

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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EDITORIAL

The last issue of the Specialist surprised your editor. We asked the printer to give us 16 pages if he can and he did. After promising us a July issue we had much nerve to ask this favor but we got the additional pages and thank him. Now we hope the treasurer has enough money to pay the bill.

Dr. Stolfa of Montana State University did some very good work for philately while there. One member suggests we start a question box in our paper. We invite members to submit their tough problems; what we cannot answer shall be submitted to other collectors either here or in Europe. Another member writes that not all our members are out and out specialists and suggests we publish condensed information on all stamps. If a sufficient number ask for this, we'll be glad to comply. We propose to begin with the issues of the second republic.

We are reprinting the other two articles which appeared in the Czechoslovak issue of "Stamps," March 27, 1948. Unfortunately, some of the cuts illustrating Mr. Velek's article got lost during the printers' strike in New York and consequently we must do without them. We take this opportunity to thank Mr. Lindquist and Miss Downs of Lindquist Publications for the cooperation extended to us in bringing Czecho philately to their readers.

Members who avail themselves of the Circuit Service are asked to read Mr. Fritzsche's note in this issue and govern themselves accordingly.

We have received information on several new stamps which we have not yet chronicled; members are asked to be patient, we shall bring it up to date as soon as possible.

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THE FIRST RED CROSS STAMPS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by John Velek

This being the season for the annual Red Cross drive, a discussion of the first Red Cross stamps of Czechoslovakia seems appropriate. The stamps are Scott #B130-2, the 40h plus 20h bistre, 60h plus 20h green and the 125h plus 25h blue. The two low values were overprinted on the old Hradcany design, Scott Type A1 and A2, but were printed in new colors. The high value was overprinted on the Type A4 Masaryk design printed in the original blue color. The additional 20 and 25h was turned over to the Red Cross.

Alois Mudrunka submitted three designs for the overprint, Type A and C for the two low values and Type D for the 125 plus 25h value. The Type A overprint was issued on the 40 plus 20h and 60 plus 20h values but Type D was not considered suitable for the third value, and a more simple design was substituted, now known as Type B.

The "Chainbreaker" stamp, Scott Type A6, was first considered for the overprinted issue and plates were made to fit its small format. Essays of overprints A and C exist on the 40 and 60h "Chainbreaker" stamps but the overprint did not show up well on the dark color of these stamps and subsequent printings were made on the earlier Hradcany stamps of lighter shade, including the 5, 30, 40 and 60h values and also the 10h olive yellow postage due Scott Type D1. The small "Chainbreaker" size plates did not fit the larger Hradcany stamps and we find these essays with the overprint on the stamps at various positions. For instance, some pairs will show three overprints while horizontal pairs which include a stamp from the first or last vertical row show only one and a half overprints, the plate being too small to reach the outside row.

The following essay varieties exist: Type A overprint on:

- 5h Hradcany, light green, imperforate, red overprint;
- 30h Hradcany, bistre, imperforate, red overprint;
- 40h Hradcany, orange red, imperforate, red overprint;
- 40h Hradcany, orange red, perforated 13 $\frac{3}{4}$, red overprint;
- 60h Hradcany, green, imperforate, red overprint;
- 40h Chainbreaker, red overprint, also overprint inverted;
- 40h Chainbreaker, black overprint;
- 60h Chainbreaker, black overprint;
- 60h Chainbreaker, red overprint, also overprint inverted;
- 10h Postage Due, red overprint.

The Type C overprint is also found on the above list of stamps with similar variations.

The Type D overprint is found in red and black on the 125h Masaryk stamp only (Fig. 1).

Proofs of all four types of the overprint only, exist in red on white cardboard, and types A and C are also known in black (Fig. 2 and 3).

Some printers waste has also passed into collectors' hands, such as that printed on both sides, on colored paper, etc.



