Family history notes · Estonia, Germany & America

# The Leoke and Koik Families

The families of Pilvi Leoke and Elmar Koik, from Estonia to the United States



**The Leoke family on 26 August 1910.** As identified by Viljandi Museum, front row, from left: Hans, Elmar and Mari; back row: Jaan, Hans and Peeter (Peter). The boy in the front row is Elmar Oswald Leoke, Pilvi's father. *Viljandi Museum, VMF 176:92.*

Pilvi Laine Leoke was born in Tartu in 1921, into a Viljandi family of booksellers and publishers. Elmar Heinrich Koik was born on the Karksi manor estate, about 35 km south of Viljandi, in 1925. Both left Estonia in 1944, spent the postwar years in Germany as refugees, and came to the United States, where they married.

**Leoke family** **Koik family**

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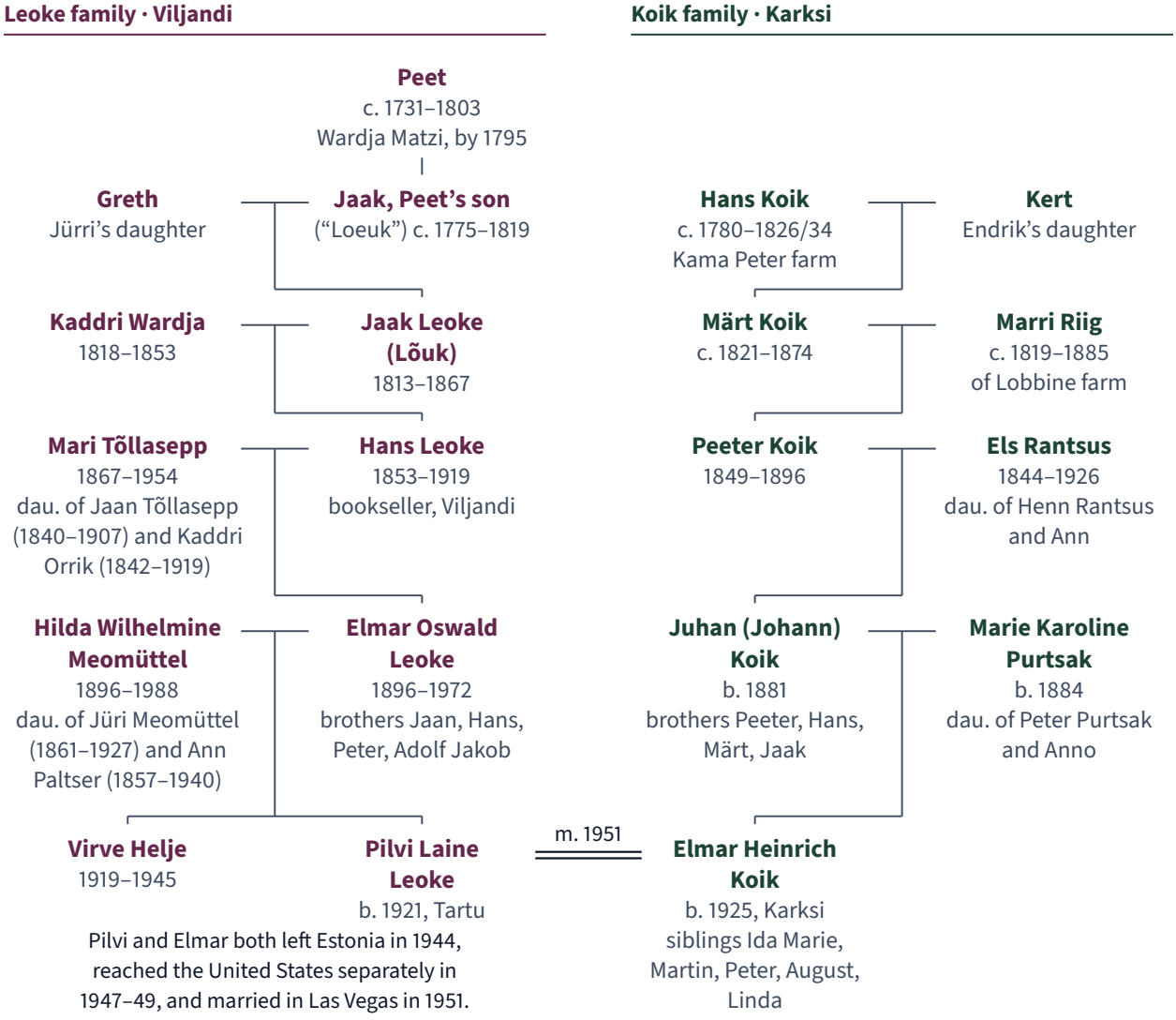

