**Part I**

**Preface**

1 Use of the Anglicism “Imperial” rather than “Royal” in referring to Japan’s royal house conforms to standard usage. It reflects not only the political history of that monarchy during the past 150 years when it struggled to establish itself among the “Great Powers,” but also its original quest some 1,500 years ago for a proper title vis-à-vis the Emperor of China. At that time government leaders employed the unusual Chinese term *tenno*, “heavenly sovereign,” to denote their monarch. That title avoided terminological conflict with China’s emperor while sidestepping the subordinate status that other more regular Chinese kingly titles entailed.

2 Japan encompasses some 145,000 square miles; the UK and Ireland combined, some 120,000.

3 The material on Japan in this Preface is treated somewhat more fully in Totman, 2005. On Britain’s woodland see the wonderfully rich study of Scottish forest history, Anderson, 1967; the solidly detailed treatment of English forest history, James, 1981; and three shorter but useful and readable works: Havins, 1976, on England; Linnard, 1982, on Wales; and McCracken, 1971, on Ireland. Sampson, 1965, limns the role of the twentieth-century monarchy.

4 For another, although less directly relevant, similarity, it may bear note that certain ethnic groups in or adjacent to both Britain and Japan ultimately proved stronger than others and in due course overran or momentarily conquered them – Scots, Welsh, and Irish in the English case; Ainu, Ryukyuan s and Koreans in the Japanese. Today, in consequence, both societies face unresolved ethnic conflicts and both exemplify the difficulty such conflicts present to nearly all the world’s peoples, be they in the Balkans, Near East, Indonesia, the Americas, or wherever. More to the point here, in both cases, the overrunning...
of neighboring societies was undertaken by, or in the name of, monarchy. In consequence the issues of ethnic conflict and monarchical legitimacy are intertwined, which has a bearing on public and scholarly attitudes toward the monarchies and their roles.


6 The Geological Survey of Japan has mapped these plate boundaries. See the sketch map reproduced in Totman, 2005, p. 564. Chapter 1 of Totman, 2004, treats this geological history a bit more fully.


8 The phrase “to one or another degree” is important. Japan, like the British Isles, has over the centuries suffered from much forest deterioration. Today much of that 70% is indeed well forested terrain, but in the mid-nineteenth century perhaps half of Naichi woodland had few if any trees of appreciable size. And as the following chapters suggest, forest recovery was a slow and difficult task prior to about 1960.


10 On forest biodiversity, see Heske, 1938, p. 52, and Simmons, 1979, p. 114.

11 Concurrently, as we shall note en passant, there was developing in Japan, much as in Britain, a concern for timber production and riparian management that transcended ownership categories. This development of the 1870s onward appears most clearly, however, when one examines the activities of Japanese government and entrepreneurial foresters and their professional organizations, so it is a story for another time.

Introduction

1 The term goryōrin should, of course, be italicized. But in this essay I Anglicize it as a proper noun because it appears in the title and is so prominent in the text.

2 Initially called Goryōkyoku, what I call the Property Office was retitled Teishitsu rin’ya kanrikyoku (Supervisory Office of the Imperial Forest) in 1907, when the administering of imperial woodland was separated from the handling of other imperial properties, such as palaces, and the Imperial Household’s overall fisc. Later, in 1924, the title was simplified to Teishitsu rin’yakyoku – Bureau of the Imperial Forest. For the sake of verbal consistency, however, this essay uses the term Property Office throughout.

3 One suspects, too, that the endemic center-periphery conflict over control and use of woodland was a significant propellant in the later Meiji rise of “hometown pride” that Wigen, 2000, explores so nicely in the case of Nagano Prefecture.

4 The most solid English-language study of the prewar imperial institution is still the pioneering work, Titus, 1974. Two recent and valuable scholarly biographies that study the emperor’s political role are Large, 1992, and Wetzler, 1998, both of which contain good bibliographical guidance to other works. Two large works in the J’accuse tradition that focus on the hoary agenda of imperial culpability for the Pacific War are Bergamini, 1971, and Bix, 2000. A gossipy popular treatment in the manner of journalistic approaches to the British royal family is Seagrave, 1999.