Fig. 1—Essay of Type D overprint



Fig. 2

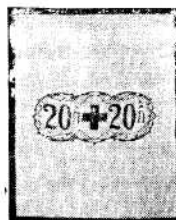


Fig. 3

Fig. 2—Proof of Type A overprint on white card.

Fig. 3—Proof of Type C overprint on white card.

The postal officials finally decided to use the Type A overprint for the two lower values and the Type B overprint for the 125 plus 25h value.

A new and larger Type A plate of 100 subjects was made to fit the large Hradcany sheets. As the stamps to be overprinted were to be in new colors, an electro-type was probably made from the old 40 and 60h Hradcany plates. All the important plate varieties from Plate I of the 40h stamp can be found on the printing for the Red Cross issue. The 40h was printed in bistre instead of the former orange red color and the 60h was made a light green, replacing the old orange yellow.

The stamps were printed in the following numbers:

40 plus 20h bistre	1,100,000
60 plus 20h light green	1,100,000
125 plus 25h blue	650,000

The stamps were issued on Dec. 15, 1920, and were demonetized on Jan. 14, 1921. Because of the additional charge attached, they were not widely used and most of the used copies have a philatelic source. Also due to the fact that they were not good for postage outside of Czechoslovakia* there were a large number of remainders which were on sale at the philatelic Agency as late as 1933. It is assumed that the Red Cross benefitted by the additional amounts collected over this period of years.

The two Hradcany values exist imperforate and also without overprint. None of these varieties were issued to post offices but were secretly distributed by postal employees, as were the essays, proofs and printers' waste.

The two Hradcany types were issued comb perforated 13¼x13¼ and the Masaryk was issued line perforated 13¼.

Although I have not seen a specimen, some of the Czechoslovakian specialized catalogs list a plate variety on the Type A overprint, viz., upper right head of overprint missing on the last stamp in the sheet (Position 100).

Counterfeits of these stamps are not known.

I am indebted to the Hirsh-Franek Handbook on the stamps of Czechoslovakia for most of the statistics stated here, and to F. J. Kovarik of Chicago for loan of some of the items illustrated.

* At the time these stamps were used, the Universal Postal Union did not permit semi-postals with a surcharge above the face value of the stamp in the international mails.

SALES AND EXCHANGE DEPT.

All members please take notice: I have moved, have found an apartment, my new permanent address from now on is: P. O. B. #402, Geneva, N. Y. Please direct all correspondence to that address also send all circuits which have to be returned and still have the old address on the route sheet to my new address.

Please remember also to speed up the circulation by sending out the circuits as soon as possible. There are always a few, who seem to sit on them until I write and remind them of it. Also, if you don't take anything out, please drop me a penny postcard and let me know that you have had the circuit and have sent it on its way. I must know where each circuit is at all times. So please cooperate.

If you have duplicates, mount them and send them in, there is a constant need of new books. It is true, we have sent out more books than ever, but we also sell more than ever.

Wolfgang Fritzsche

New address: P. O. Box #402, Geneva, N. Y.

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COMMEMORATIVE POSTMARKS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by J. W. Lowey

Czechoslovakia was the first of the European countries liberated during the First World War to resort to the application of special and commemorative postmarks.

During the period of its independence, from 1918 to 1938, some 800 different commemorative cancellations were applied to mails. These vary in size, shape, and color, and in many instances are bi-colored or even multi-colored. Most of them originate from the Main Post Office at Prague (Praha I.) though other cities and communities are substantially represented.

Another aspect is the use of bilingual inscriptions—Czech-Ruthenian, Czech-German, Czech-English, etc. Of special fascination for the specialist are the Czech-Hebrew postmarks commemorating several Zionist Congresses held in the Republic.

On very special occasions, as for instance, the death of President Masaryk and other important national events, a special uniform postmark was used in some thirty key cities of the country.

The majority of the cancellations which, besides mottoes and legends, also have miniature illustrations and symbols, are very appealing. However, few compare to the creative art which was used after the country's second liberation in 1945.