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**Overview**

# How the two families connect

Both families came from what is now Viljandi County. The Leokes, whose forebears were landless peasants on the Vana-Võidu manor estate, became a town family who ran Viljandi's first Estonian bookshop. The Koiks were a rural working family with roots in the Kariste estates of Halliste parish. Parish records trace their movements through Paistu and Halliste to Karksi manor.

**Two Elmars.** Pilvi's father was *Elmar Oswald Leoke* (b. 1896). Her husband was *Elmar Heinrich Koik* (b. 1925).

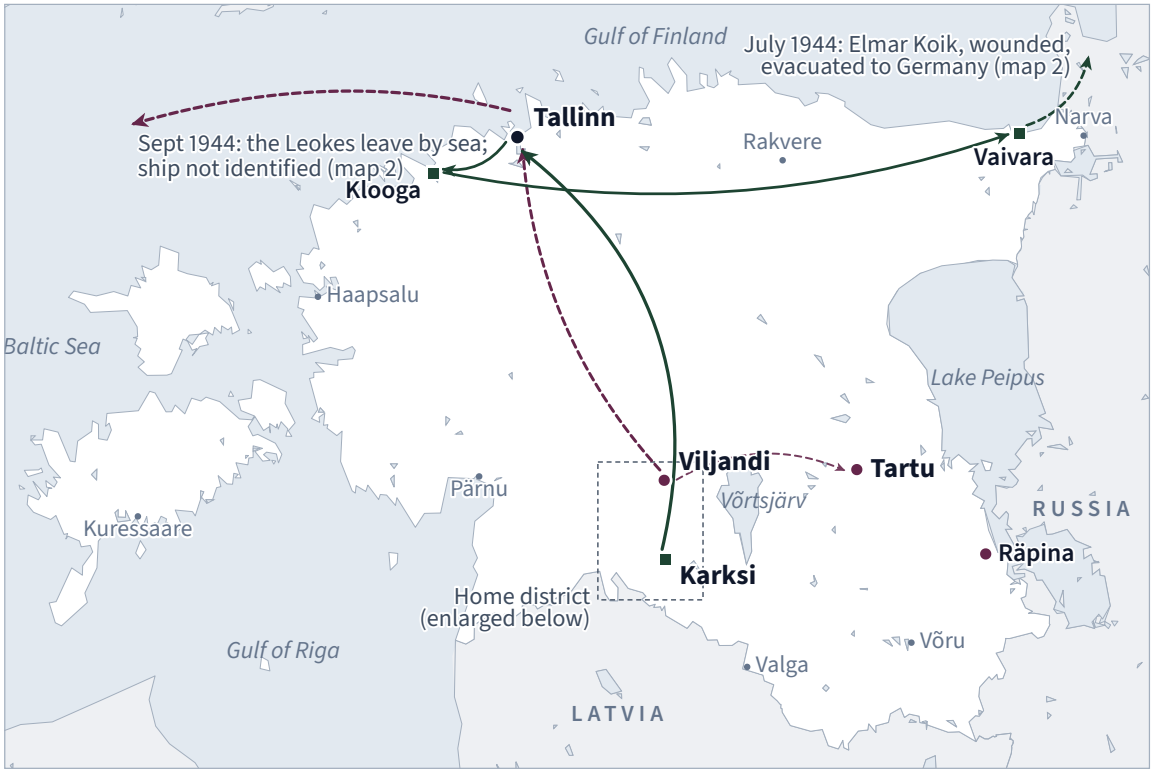


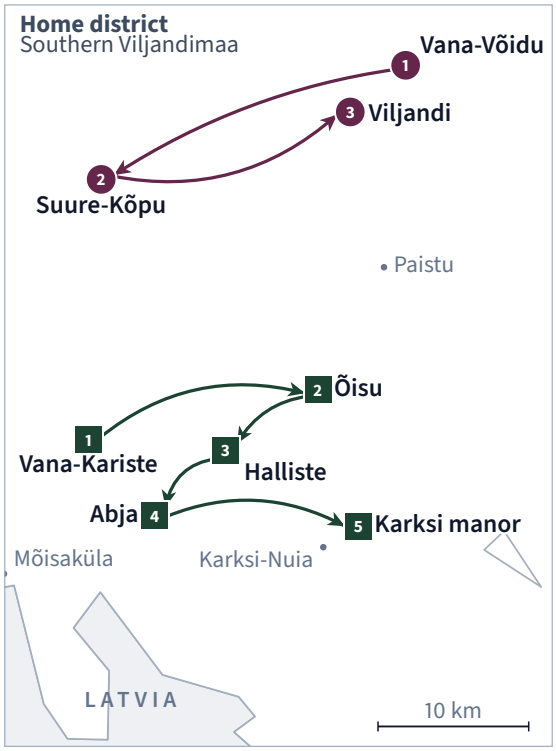

Plum: Leoke family; green: Koik family. A line down leads from a couple to their child; "c." means about.

Map 1 · Estonia

# Roots in Estonia

Where the Leoke and Koik families lived, from the 1790s to the departures of 1944




## Leoke

1. **Vana-Võidu estate**: Peet at Wardja Matzi farm by 1795; Hans born there, 1853; marries Mari Tõllasepp, 1885
2. **Suure-Kõpu**: the Louisenhütte works, about 1890–96; Peter and Elmar Oswald born
3. **Viljandi**: the bookshop, 1891–1936

   **Tallinn**: Virve born 1919; the family's last home, 1944. **Tartu**: Pilvi born 1921. **Räpina**: paper mill, before 1944

## Koik

1. **Vana-Kariste**: Hans Koik a farmhand at Kama Peter, 1811; Peeter born 1849
2. **Õisu**: Peeter and Els live here after marrying at Paistu, 1875; Juhan born 1881
