

TECHNICAL NOTE NUMBER 103

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY - U. S. FOREST SERVICE - MADISON, WISCONSIN

HOW TO DISTINGUISH MAHOGANY AND WALNUT FROM RED GUM

In the manufacture of furniture and cabinets a great deal of red gum is used in combination with mahogany or walnut. When red gum is properly finished it can be made to look so much like either of these woods that only by careful observation can the true be distinguished from the substitute. There is a very distinct difference, however, between red gum and mahogany or walnut. This difference lies in the size of the pores.

In mahogany, Circassian walnut, and black walnut the pores are so large that they can be seen very distinctly on a smoothly-cut surface of the end grain, where they appear as minute openings smaller than pin holes but visible without magnification. On surfaced faces the pores appear as fine grooves, running parallel with the grain. They are even visible through the varnish, appearing as dark lines.

In red gum the pores are much smaller and can be seen only with a magnifying glass.