An addition to this phase of philately is the issuance of First Day Covers (Figure 1). The covers are similar to the ones which are being produced in the United States, though I would claim that they are superior to ours for several reasons.

Whereas United States covers are manufactured and sold by private concerns, those of Czechoslovakia are issued by the Ministry of Posts. All of them have hand-engraved designs. The main difference, however, lies in the postmark itself.

The stationary inscription "First Day of Issue" becomes rather monotonous in the long run. How much more variety is there in the colorful parade of covers from Czechoslovakia!

Another feature is that some of the covers contain a short article pertaining to the stamps affixed. These sketches are written by authorities on the subject. Or, as is the case with Figure 1, by an intimate knowledge of President Masaryk which follows:

"T. G. M.

"Tenth Anniversary.

"The tenth anniversary of our great sorrow will call forth in each of us thoughts and memories of our President-Liberator. Even such a little portrait like a postage stamp issued in his honour, even this will bring back to us many dear memories. I am one of the fortunate people who used to see him often and so I would like to tell you what kind of thoughts they are that are passing through my mind. I do not force these thoughts upon you, may be this picture will touch another chord in your memory. It seems to me that the President is listening to us this very minute. Even now he has taken off his eye-glass, he has put it beside him on the table, and he is following thoughtfully some debate or discourse in progress. It can be nothing insignificant, as he is giving it his full attention. He is pondering on what is being said, weighing the arguments and forming his opinion. In a second or two he will put down the hand on which his head had been resting, and he will say: 'Well this matter is not so simple . . .' or else 'We shall have to see the other side of the question too . . .' And then will follow one of the wise, true and mature sketches on things that are around us. And it may be, though I might be mistaken, that I see even something more. Around his eyes there lingers the ghost of a pleased smile as if he were commenting on what he has just heard, thinking: 'Now I wonder what the outcome of all this will be.' And I have a feeling as if by this portrait he had come once more among us, following our doings, weighing them and valuing them. And with indulgence as I hope."

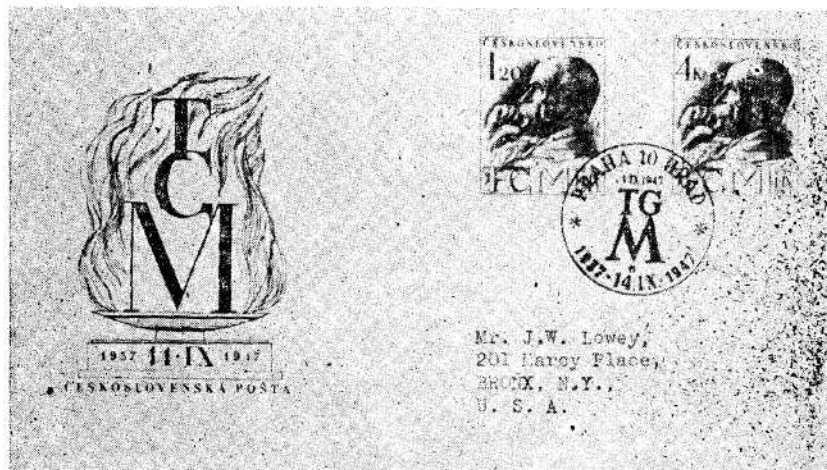


Fig. 1—First day cover with special cachet.

As in the United States, collectors in Czechoslovakia can buy or order First Day Covers. They order from the Philatelic Agency at Prague instead of the Post Office, however. Besides, thousands are mailed gratis to philatelic publications, philatelic organizations and certain persons at home and in all parts of the world.

Some of the commemorative postmarks applied since 1945 are illustrated here:

Figure 2—Strakonice, July 17, 1945—"Visit of General Patton, Commander of the U. S. Army."

Figure 3—Praha, September 22, 1945—"Visit of Marshal Sir B. L. Montgomery."