3. **Halliste**: the family from 1887; Juhan marries, 1907
4. **Abja**: Ida born, 1908
5. **Karksi manor**: household there 1924–27; Elmar born 1925

   **Tallinn, Klooga, Vaivara**: Elmar works in Tallinn, 1942–43; mobilized and wounded, 1944

Lines join places in the order the records give; they do not show routes.

Sources: parish registers and soul revisions (Estonian National Archives); Arolsen Archives.

Coastlines and lakes © OpenStreetMap contributors via geo-maps; modern borders shown.

Part one

# The Leokes of Viljandi

## Hans Leoke: from schoolmaster to bookseller



Hans Leoke (1853–1919), Pilvi's grandfather.

Hans was born at Wardja Matzi farm on the Vana-Võidu (Alt-Woidoma) manor estate, just outside Viljandi, on the evening of 27 December 1852 Old Style (O.S.), which is 8 January 1853 in the modern calendar. Estonia used the Julian, or Old Style, calendar until 1918; Appendix C explains the conventions used here. He was baptized in Viljandi church on 4 January 1853 O.S.[1]

His parents, Jaak Leok and Kaddri Wardja, had married at Viljandi on 5 April 1838; the registers also spell the surname Löuk or Lõuk. Kaddri was the daughter of the farm holder at Wardja Matzi. Jaak's family had lived on the same farm since at least 1795, when his grandfather Peet was there with the family of Peet's brother Jaan, whose son held the farm until 1813.[2] Appendix C traces the earlier generations.

