

Workingmen's Houses,  
James Rooney House  
354 Southern Avenue  
Dubuque  
Dubuque County  
Iowa

HABS No. IA-159-AB

HABS  
IOWA,  
31- DUBU,  
14-AB-

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**PHOTOGRAPHS  
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

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Historic American Buildings Survey  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver Colorado 80225

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## James Rooney House

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Site Location: 354 Southern Avenue  
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa  
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 1.2  
Cadastral grid : NE1/4 NE1/4 S36 R2E  
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'  
UTM coordinates: 15.691820.4705800  
Lot dimensions : 61'x 125' : .18 acre  
Lot description: Lot 1 of Lot 1 of Lot 1 of  
Lot 4 of O'Connor's Subdi-  
vision of Mineral Lot 37

Present Owner: Iowa Department of Transportation  
Present Usage: vacant  
Present Condition : good

Overall Dimensions: 2-story main block: 20'x 26'; front porch: 6'x 20';  
1-story side addition: 12'x 16', with 6'x 8' rear shed  
and 5'x 16' front porch.

Orientation : northwest

Architectural  
Description : Plan type : 2-story rectangular with 1-story side addition  
Foundation: coursed limestone perimeter walls.  
Structure : wood frame  
Ext. walls: painted wood beveled siding with plain corner  
boards.  
Roofs : moderately pitched gables on main block and  
side addition; shallow shed roofs over porches  
and rear shed addition; 3-tab asphalt shingles  
throughout.  
Chimneys: concrete block interior chimney centered on  
ridge of main block.  
Dormers : none  
Windows : painted wood 2/2 double-hung windows through-  
out, three bays on front of main block; all  
with plain casings, slip sills and hood molds.  
Openings : single-leaf front entrance offset under front  
porch; rear door on side addition and side door  
on rear addition; plain casements and sills  
throughout.  
Porches : full-width, partially enclosed porch on front  
of main block and full-width, enclosed porch  
on front of side addition.  
Details : molded and boxed cornices on main block and  
addition roofs.

**Construction Date :** 1876

**Architecture Style:** Gable ended box

**Physical History :** In 1868 William Rooney, a currier, purchased Lots 3 and 4 of O'Connor's Subdivision from Morty O'Connor for \$450. Three years later he constructed a stone-and-frame house for himself, his wife and sons Thomas and James [HABS No. IA-159-Z]. William Rooney later subdivided the property, and in 1876 James Rooney built this two-story frame house on Lot 4. Costing \$1000, the son's dwelling stood immediately south of the father's but was set back further from the street and elevated by a steep rise in the land. James Rooney, a laborer for William Ryan and later a policeman, lived here with his wife Mary until he sold the property in 1892 to Morris Scollard [Scolland]. It has since been occupied by a series of working class tenants and in 1987 was acquired by the Iowa Department of Transportation for demolition. Although additions have been built onto the northeast side of the original block and the front porch and stoop have evidently undergone some alteration, the building remains relatively well-preserved and unaltered.

**Significance:** Similar in scale, configuration and materials to the other workingmen's houses built along Southern Avenue in the 1870s and 1880s, the James Rooney House is visually distinguished by its atypically deep setback from the street. It is further distinguished by its excellent state of preservation. Historically, the house is typically associated with Dubuque's early proletariat.

**References:** Sanborn Insurance Maps: 1909, 1972.  
Dubuque City Directories: 1857 - 1970.  
Dubuque County Assessment Record: 3-32-3-17.  
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."  
Land Title Abstract (located at Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames Iowa).  
*Dubuque Daily Herald*: 2 December 1876.

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