Figure 4—Praha, October 11, 1945—"General Dwight D. Eisenhower visiting Czechoslovakia."

Figure 5—Praha, October 28, 1945—"October 28th Celebration" (Independence Day).

Figure 6—Praha, November 17, 1945—"World's Student Congress."

Figure 7—Praha, March 10, 1946—"Convention of the Czechoslovak Legion."

Figure 8—Praha, May 9, 1946—"Anniversary of the May Revolution and Liberation of the Republic."

Figure 9—Lidice, June 10, 1946—"Lidice Will Live."

Figure 10—Praha, June 19, 1946—"Election of the President of the Republic."

Figure 11—Praha, September 15, 1946—"Aeronautic Day."

Figure 12—Praha, September 22, 1946—"PVV" (Prague Fair).

Figure 13—Praha, October 28, 1947—"1947-1948, Two Years of Work—Two Steps Toward Prosperity."



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Only 100 collectors of Czechoslovakia can have this item in their collection as that is the known number.

I have ONE mint copy of the color error of Scott B135 BROWN instead of blue. (Stach #239A). The first check for \$200.00 takes it.

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Czechoslovakia — Plating the Stamps of the First Issue

By John Velek, A. P. S.

(Reprinted by permission from The American Philatelist)

Continued

Position 65. There is a dot in the lower left heart. The right dove has a dot in the tail. The A of POSTA has a tiny dot of color in the right stroke.

Position 66. The top frame line has breaks over the P and ST of POSTA. On heavily inked copies these do not show up well. There is a dot above the sun, on the wing of the left dove and in the right side of the S of POSTA.

Position 67. The top frame line has a break before the P of POSTA. The spire is bent to the left. There are two small dots between the base of the center tower and the spire.

Position 68. The sun has a dot at the top right and a small break at the bottom right. The dot over the right tower almost touches. The spire has a nick at its base almost breaking it off.

Position 69. There is a dot on the left frame over the E of CESKO and another in the top right branch of the large bush. There are two tiny dots after the 0 of 40 and one in the wing of the right dove.

Position 70. There is a dot over the spire and one in the top of the P of POSTA. The long ray is broken near the bottom. The left frame is broken over the K of CESKO. The left side of the 4 is pointed. (Billig No. 7t).

Position 71. The base of the vignette has a white spot on the left end. There is a small dot on the inside edge of the sun line.

Position 72. The A of POSTA has a colored dot on the inside edge. The top frame line has a break between the OS and a dot over the T of POSTA.

Position 73. There are small breaks in the design over A and between SK of SLOVENSKA. These were probably transferred from Plate I but are not as well defined as in the first plate. There is a dot in the tablet after the 40 and in the third leaf at left.

Position 74. There is a large white spot below the K of SLOVENSKA and a smaller one below the left towers. (Billig No. 7j). The tablet line is broken on the right.

Position 75. The large bush has a dot in the left branch. There are two small dots on the tablet line to the left. The frame line has a dot below the right heart.

Position 76. There is a small dot of color on the top of the sun. The long ray just touches the short ray above it. This is a very difficult stamp to plate and the collector can save himself the trouble by tying it in with one of the stamps around it.

Position 77. The S of POSTA has a line of color thru the bottom. The sun has a dot below the long ray. There are tiny dots on the inside bottom of the tablet line and one above the tablet line at the top center.

Position 78. There is a tiny break in the tablet line below the 0 of 40 and a dot between the tablet and the base of the vignette. The bottom frame has two small dots below the value tablet. There is a small colored dot in the top right heart.

Position 79. The wing line of the left dove is broken at the bottom. There is a break below the O of POSTA. Many positions show a weakness in the design below the O but only this stamp has a definite break thru the design and the line below.

Position 80. There is a white dot after the T of POSTA. The long ray has a large break. The sun has a dot above it to the left. There is a break in the base line above the 0 of 40.