The Viljandi Museum's biography calls Jaak the manor carpenter. The estate's soul revisions, periodic censuses of the peasant population, list him as a landless laborer (*Lostreiber*) living on other people's farms. The revisions record a person's standing on the estate rather than a trade, so the two descriptions need not conflict.

The museum biography also describes Hans as the youngest of four children and the only one to survive. The Viljandi registers name two of the others, both daughters who died young: Marri, born in 1841, who died in January 1843, and Rööt, born in 1844, who died of dysentery in June 1848, aged four. The third child has not been found. Kaddri died on 22 August 1853, aged 35, when Hans was eight months old. In the estate revision of 1857–58, Hans, recorded as aged five, is listed on Saare Annuse farm in the household of his godfather, the farm holder Mikhel Rambek, while his widowed father was living at Wardja Matzi with Kaddri's brothers. Jaak died of dropsy at Saare Annuse on 7 October 1867 O.S., aged 55, when Hans was fourteen.[3]

Financial difficulties forced him to leave first the Arumetsa parish school and later the Viljandi parish school. A household-book note records his confirmation at Viljandi on 21 February 1871, when he was eighteen.[4] He worked at the Karula peat works, first as a laborer and then as a clerk. He continued his studies while working, and in

1872 he earned a schoolmaster's certificate from the Viljandi district school, later taking courses at the Tartu teachers' seminary.

After posts at the Kuude and Leiaru schools, he was schoolmaster at Arumetsa from 1876 to 1890. He wrote on schooling for the newspaper *Sakala*, collected folklore for Jakob Hurt, belonged to the Estonian Literary Society, supported the ideas of Carl Robert Jakobson, and helped found the Estonian Alexander School. In 1882 he led the founding of a library society, and an instrumental band followed. A membership card of the Estonian Literary Society for 1885, made out to a "Hans L...", is in the Viljandi Museum and is probably his.

On 1 December 1885 O.S., aged 32, Hans married Mari Tõllasepp at Viljandi. The register enters him as schoolmaster (*Schulmeister*), with both his parents dead. Mari, aged 18, was from a farming family at Kangilaski farm, also on the Vana-Võidu estate. She was born there on 23 April 1867 O.S., the daughter of Jaan Tõllasepp and Kaddri née Orrik, who were both living at the time of the wedding.[5] Their first two sons, Jaan and Hans, were born at the schoolhouse. Hans lost his teaching post during the Russification of the schools, when Russian was imposed as the language of instruction.[6] The stated reasons were his lack of Russian and his part in drafting a petition for religious freedom. With the help of Pastor Westrén-Doll he found work as a clerk and bookkeeper at the Louisenhütte machine works at Suure-Kõpu, where he stayed five years. Peter and Elmar Oswald were both born there, and their baptism entries describe their father as an overseer at the works.[7]



**Hans and Mari Leoke, dated about 1900 by Viljandi Museum.** *Viljandi Museum, VMF 75 F 713.*




**Provost Ferdinand Hörschelmann with the schoolmasters of Viljandi district, Tartu, 24 June 1873.** Hans, then 20, had qualified as a schoolmaster the previous year and may be among the group; the schoolmasters are not individually named. *Viljandi Museum.*

## Viljandi's first Estonian bookshop

On 23 January 1891, Hans opened the first Estonian-language bookshop and lending library in Viljandi, which until then had only German bookshops. His brother-in-law Ado (Aadu) Tõllasepp, Mari's younger brother, then 21, managed it at first, while the family seems to have stayed at Kõpu; Hans took over the shop himself in 1896. Ado later set up his own printing house and bookshop.

The shop moved through several premises before settling at Tartu 11 in 1909, where the family also lived. Mari had a business of her own: a grocery and haberdashery at Lossi 16, run in her name, which also sold toys and funeral wreaths. The full sequence of addresses appears in Appendix A.




