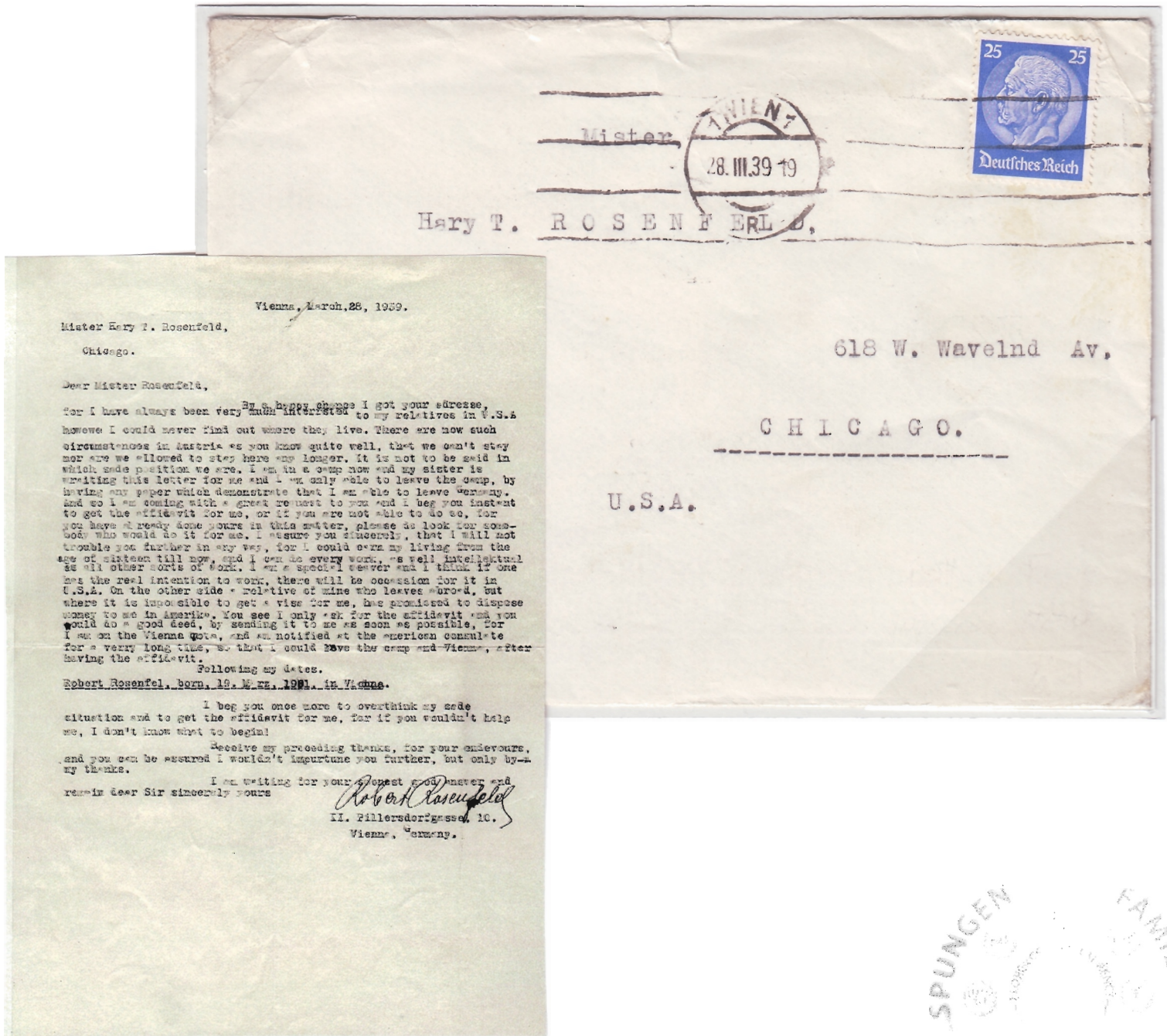


Flight of Austrian Jews

Austria under Nazi rule was a nightmare for Jews. A previously unknown SS officer, Adolf Eichmann, was put in charge of the Central Bureau for Emigration in Vienna shortly after the *Anschluss*. Using violence and terror, deceit, blackmail, and the threat of concentration camp confinement, Eichmann's task was to expel all Jews from Austria while confiscating all their money and property. No country in the world wanted to shelter the Jews, so each one had the problem of securing the required emigration documents. After the November 1938 *Kristallnacht* pogrom, Eichmann imprisoned the remaining Jews in concentration camps to increase pressure on them to leave. By the time war broke out in the fall of 1939, 126,445 Austrian Jews had emigrated.

In a March 28, 1939, surface letter to the United States, Robert Rosenfeld sent a desperate appeal for assistance to his Chicago relative.



Vienna, March, 28, 1939.

Mister Harry T. Rosenfeld,
Chicago.

Dear Mister Rosenfeld,

By a happy chance I got your adresse, for I have always been very much interested to my relatives in U.S.A. howewe I could never find out where they live. There are now such circumstances in Austria as you know quite well, that we can't stay nor are we allowed to stay here any longer. It is not to be said in which sade position we are. I am in a camp now and my sister is wraiting this letter for me and I am only able to leave the camp, by having any paper which demonstrate that I am able to leave Germany. And so I am coming with a great request to you and I beg you instant to get the affidavit for me, or if you are not able to do so, for you have already done yours in this matter, please do look for somebody who would do it for me. I assure you sincerely, that I will not trouble you further in any way, for I could earn my living from the age of sixteen till now, and I can do every work, as well intellectual as all other sorts of work. I am a special weaver and I think if one has the real intention to work, there will be occassion for it in U.S.A. On the other side a relative of mine who leaves abroad, but where it is impossible to get a visa for me, has promised to dispose money to me in Amerika. You see I only ask for the affidavit and you would do a good deed, by sending it to me as soon as possible, for I am on the Vienna quota, and am notified at the American consulate for a verry long time, so that I could leave the camp and Vienna, after having the affidavit.

Following my dates.

Robert Rosenfel, born, 19. März, 1961. in Vienna.

I beg you once more to overthink my sade situation and to get the affidavit for me, for if you wouldn't help me, I don't know what to begin!

Receive my preceding thanks, for your endeavours, and you can be assured I wouldn't impurtune you further, but only by my thanks.

I am waiting for your soonest good answer and remain dear Sir sincerely yours

Robert Rosenfeld
II. Pillersdorfsgasse, 10.
Vienna, Germany.