Position 81. The left side of the stamp is damaged above the O of CESKO. This defect is missing in the early printings. The top frame has a small break toward the left. There is a dot in the lower right heart and a line runs from the heart thru the bottom frame line.

Position 82. There are two dots in the third leaf of the left group. There is a tiny dot above the roof to the left of the sun.

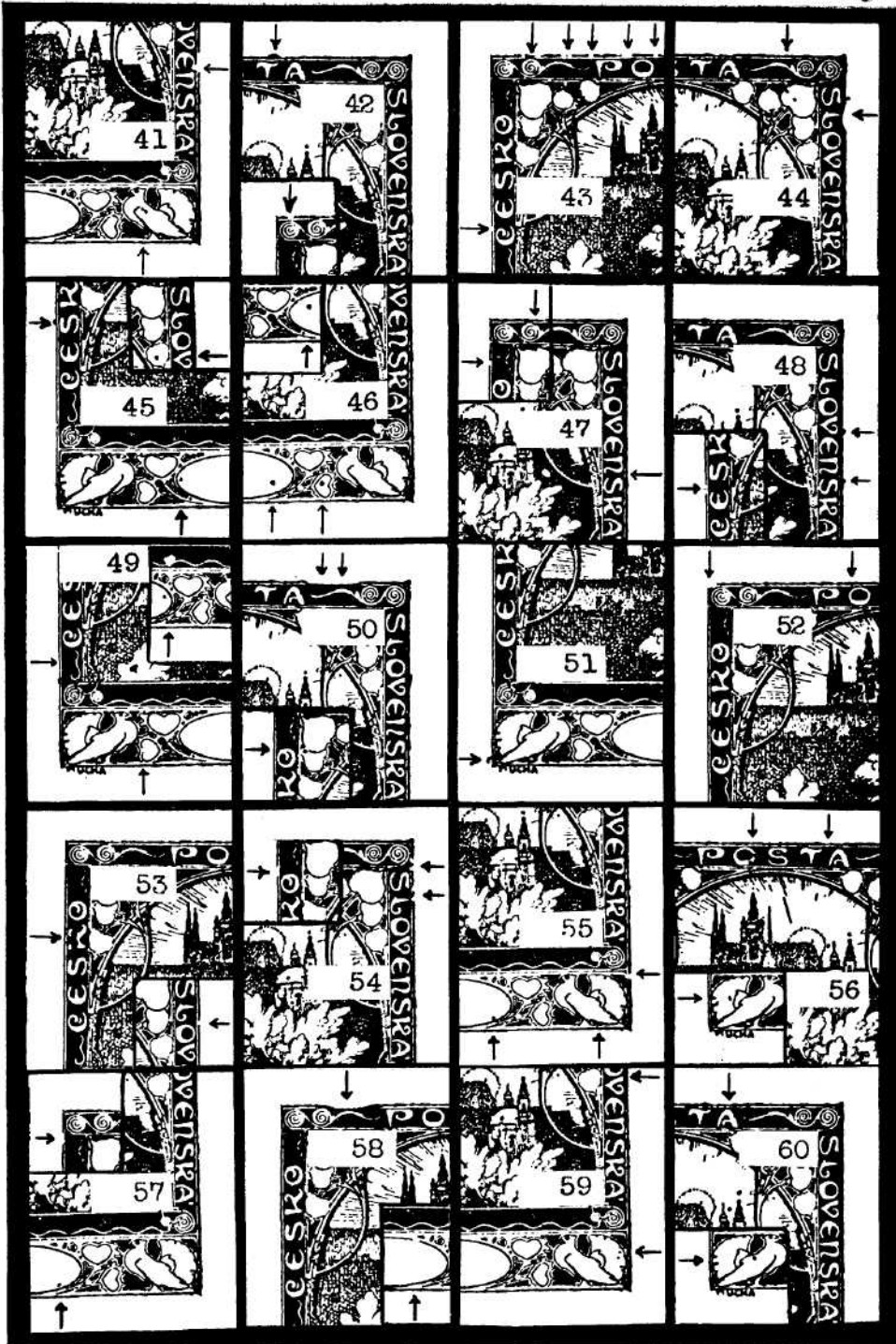


Fig. 8—40 haleru Plate II Positions 41-60

Position 83. The large bush has a white dot over the left side. There is a tiny break in the lower left heart.