**Tartu street in 1925, looking from the Lossi corner.** The long wooden building beyond the round-windowed corner house carries the sign **"H. LEOKE."**: the family shop and home at Tartu 11, six years after Hans died. The household book also records this address for Elmar Oswald, Hilda and their daughters, without dating the address entry. *Viljandi Museum.*



**Hans Leoke, in a dark coat and with a beard, in front of his shop at Tartu 11 in 1912, while electric lines are being strung.** The EVE building, now the Grand Hotel Viljandi, was later built on this site. *Photo J. Riet, Viljandi Museum VMF 424:415.*

In 1910 Hans became a second-guild merchant and a citizen of the town, which gave him a vote in town elections. Besides books and school supplies, the shop sold household goods, accepted cloth and yarn for dyeing, and sold tickets and printed posters for local performances.

> Children preferred his shop, where pens, pencils, textbooks and exercise books were sold, to the other, duller shops. Leoke was a kindly man with gold-rimmed spectacles and a big beard. Since he was short, his head reached just over the counter, so that he swept the display cases with his brown beard like a broom. His mouth was never still: he asked every youngster his name, where he lived, which school and class he was in and what his papa did, said he knew him, and sent greetings home.
>
> — Writer Johannes Semper, remembering his school days (translated from the Estonian)

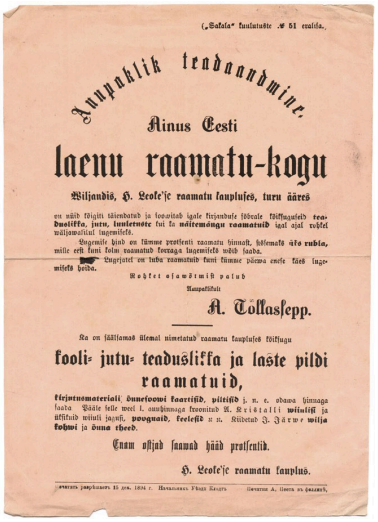
## Publishing and lending books

Hans founded his publishing house in 1895. Its first publication was M. Kampmann's biography of Emperor Alexander III. A former teacher, Hans concentrated on schoolbooks, songbooks and stories. He also published his own collection of riddles, songs and games, *Vigurivänt* (1906), under the pen name *Kevadelind* ("spring bird"), along with a Viljandi town guide in Estonian and Russian. His almanacs usually had print runs of 5,000 copies, rising to 10,000 in 1909.

Theater became a major part of Hans's publishing business. Amateur drama groups had limited access to suitable material, so from 1902 Hans published original and adapted Estonian plays in his series *Rahva näitemängud* ("Plays for the People"), including works by August Kitzberg. Between 1902 and 1922 his press issued 140 plays, about a third of all Estonian drama published in those years, and he was the main publisher of children's plays. He also bought scripts and rights, obtained performance permits from the censor, and rented scripts out to theater groups: his catalog listed almost 700 plays, most of them in manuscript.




**"H. Leoke.** Bookshop and publishing business. Viljandi." Hans's stand at the 1911 agricultural show in the VEPS courtyard: his own publications on the board, and a case of Estonian farming literature from 1790–1911 drawn from his archive library. *Photo J. Riet, Viljandi Museum VMF 424:330.*


Anupaklik teadaandmine.
Ainus Eesti
laenu raamatu-kogu
Wiljandis, H. Leoke'sje raamatu kaupluses, turu ääres
A. Tõllassepp.
kooli- jutu- teadusliKka ja laste pildi raamatuid,

**A poster for "the first Estonian lending library" at H. Leoke's bookshop.** *Viljandi Museum archive.*

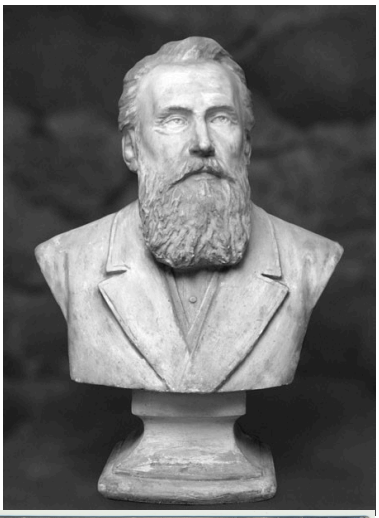
From 1891 the shop lent books for a fee to readers in Viljandi and the surrounding countryside. It started with about 700 titles and had grown to 4,200 by the early 1900s.

