



There are at least two important features of this Abegweit upper deck Boardroom that make it extra special. One is the type of wood used and the other is each panel. Let's explore each.

First, the wood. The panels in this room are cut from North American Chestnut. If you like it and hope to put some in your home today, you'd have a rather difficult time finding it. You probably won't be able to get it at a lumber store or even one of the big boxes. Why? Well, not too long after this room was constructed, the North American Chestnut became nearly extinct. Here's why (according to our friends at Wikipedia):

The chestnut blight was accidentally introduced to North America around 1904 when *Cryphonectria parasitica* was [brought] into the United States from East Asia [with] the introduction of Japanese chestnut trees for commercial purposes. In 1905, American mycologist William Murrill isolated and described the fungus responsible (which he named *Diaporthe parasitica*), and demonstrated by inoculation into health plants that the fungus caused the disease, noted shortly before at the Bronx Zoo. By 1940, most mature American chestnut trees had been wiped out by the disease. In the first half of the 20th century it killed an estimated four billion trees.



And that's why our Abby House Committee watches over this room with great care -- if any panel were to be damaged, it could not be replaced.

But wait, there's more. What else is so uniquely special about these panels? Take a look around you. Look at any panel. Notice a knot in the panel closer to the top. Additionally, notice that the knot is mirrored on the other side of the panel cut. As if a tree was sliced with the knot at the end of the board.



Now notice that the boards with the knots were cut and mounted like a mirror image of each other. It's referred to as "book-matched" (like opening a book). Amazing, huh? You don't get to see craftsmanship like that very often nowadays. Well, here's where this amazing craftsmanship turns into a masterpiece. Take a look at every panel around the room. They are nearly identical. In fact, you might imagine that every panel in this room was cut from the same North American Chestnut Tree.

