

Simon Kean was born about 1832. No Birth has been found in Scotland; he may have been born in Ireland.

Simon appears to have been regularly in trouble and in gaol.

1846

George Rutherford, 13, born in Ayr, a Ropework Boy, living in Barrowfield, Glasgow. He was in Glasgow Prison (Duke Street), date unknown, when he was aged 13. ¹

Then, later in the year, George Rutherford, Simon Kean, or Kane, born in Glasgow, Rope Work, living in Barrowfield, was in Glasgow Gaol (Duke Street), date unknown, now aged 14. ²

By 1848, Simon was a coalpit worker, living at Worldhaugh near Rutherglen, charged with theft and housebreaking. ³

Housebreaking and Apprehension. Early on Thursday morning (10 August), a man named Simon Kean, who it seems had only recently been liberated a few hours previously from the North Prison[Duke Street Prison], resumed his criminal career by robbing the house of a gentleman named McEwen, near the Dalmarnock Road. He knocked out a pane of glass in the under-flat's window, then removed the fastenings. The only booty he carried away was three or four coats and a few other articles of wearing apparel. When he reached the eastern extremity of the Green, he squatted down to examine the contents of the pockets. While engaged in examining the booty, a watchman of the night happened to look over the wall behind Kean and decided all was not right. He seized Kean and conveyed him to the Calton Police office. Here he was recognised as a notorious character and detained. Full proof of his guilt was obtained when Mr McEwen lodged information of the robbery, and identified the articles found in Kean's possession as his property. Kean was remitted to the Sheriff. ⁴

Simon Kean was accused and pleaded not guilty to theft by housebreaking, to being of bad repute and habit as a thief, and to a previous conviction. At his trial, he was found guilty of theft, but the housebreaking was not proven. Sentenced to 7 years transportation. ⁵

The Prison Registers show that Simon Kean, 16, single, can read, weaver, was convicted at Glasgow on 22 September 1848 of theft by housebreaking and sentenced to 7 years transportation. He was received at Millbank Prison on 21 February 1849, from Glasgow Gaol. Simon had five previous convictions for theft and was once charged. On 8 March 1849 he was removed to Parkhurst Prison. According to the registers, he was Roman Catholic. On 28 December 1850, he boarded *Mermaid* for the voyage to Western Australia. ⁶

On arrival at Fremantle, Western Australia, Simon was assigned number 359 and a physical description recorded:

359. Simon Kean, 19, 5'6", brown hair, grey eyes, round face, fresh complexion, freckled face, no marks, carpenter and single. ⁷

¹ NRS Reference: HH21/32/2 p. 157

² NRS Reference: HH21/32/2 p. 223

³ NRS: JC26/1848/392; JC26/1848/392; AD14/48/6

⁴ North British Daily Mail, 14 August 1848, p3

⁵ Glasgow Saturday Post, 23 September 1848, p3

⁶ State Records Office of WA (SROWA), HO24/4, HO24/15; PCOM2/29

⁷ SROWA, Acc 124/1-32

Simon Kean, or Keen, was interviewed by the prison Chaplain, who recorded his findings in response to a series of questions.

Simon was 19 years, single, a coal miner, Church of Scotland (one English register says he was Roman Catholic), went to night school, can read and write a little but is indifferent to accounts. He has not regularly attended Divine Service; he only sometimes does.

Never received the Sacraments; sometimes attentive and sometimes otherwise, a little inclined to drink. His intellect is sound, and he is hopeful. Secular and Religious knowledge is limited. Bad company caused his crime. Simon did not recommend anyone who could give him a character reference.

He said his brother, John Keen, a rope maker, lives in Leith, Edinburgh.⁸

Simon received a Ticket of Leave a few months after arriving, on 22 September 1851.

A Conditional Pardon was granted on 30 September 1853.

In the late 1860s he must have been in the Champion Bay area.

On 22 January 1868, *Kestrel* of Sydney, 170 tons, left the port of Champion Bay for Sydney, arriving on 23 February 1868.

Steerage passengers: Arthur Brown, Peter McFarlin, Jno McClusky, Thomas Black, James Stewart, James Wilson and Simon Kean.⁹

No further information on Simon has been found.

⁸ SROWA, Acc 1156/R1A-R1B

⁹ State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales; Inward passenger lists; Series: 13278; Roll: 419