



In Memory of  
**Sergeant**  
**CLARENCE COLVILLE McLENNAN**

**405021**, Royal Australian Air Force  
who died age 33  
on 07 February 1942

Son of Roderick Hugh McLennan and Emily Ethel McLennan,  
of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour  
HEANTON PUNCHARON CHURCYARD, (ST AUGUSTINE)  
CHURCHYARD, ENGLAND



SERGEANT  
**CLARENCE COLVILLE McLENNAN**  
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE  
SERVICE NUMBER: 405021



Sergeant Clarence Colville McLennan, the son of Roderick Hugh McLennan and Emily Ethel McLennan (nee Davis), was born at Armidale in New South Wales on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1908. He was educated at the North State School during the years 1920 to 1921 and the Toowoomba Grammar School during 1922 until 1924. He also attended the Toowoomba Technical College & High School in 1924 and 1925 where he received training in fitting and turning. He was enrolled in the Reserve of the Royal Australian Air Force on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1940 after swearing an oath/affirmation of allegiance. At the time of his enrolment, he had been employed for four years as a Car Salesman with Falconer Motors, Ruthven Street, Toowoomba, and resided with his mother at 86 Bridge Street, Toowoomba. His father was a grazier at "Aberfoyle", Tara, Queensland. He had previously completed one year of compulsory training with the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. He had previously served as a Private in the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion of the Citizens Military Forces for one year.

Sergeant Clarence McLennan was enlisted in the Citizen Air Force of the R.A.A.F. on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1941 at No. 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane as a trainee Air Observer after giving an undertaking that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. He was allotted the service number of 405021. His physical description was that he was 5 feet 6 inches in height and weighed 150 pounds. He had a fair complexion, green eyes and light brown hair. He stated that he was of the Presbyterian religion. He gave his next of kin as his mother, Mrs Emily Ethel McLennan, residing at 86 Bridge Street in Toowoomba.

Sergeant Clarence McLennan joined No. 3 Initial Training School at Sandgate in Queensland on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1941 for basic Air Force training. He joined No 11 Course at No. 1 Air Observer School at Cootamundra in New South Wales on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1941. He joined No. 11 Course at No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School at Evans Head in New South Wales on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1941. He joined No. 11 Course at No. 1 Air Navigation School at Parkes in New South Wales on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1941. He qualified for the Air Observer Qualification Badge and was promoted to the rank of Temporary Sergeant on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1941. He proceeded to No. 3 Embarkation Depot at Sandgate in Queensland on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1941, He was granted pre-embarkation leave during the period 19<sup>th</sup> September until 28<sup>th</sup> September 1941 to farewell his family and finalize his personal affairs.

Sergeant Clarence McLennan embarked by sea transport for overseas attachment to the Royal Air Force from Sydney in New South Wales on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1941. The voyage took him to the west coast of North America where he travelled overland to the east coast of Canada. He embarked Canada 12<sup>th</sup> November 1941. After arriving in the United Kingdom he joined No. 3 Personnel Despatch & Reception Centre at Bournemouth on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1941. He joined No. 3 (Coastal) Operational Training Unit on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1941. The Squadron's main role was carrying out training for anti-submarine patrolling.

Sergeant Clarence Colville McLennan was an Air Observer and a member of the crew of a No. 3 (Coastal) Operational Training Unit Beaufort Bomber L 9935 of Royal Air Force Station Chivenor in North Devon that was lost at Devon England on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1942. His aircraft had been detailed to carry out a night navigation exercise patrol over the sea. A subsequent investigation of the crash found that the pilot lost flying control after executing a night take off that caused him to lose altitude and strike high ground killing all four occupants of the aircraft. His body was recovered and buried with full service honours at 1500 hours on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1942 in the Heanton Punchardon (St Augustine) Churchyard near Barnstaple in the United Kingdom. His headstone in the Heanton Punchardon Churchyard carries the family inscription "His Duty Nobly Done". For his service in World War 2, John McLennan was awarded the Air Observer Qualification Badge, the 1939/1945 Star, the Aircrew Europe Star, the War Medal and the Australian Service Medal.

Sergeant Clarence McLennan's name is commemorated on Panel No. 126 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Mothers' Memorial, the Toowoomba Soldiers' Memorial Hall WW2 Honour Board, the Falconer Motors Honour Board, the Toowoomba Grammar School WW2 Honour Board, and St. Stephen's Church Memorial Tablet.

His photograph and the following details of his death were published in the Toowoomba Chronicle on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1942:

*"TOOWOOMBA AIRMAN – Sergeant C. McLennan – DEATH ON ACTIVE SERVICE".*

*Mr and Mrs R.H. McLennan, of Bridge Street, Toowoomba, who were advised by the Air Board that their son, Sergeant Clarence McLennan was missing, now have received advice that he lost his life as a result of a night navigation flight over the sea on February 7. His body was recovered and buried at Heanton Punchardon churchyard, near Barnstaple, England. Sergeant McLennan was 33 years of age. He was educated at the North Boys' State School and the Toowoomba Grammar School. He entered Amberley Training School in January, 1941, and after several months' training he went to England by way of America and Canada.*

**Note:**

His brother, Gunner Allan Austin McLennan, died of illness whilst in captivity of the Japanese in Burma.

*Photographed by: Martin Bodman. Geograph.org.uk.*



*Australian War Memorial photograph 009483  
A Bristol Beaufort torpedo-bomber of Coastal Command on patrol duties.*

**Toowoomba Grammar School Archive Records state that he joined the school on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1923 and left on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1924.**

**External Link:**

[CWGC](#)

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[NAA Accident Report](#)

[NAA Service Records](#)