

TEMPE TO PHOENIX, ARIZONA BY ZEPPELIN

By Patrick Spencer and Tom Reyman

The German Graf Zeppelin airship made many flights all over the world in the late 1920's and early 1930's and this presented numerous opportunities for people to prepare envelopes and postcards that could be posted on these flights. One such flight was the May 1930 Europe-Pan American Round Flight, Zeppelin flight Z-105. The planned route for this journey was from Friedrichschafen, Germany to Spain to South America and then North to Lakehurst, New Jersey before returning to Germany. For those in the United States who wanted their mail to be flown on the Graf Zeppelin, arrangements were made to carry mail by ship from New York to Germany where the mail would be processed and then placed on-board the airship.

This postcard was one of the pieces of mail that took advantage of this arrangement. There are several things that make this postcard unique and unusual. The postcard was prepared in Tempe, Arizona addressed to Phoenix, Arizona only about 10 miles away. The sender of the mailing was E. A. (Edward Ambrose) Tovrea, a wealthy land developer and cattleman, whose cattle stockyards and meat packing facility were East of Phoenix. He was sending the postcard to his wife in Phoenix.

The postcard travelled to New York where it was transported to Germany. There it was placed on board the Graf Zeppelin to begin the "Sudamerikafahrt" (South America Flight) landing at the Zeppelin facility in Lakehurst, New Jersey. From there the card, again, travelled across the United States to finally be delivered in Phoenix.



Figure 1

The reverse of the card shows a picture of a horse.

As noted on the postcard, the Tempe, Arizona date stamp is May 1, 1930. The postcard postage rate for this flight was \$1.30 and the U. S. C14 stamp was required to meet that rate. The \$1.30 amount is equivalent to over \$21 in current 2022 dollars.

The Europe-Pan America Flight left Germany on May 18, 1930 and arrived at Lakehurst, New Jersey on June 6. There is no receiver date on the postcard to indicate when it arrived at the Phoenix Post Office Box to be delivered to Mrs. Tovrea.

The Tovrea Family was well-known in the Phoenix area because of its business and land holdings. For local residents today, the Tovrea name is also well-known because of the famous ‘Tovrea Castle’ building (Figure 2) which was located next to the former Tovrea cattle stockyards. Although it was built by Allisio Carraro in 1929 to 1930, E. A. Tovrea purchased the building in 1931 for a residence for him and his wife. Mr. Tovrea died in 1932 and his wife continued to live there until her death in 1969. The landmark building is now owned by the City of Phoenix, using it as a museum.

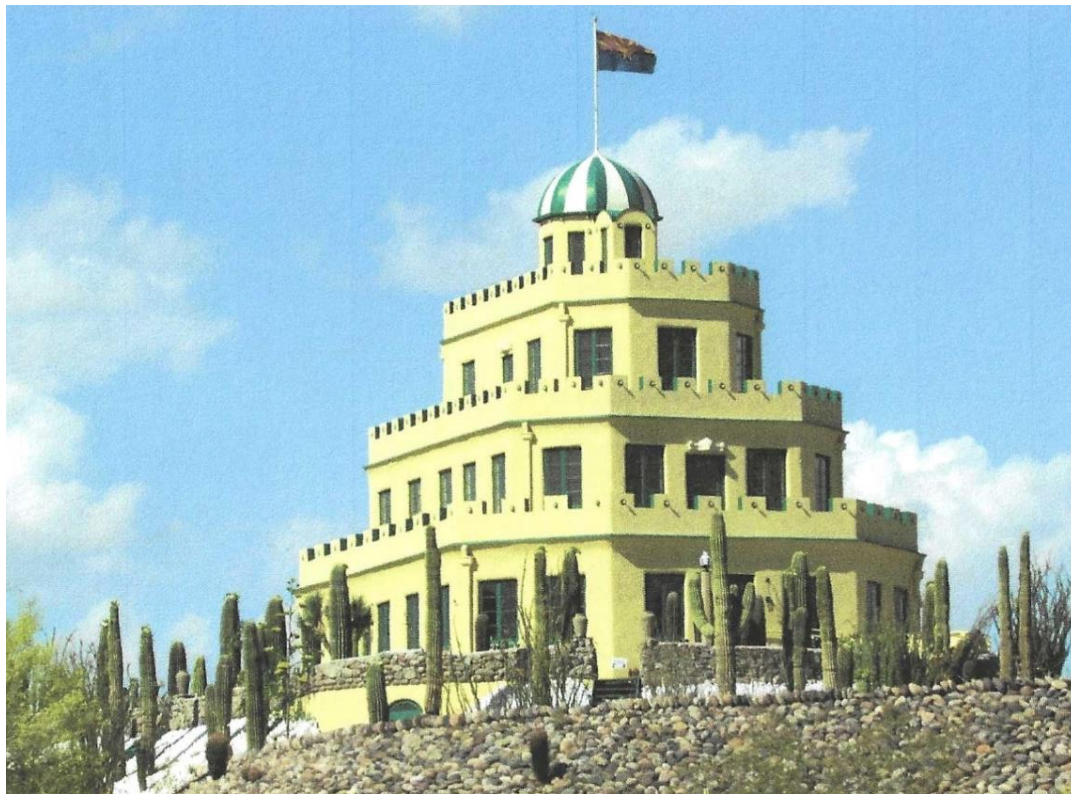


Figure 2 –
The Tovrea
Castle

References:

American Air Mail Catalogue, Volume 1, Fourth Edition, 1966; Cinnaminson, N.J.; Pages 337-338.

<https://www.sleuthsayers.org/2015/08/where-cattle-are-king>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/tovrea-castle>