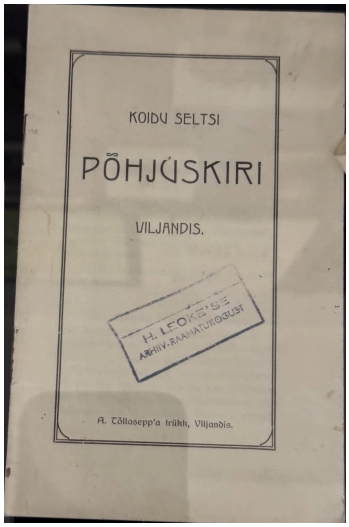
After Hans died, the lending library passed to his sons Elmar Oswald and Jaan. They stopped publishing and lending plays in 1922, and in 1933 Elmar Oswald sold the lending library to the theater publisher Taavet Mutsu.[8] Jaan kept the bookshop running until 1936.

## The archive library

All his life Hans tried to collect every Estonian-language publication he could: books, almanacs, magazines and newspapers. By the 1920s the collection held nearly 15,000 Estonian publications, including almost every Estonian book published before 1864 and original editions of regional decrees from 1688–1842. He hoped it would stay together in Viljandi and dreamed of founding a museum.

Jaan spent years seeking a buyer for the entire collection. When those efforts failed, it was sold in parts; J. Keng, identified in the museum account as the family's heir, disposed of the remainder. Books from the collection are now held by several institutions, especially the Viljandi Museum, as well as the National Library, the Literary Museum and the Theatre and Music Museum. They can be recognized by the stamp "H. Leoke'se arhiiv-raamatukogust" ("from H. Leoke's archive library"). The stamp appears on items printed as late as 1926 and 1934, so the collection kept growing after Hans's death, presumably under Jaan, who ran the shop until 1936.






**Statutes of Viljandi's Koidu Society, 1911, printed by Hans's brother-in-law Ado Tõllasepp and stamped "H. Leoke'se arhiiv-raamatukogust".** *Viljandi Museum.*



**Hans Leoke on his deathbed, August 1919.** *Viljandi Museum, VMF 75 F 3887.*

Hans Leoke died on 16 August 1919 and was buried in the Viljandi Old Cemetery.

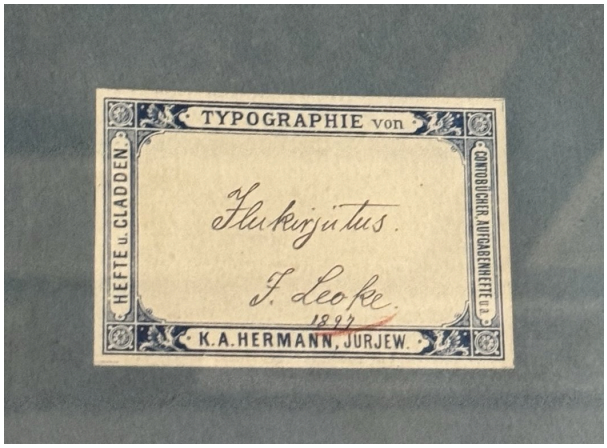
## Hans and Mari's sons

- **Jaan Leoke** (2 November 1886 O.S. – 17 March 1959), born at the schoolhouse. He ran the bookshop at Tartu 11 until 1936, co-owned the lending library with Elmar Oswald, and spent years trying to keep his father's archive library together. His school penmanship book from 1897 is in the Viljandi Museum. In 1913 his father planned to send him to study in Leipzig, but the First World War ended the plan. After the Second World War, he and his mother Mari remained in Viljandi, where they sold books, while his brother Elmar Oswald's family emigrated to America. He is buried in the family plot.

