

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 8 1976  
DATE ENTERED AUG 3 1977

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

**\*\*** Carrighar, Sally, House (AHRS-NOM-018)

AND/OR COMMON

Jacob Berger Home

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Nome, Alaska

First Avenue (no number)

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Nome

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Alaska

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alaska

02

Nome District

180

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Howard Farley

STREET & NUMBER

Box 431

CITY, TOWN

Nome

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska 99762

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

Nome

STATE

Alaska

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS)

DATE

April 3, 1974

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

323 East 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED (slight)	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Victorian dream home that Jacob Berger completed in 1904 from architectural plans purchased in the United States, was quite typical of middle-class America--but in Nome it was a mansion. It was probably the first two story residence on all of the bleak Bering Sea Coast. All materials, hardware and furnishings were top quality, principally from San Francisco and Seattle, but some from New York and Chicago. His carpenters were master craftsmen, meticulously selected. Living room parlor and music room flooring was oak from a Southern mill. Much of the glass was plate; doors and sills were of extra strength; wainscotting was smooth-planed; shakes and shingles were of first-grade cedar.

Because of permafrost, which often bulged or tilted, extra structural strength was incorporated throughout; and for this reason there was no basement. Severe climatic conditions dictated thicker walls and heavy insulation. Modifications from the "lower States" plans were made in heating and plumbing, tested at such places as Dawson and Skagway a few years earlier.

Exterior appearance was more functional and less ornate, with less gingerbread or portico than the original renderings probably specified. Not sacrificed--and making the structure unique for the locale, was the large amount of glass. It had considerably more and larger windows than other Alaskan homes of the period. There were three extra large windows on the second floor facade--two horizontal--and an embellishing touch on the dominant center gable was a circular Captain's window on each side of the master bedroom. Ground floor exterior gave the impression of near-solid glass with six windows, dominated by the extruding massive central gable; and the enclosed glass door vestibule entrance.

The roof is modified hipped, dominated by the pyramided, shingled massive center gable. The corniced overthrust eaves are boxed.

When Sally Carrigher acquired the home in 1945 it was virtually unchanged. It was sorely in need of renovation, however, and this she did with careful attention to the original integrity. The townspeople were aware of her preservation instincts, and perhaps as much for this reason as any, the residence ceased being called by the name of the builder and a few subsequent residents; and has, since, been called "The Sally Carrighar House".

Although the property has declined somewhat from its period of occupancy by Sally Carrighar and Judge von der Heydt, it has been altered very little either in appearance, or interior or exterior design, since its original construction.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1903-1904 (constructed) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Jacob Berger

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This building is significant as the best surviving example of a Nome gold rush mansion. It gains import since few buildings of any kind are extant on the original townsite which was the focal point of the spectacular Seward Peninsula Strike. And it is distinctive because in the intervening years it has gained the name of a literary personage not associated with the gold era, author-naturalist Sally Carrighar.

The Victorian home was built by a Jewish miner who made three rich strikes in the area, Jacob Berger. Built on permafrost, it was and remains an Arctic anomaly, architecturally. In addition to the builder--and Sally Carrighar--it has housed several families richly associated with local history; and they, in turn, have provided hospitality and entertained many of the array of dignitaries who visited Nome since 1904. The home has miraculously survived several great fires and wild oceanic storms which devastated its environs.

## Biography

By the summer of 1900 when the sensational Seward Peninsula strike has gained world attention, 50 laden ships and some 20,000 people were on their way. Nome became the dynamic city of Alaska, and quickly metamorphosed from a rough melange of tents and false-fronted establishments to an impressive commercial district of substantial stores, banks, hotels, gambling halls and saloons. The residential district, however, was not nearly as impressive. Most miners and adventurers were unattached, spending little time in their crude huts and simple cabins. With the construction of schools, churches and a hospital, Jacob (Jew Jake) Berger decided to set the tone for a "proper" residential district. He sent away for architectural renderings, hired a contractor; and ordered (from the major supply houses of the U.S.) materials, hardware and furnishings worthy of the "finest mansion" in Nome. Despite travel from many distant railpoints still more than 2,000 nautical miles away (from Seattle portside), Berger's dictum to spare no expense, brought results. The "mansion", finished in 1904 was indeed the showplace of Nome. The Berger family did not remain long and the house then became the residence of at least three prominent families; but in the 1940's was in an estate, and vacant, when Sally Carrighar decided to study Alaskan arctic wildlife--from the vantage point of Nome.



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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Fifty years ago Sally Carrighar began adult life as a writer of radio drama s and feature articles, while continuing her interest in wildlife. In 1937 she decided to combine her writing career with a naturalist's methodology. Since then Sally Carrighar has dedicated herself to biological research and observation of nature, communicating experiences, emotions and knowledge to a wide reading public. Successively, Ms. Carrighar stayed, for extended periods, in wilderness areas. She wrote (One Day On Beetle Rock) 1944; (One Day at Teton Marsh) 1947; researched in Alaska, 1945, and later, again, as the locale of Icebound Summer, 1953 and Moonlight at Midday, 1958.

At Nome in 1945 she bought and refurnished the Jacob Berger residence. She also lived with the Eskimos, in the village of Unalakleet (for the best opportunities to go seal-and-whale-hunting and in winter to travel by dogsled to the inland trap-lines). Flying by bush plane, she traveled from Nome more than four thousand miles in search of lemmings. No book about arctic wildlife (she felt) could be complete without authentic details concerning those legendary rodents. Sally Carrighar finally found the lemmings at Barrow, Alaska's most northern settlement. In other years, studying arctic foxes, walrus, humpback whales, birds, fowl and lemmings, she stayed with the natives of Kotzebue, Shishmaref, at Gambell on St. Lawrence Island, and at Wales on the Arctic Sea.

From the historic home at Nome, Sally Carrighar watched the springtime arrival and autumn departure of the multitudes of migrating wild birds and marine life in the far North. After that she would then settle down to nine months tending stoves. All the while she planned expeditions around the Territory, and observed all she could about the Eskimos; for whom she had exceptional admiration.

Some of Sally Carrighar's body of work on Alaska was done on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Help also was given her by several Stateside biologists and arctic explorers; by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the Coast Guard; and others, including bush pilots, traders, trappers, and miners. She has been acclaimed as a Naturalist-Historian-Ethnographer of mid-20th century Alaska.

In 1954, temporarily in Massachusetts for more background research, Sally Carrighar stated: "Until I have written one or two further books about it, Alaska will continue to be my home." She returned for four more years. Sally sold the historic Nome house where her two major books were conceived and written to Judge von der Heydt. She now lives and continues to write, in California.