Position 84. About five mm. of the top frame is missing over the TA of POSTA. (Billig No. 7hh). There is a similar variety in Plate I and it may have transferred to this plate. The sun line is broken at the top. The fourth leaf at right has a break in the bottom line.

Position 85. The upper left corner of the stamp is damaged. There is a white line from the O of CESKO to the margin.

Position 86. The left frame line is broken in two places toward the bottom. There is a similar variety in this position in Plate I. The top of the tablet is broken between the 4 and 0 of 40.

Position 87. The right side of the tablet line is broken opposite the heart. There is a small break in the design over the A of SLOVENSKA.

Position 88. The left frame line is broken below the C of CESKO. There is a tiny break in the breast line of the right dove. The long ray is extended at the top about one mm.

Position 89. The 0 of 40 joins the tablet line; variety transferred from Plate I. (Billig No. 7g). The absence of the long ray places this stamp in Plate II. Also there is a white spot touching the large bush at the left near the top.

Position 90. The tablet line has a break over the 0 of 40. (Billig No. 7u). Most 40h. stamps show a thinness or small break in this part of the line but in this position the line is entirely missing for about one mm. The 0 of 40 has a nick on the left side opposite the horizontal stroke of the 4.

Position 91. The right scroll line is forked and the frame is broken over the A of POSTA. (Billig No. 7f). Another of the important varieties transferred from Plate I. Plate II can be identified by the top left heart which has several spots of color instead of only two small dots as in the first plate. Also the left frame is broken over the lower scroll and there is a dot below the 0 of 40. The first stamp in the bottom row, it has the control number 4:— below.

Position 92. The top frame line is missing over the A of POSTA for about three mm. The M and A of MUCHA are underlined. The control number is 8:—.

Position 93. The left frame line has a small break almost at the top. There is a small break under the O of, and a dot joins the top frame line to the S of POSTA. The top frame line is rather weak just to the right of the A and part of the sun line is missing at the roof on the left. Only clearly printed copies of this position can be plated as the plating marks are small and are blotted out on a heavily inked stamp. Of course a marginal copy with the control No. 2:— would place the stamp in this position.

Position 94. The top frame has two breaks—one over the A of POSTA and the other to the right. There is a dot in the third right leaf and between the 4 and 0 of 40. The number 16:— is below the stamp.

Position 95. The right dove has a dot on the wing. There is a dot on the edge of the left top heart. The control number is 20:—.

Position 96. In the top left heart the top line is broken on the right. There is a short line in the lower part of the breast on the left dove. The dot over the right tower is very faint. The number 24:— is in the lower margin.

Position 97. There is a large break in the base of the last tower on the right. (Billig No. 70). The regular dot over the tower is missing. The upper left corner has a nick at the top. 28:— is the control number.

Position 98. The 0 of 40 joins the tablet line. The collector will note that in this position the line is slightly to the left of center while in Position 89 it is to the right. There is a break in the tablet line at the top and in the sun line on the left. The dot is missing over the right tower. Control number below this stamp is 32:—.

Position 99. There is a line thru the short tail feathers of the left dove. The long ray is broken near the bottom. Number 36:— is at the bottom of the stamp.

Position 100. The top frame is broken over the second left scroll and the right frame over the S of SLOVENSKA. The ray over the sun is about one-half normal length. Control number 40:— is in the lower margin.

