

Workingmen's Houses,  
Thomas Rooney House  
368 Southern Avenue  
Dubuque  
Dubuque County  
Iowa

HABS No. IA-159-AM

HABS  
IOWA,  
31- DUBU,  
14-AM

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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

Workingmen's Houses,

## Thomas Rooney House

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**Site Location:** 368 Southern Avenue  
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa  
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 1.62  
Cadastral grid : SW1/4 NE1/4 S36 T89N R2E  
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'  
UTM coordinates: 15.691780.4705760  
Lot dimensions : 40'x 103' : .09 acre  
Lot description: North 93' of East 40' of Lot 1  
in Newman's Subdivision.

**Present Owner:** Iowa Department of Transportation  
**Present Usage:** vacant  
**Present Condition :** fair

**Overall Dimensions:** main block: 24'x 14'6"; rear additions: 22'6"x 12' and 20'x 6'; front porch: 10'x 6'.

**Orientation :** northwest

**Architectural Description :** Plan type : single-story rectangular with centered front porch and offset rear additions.

**Foundation:** stone rubble perimeter walls.

**Structure :** wood frame

**Ext. walls:** wide exposure metal siding installed over beveled wood siding.

**Roofs :** moderately pitched side gable over main block, with shallowly pitched shed and hipped roofs over additions; 3-tab asphalt shingles throughout.

**Chimneys :** parged brick interior chimney, straddling roof ridge.

**Dormers :** shed dormer on rear face of main gable.

**Windows :** 1/1 double-hung sash, with plain casings, slip sills, aluminum storms and recently installed ornamental shutters.

**Openings :** 3-light, slab front door centrally placed on porch; 1-light, paneled door on northwest side of addition, sheltered by cantilevered metal canopy.

**Porches :** partially enclosed porch on stilts centered on front; shed roof supported on either side by four square columns.

**Details :** plain boxed cornices; stone retaining walls at sidewalk.

Construction Date : c.1880

Architecture Style: Side gabled box

Physical History : In 1871 currier William Rooney built a stone house on Southern Avenue [HABS No. IA-159-Z] for himself, his wife and his sons Thomas and James. James built his own large frame house [HABS No. IA-159-AB] next to his father's three years later. Thomas purchased a residential lot several doors west on Southern Avenue from developer Edward Smyth in September 1884 for \$100. Rooney had probably constructed this modest frame house earlier, perhaps soon after the subdivision's 1874 platting date. A laborer, he lived here with his wife Mary before turning the property over to his father in 1899. William Rooney lived here only briefly before his death; John Rooney acquired the property in April 1902 and sold it a month later to Charles Reynolds for \$300. Thomas and Elizabeth Stees then occupied the house for a number of years before buying it from Reynolds in 1912. It has since been occupied by William Sheehan [Sheehan], and James R. Spark. In 1985 the Iowa Department of Transportation acquired the property for demolition. The house has undergone a series of alterations and additions over its occupancy that have destroyed its original appearance. These include: covering the roof with asphalt shingles; sheathing the exterior walls with metal siding and shutters; replacement of the front porch; replacement of the front door and windows; and construction of two rear additions, more recent of which was built in 1980.

Significance: Never architecturally distinguished, the Thomas Rooney House has been compromised by numerous alterations and additions. It is one of several similarly scaled and configured workingmen's residences built along Southern Avenue at the edge of Dubuque in the late 19th century.

References: Dubuque City Directories: 1857 - 1970.  
Dubuque County Assessment Record: 3-32-3-2I.  
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."  
Land Title Abstract (located at Iowa Department of Transportation, Ames Iowa).

Compiler: Clayton B. Fraser, Fraserdesign, Loveland Colorado.  
August 1988.