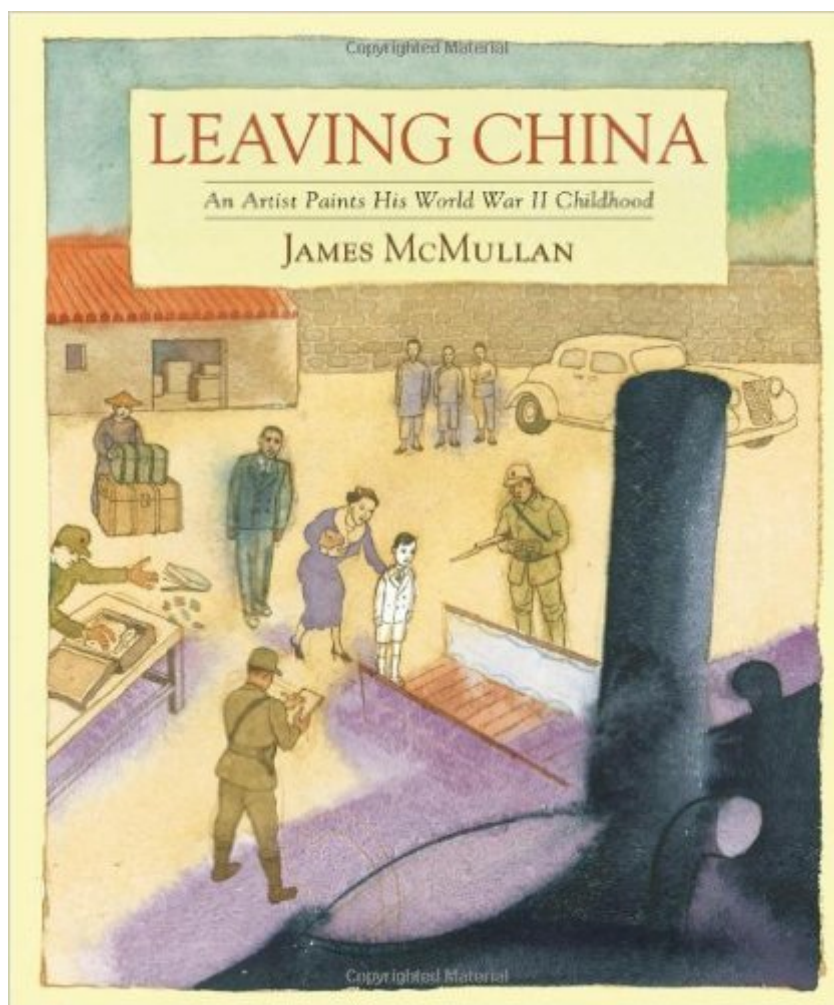


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# Leaving China: An Artist Paints His World War II Childhood



## Synopsis

A memoir in paintings and words by internationally acclaimed illustrator, author, and teacher James McMullan. A Booklist Top 10 Biography for Youth is this dreamlike quality of my memories that I wanted to capture in some way in the paintings that accompany the text--to suggest in the images that the events occurred a long time ago in a simpler yet more exotic world, and that the players in that world, including me, are at a distance. • Artist James McMullan's work has appeared in the pages of virtually every American magazine, on the posters for more than seventy Lincoln Center theater productions, and in bestselling picture books. Now, in a unique memoir comprising more than fifty short essays and illustrations, the artist explores how his early childhood in China and wartime journeys with his mother influenced his whole life, especially his painting and illustration. James McMullan was born in Tsingtao, North China, in 1934, the grandson of missionaries who settled there. As a little boy, Jim took for granted a privileged life of household servants, rickshaw rides, and picnics on the shore until World War II erupted and life changed drastically. Jim's father, a British citizen fluent in several Chinese dialects, joined the Allied forces. For the next several years, Jim and his mother moved from one place to another—Shanghai, San Francisco, Vancouver, Darjeeling—first escaping Japanese occupation then trying to find security, with no clear destination except the unpredictable end of the war. For Jim, those ever-changing years took on the quality of a dream, sometimes a nightmare, a feeling that persists in the stunning full-page, full-color paintings that along with their accompanying text tell the story of Leaving China.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: NC1280L (What's this?)

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Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 8 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (19 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #807,049 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in Books > Teens > Art, Music & Photography > Art > Biographies #42 in Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > Asia #62 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Emigrants &

Immigrants

Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Artist and author James McMullan was born in Tsingtao, North China in 1934, where his parents managed a branch of a hand-made lace business that his grandparents had started --- the James McMullan Company. His grandparents --- members of a Protestant mission society who met and married in Yangzhou in 1887 --- moved to Yantai, where they ministered to local natives and opened a small clinic, a school and an orphanage. They started the company after teaching several girls in their orphanage to make lace. McMullan's first memory is throwing grapes at a neighbor's dog in his backyard. One bounced off the side of the house. The dog went after it, but so did James. He reached it just before the dog did, causing the dog to bite him in frustration. The injury resulted in 20 stitches. James was two years old at the time. This childhood memory is the first painting and text pairing in the LEAVING CHINA. The book is filled with reproductions of 50 original watercolor paintings that depict important events and milestones in McMullan's childhood. Each painting is accompanied by text describing the incident, resulting in a wonderful collection of short stories and pictures about his childhood --- a pictorial memoir. McMullan tells about his earliest memories from China, his journey to the U.S. during WWII, his travels to Shanghai, San Francisco, Vancouver and Darjeeling. During his early childhood, McMullan was an only child who enjoyed a privileged childhood in China, complete with rickshaw rides to a private school and a family cottage overlooking the beach. But all this changed when his father joined the Allied forces at the beginning of the war.

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