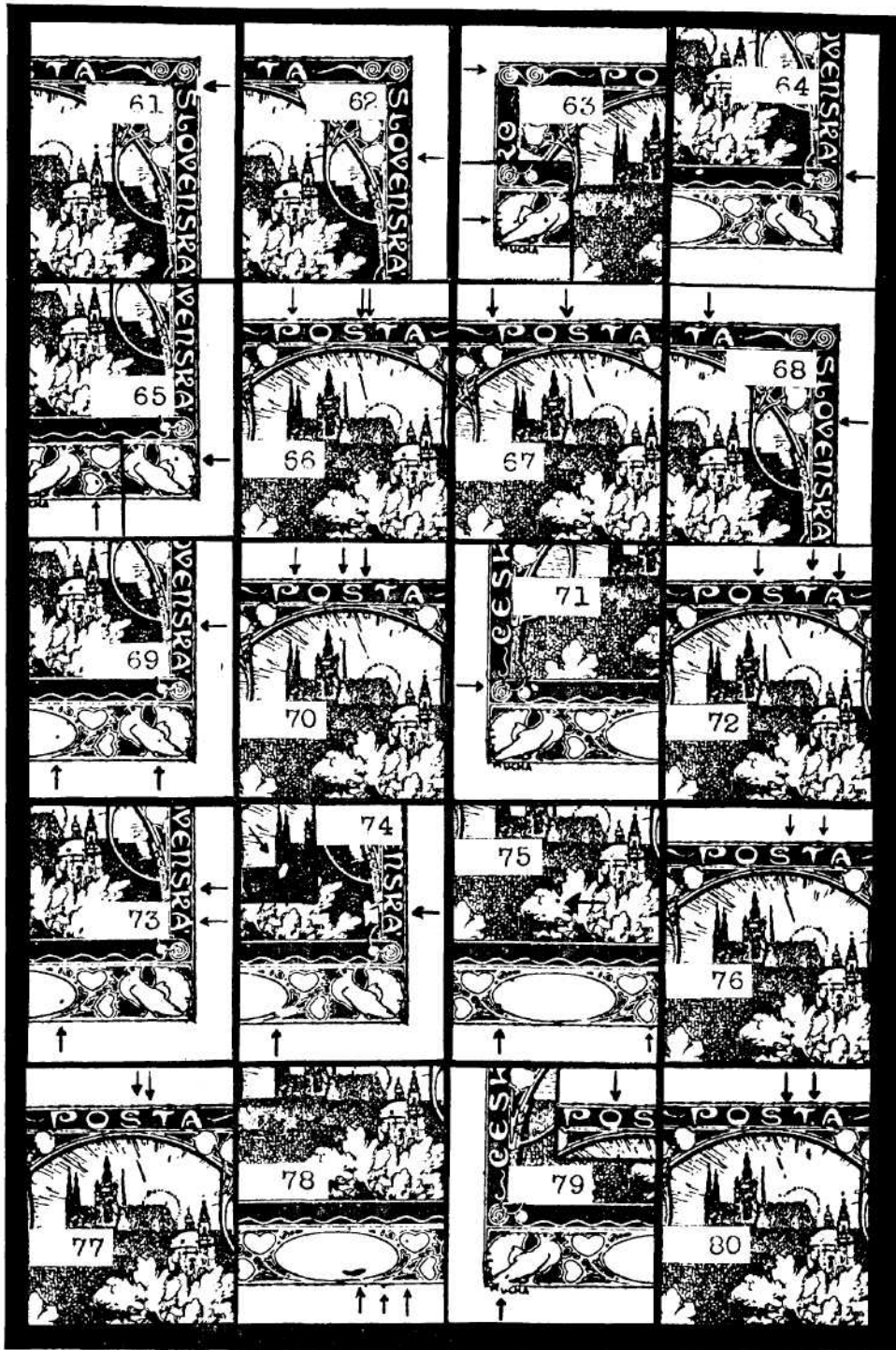


Fig. 9—40 haleru Plate II Positions 61-80

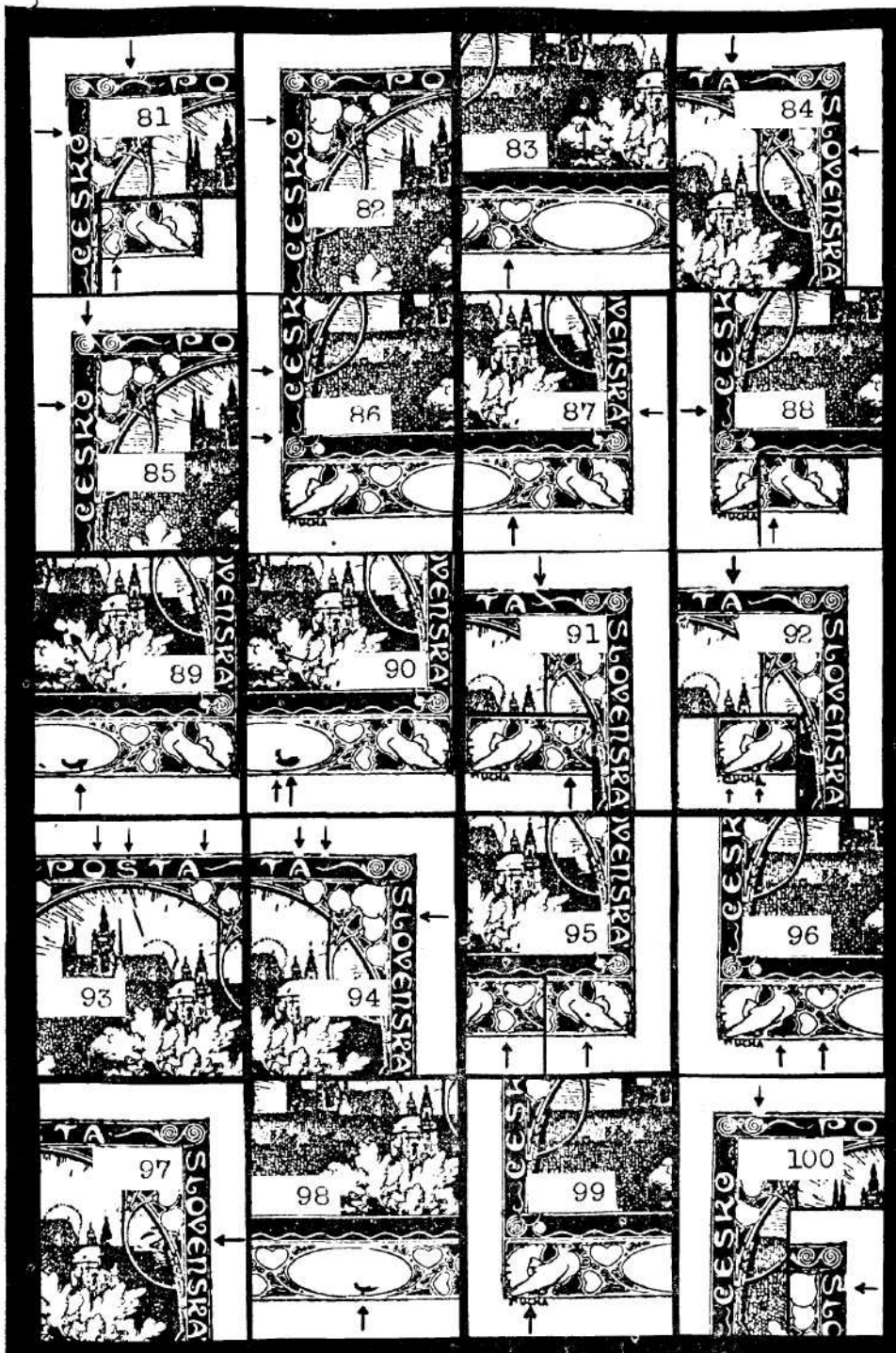


Fig. 10—40 haleru Plate II Positions 81-100



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