

# What's this all about then?

Two new books and a significant collection of prints all published in 2021.



Not surprisingly I have been asked about the sudden reappearance of The Florin Press with such a quantity of new work.

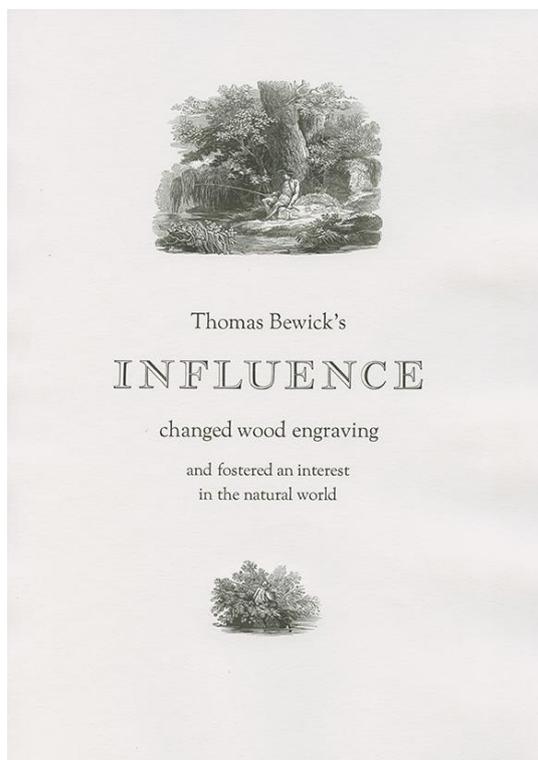
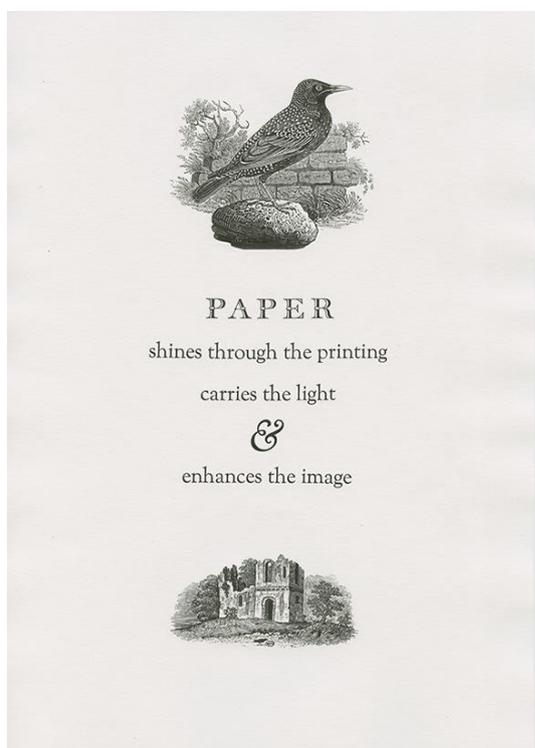
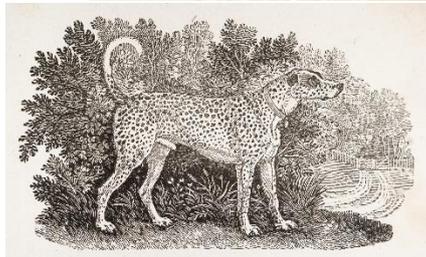
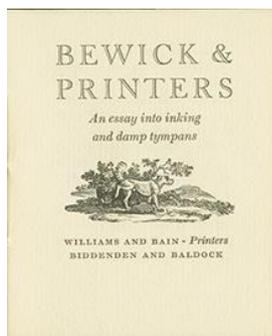
This is certainly one of the most important and extensive projects I have ever undertaken.

The research for these new publications began in the 1960s. It was then that I was

introduced to Thomas Bewick's magnificently visual and superbly skilful work. I met those who printed from his blocks and I began to ask questions. Why precisely did Bewick lower the blocks, what did he hope to achieve? How could they best be printed now on book papers rather than on flimsy tissue? They were seldom well printed in his lifetime.

Research began in 1965 and was my constant companion, if seldom my main preoccupation. Then after decades the threads began to converge and it was time to settle down and bring it all together.

The research and writing became my first occupation. I had found out so much but still had many paths to explore. I needed to understand and see how Bewick developed his technique of lowering. I knew it was in response to the printing of the day but just as important was Bewick's need to introduce tone into his engraving. This study became *Thomas Bewick Engraver, and the performance of woodblocks*, The first of three publications. I studied the seventeenth century method in theory, and then put it into practice. The result was astounding and the printing solution remarkably simple, but apparently completely forgotten, and certainly ignored.

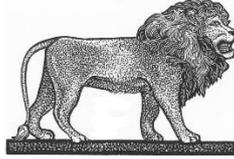


Printing inks presented more of a problem and experiments with black ink continued for many years. Having written about the performance of blocks I had to demonstrate it, and what applied to printing Bewick's woodblocks also applied to any and every woodblock, ancient and contemporary. From modest beginnings this part of the project grew into *A Collection of Printing from Woodblocks, on a diversity of papers*.

I couldn't print on air, I needed paper and I had already written, in *Thomas Bewick Engraver*, how this most civilising of man's inventions had come about, and developed. My chapter about modern paper, first intended for that book, had grown far too large and was removed to be published separately. Then I realised it was far from finished, more research and more printing followed and through all that a clear idea of another book emerged. *Understanding Paper, assessment for artists and fine printers* was what I wished I had known long ago, when I began printing from woodblocks. In particular the possibility to test papers for the likelihood that they will have a long life. I looked for a good glossary and decided I had to construct a new one. The subject is far from exhausted but this is a big step forward. For the user of good paper this book will bring some clear understanding. Thirty-

four of the forty papers in the *Collections of Printing from Woodblocks*, are assessed in *Understanding paper* and a copy of the book is included with each collection.

All three publications definitely stand on their own, they are complete, yet they are linked, each adding to the others. For a full appreciation of wood engravings on paper all three publications combine to answer what seemed such straightforward questions over sixty years ago.



*Full prospectuses for all three publications are available on the website*

[www.florinpress.com](http://www.florinpress.com)

*where copies may be bought*