



RECENTLY DESIGNATED NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

LUDLOW MASSACRE SITE In 1913, when over a thousand miners went on strike at John D. Rockefeller's Colorado coal camps—one of the world's most dangerous places to work—all they wanted was union representation, a decent wage, and an eight-hour workday. What they got was the state militia setting fire to their tent colonies—erected with help from the United Mine Workers—and “the Death Special,” a machine-gunning armored car. Four men were murdered and during the fire two women and eleven children suffocated in a “safety cellar” dug under a tent. The labor skirmish—the first to kill women and children—sparked mass outrage, turning the nation's eye to the unrest. “People who never gave unions a tumble before the Ludlow massacre, were climbing on our bandwagon,” remarked a survivor. The 40-acre site is today a singular source for archeological research into the history of labor.

ALSO HOUSE An unparalleled example of early 19th-century American decorative arts, the Richard Alsop House boasts rare and well-preserved frescoes that offer a glimpse of an all-but-vanished time. A Classical-influenced structure in Middletown, Connecticut, its walls and ceilings are adorned with Greek and Roman gods, floral patterns, birds, and angels. Frescoes were popular among the urban elite in places like New York and Philadelphia. But as fashions changed, they were either painted over or covered with wallpaper. Few have survived. Art historian Samuel Green calls the paintings “the most elaborate program of decoration in American domestic architecture before the Civil War.” Wesleyan University bought the house in 1948, since working to preserve it. Now known as the Davison Art Center, the house still stands apart because of its idiosyncratic style, wall paintings in evidence both inside and out. Peter Kenny, the curator of American decorative arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, describes the frescoes as “unique and irreplaceable treasures [which] are truly part of our national cultural patrimony.”

contact point web www.nps.gov/history/nhl/

UPenn Laboratories >>

Modern architecture made a name for itself with groundbreaking transformations of the built environment, but by the late 1950s, the creative well seemed to be running dry. “There was really nowhere to go from the elegantly reductive principles of Mies van der Rohe’s Seagram Building,” points out Carter Wiseman in *Louis I Kahn: Beyond Time and Style, A Life in Architecture*. Inspired by tours of Europe’s ancient ruins, Kahn found a direction forgotten by most architects of the day: the past. With two complexes built for the University of Pennsyl-

WITH TWO COMPLEXES BUILT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA IN PHILADELPHIA BETWEEN 1957 AND 1961 . . . KAHN ELOQUENTLY FUSED HISTORY AND THE MODERN WITH TOWERS EVOKING COMPARISONS TO ITALY’S MEDIEVAL SAN GIMIGNANO.

vania in Philadelphia between 1957 and 1961—the Alfred Newton Richards Medical Research Laboratories and David Goddard Laboratories—Kahn eloquently fused history and the modern with towers evoking comparisons to Italy’s medieval San Gimignano. “Although Kahn never intended these buildings as a protest, [they] provided a potent design alternative to International Modernism,” notes the National Historic Landmark nomination. The Richards lab is configured in a pinwheel pattern with three primary towers—adorned with steel-frame windows—attached to a fourth housing research animals, mechanical systems, stairwells, and elevators. There are “servant” and “served” spaces, the former housing lab spaces, the latter ventilation shafts and other auxiliary elements. Rather than creating yet another glass box, Kahn clad the structures in heavy red brick and concrete. A “real building,” noted the *Architectural Review*. “Probably the single most consequential building constructed in the United States since the [second world] war,” declared Wilder Green, curator at the Museum of Modern Art. The structures embody the theories of human nature and group needs espoused by Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright (though university scientists did not care for the studio-like labs and problematic overabundance of natural light). “In rehabilitating an idea of functionalism that was more humanistic than the modern movement had suggested,” wrote sociologist Robert Gutman, “Kahn offered a vision that was at the same time familiar and original.”