- **Hans Leoke** (5 November 1888 O.S. – 1945), also born at the schoolhouse. He was schooled in Petrograd and trained at the Estonian War School in 1919–20. In a biography he supplied about 1923 he called himself a "restless wanderer": by his own account he had been sent to Vladivostok as an artillery volunteer, escaped to Japan, and worked for English and Dutch trading houses in the East Indies before returning to Estonia in 1919. In 1921 he joined the new Estonian consulate in New York, and from the summer of 1922, when the United States recognized Estonia, he was acting consul. After a stay in Tallinn in 1924–25 he returned to New York, by way of Sweden, in April 1925; by 1926 he no longer held the post. His last dated trace is in New York in November 1930. Linda Sarapuu's 2007 study, which also calls him acting consul, gives his death as 1945; where and how he died is not yet known.[9]
- **Peter Leoke** (1892–1973), born at Louisenhütte, Suure-Kõpu (his American papers say Viljandi). Diplomat, publisher and the family's anchor in America.
- **Elmar Oswald Leoke** (27 July 1896 O.S. / 8 August 1896 – 26 February 1972), born at Suure-Kõpu, Pilvi's father: the youngest boy in the photographs.
- **Adolf Jakob Leoke**, born in Viljandi on 22 July 1901 (Old Style) and baptized at home on 27 July; he died the next day.



**The Leoke family, about 1903.** Front row, from left: **Elmar Oswald** (about 7, Pilvi's father), Hans, Mari and Peeter. Back row: Hans the younger and Jaan. The only photograph we have found of all four surviving sons as boys. *Viljandi Museum, VMF 75 F 716.*




**"Ilukirjutus.** J. Leoke 1897": almost certainly Jaan's penmanship copybook from when he was ten, made by K. A. Hermann of Jurjew (Tartu). *Viljandi Museum.*




**Jaan Leoke, publisher and bookseller, about 1910; on the back, in pencil, "Jaan Leoke 1886–1959".** *Photo J. Riet, Viljandi Museum VM 9248 F 75:2518.*



**Jaan Leoke selling books in Viljandi around 1950, during the Soviet period.** *Viljandi Museum, VMF 75 F 725.*

## Peter Leoke, the family's anchor in America



**Peeter at 18, in his school uniform, in the 1910 family photograph.**

Peter, Hans and Mari's third son, was born on 21 May 1892 (9 May Old Style), the date he also gave in America.[10] He went to the Nicholas I gymnasium in Tallinn. He studied architecture at the Riga and Moscow polytechnics between 1913 and 1916. During his student years he joined the fraternity Vironia.

In 1918–19 he helped set up Estonian consulates in Helsinki and Riga. He served in the artillery during the War of Independence, ending his service in 1921 as commander of a heavy battery. He then joined the Foreign Ministry and in 1922 helped envoy Tõnis Vares establish Estonia's legation in Moscow. In Moscow, on 2 June 1921, he married Elizabeth, born there on 23 June 1893. Her passport papers of 1924–25 call her Elisabeth Leoke-Porfireff and describe her as an actress and drama student; Porfireff was probably her maiden name.[11] From November 1921 Peter was registered in Tallinn, in the Foreign Ministry's service. Peter also worked in publishing and theater: he founded the publishing house *Areng*, which published the magazine *Romaan*, and in 1920 co-founded Estonia's first private theater studio.

He left Tallinn for Sweden at the end of September 1924,[12] and by 1925 he and Elizabeth were in New York; one account says he came by way of Canada. He edited the Estonian weekly *Ameerika Eestlane* and was active in Estonian community organizations, earning his living as a home decorator. Around 1941 he moved to Los Angeles and

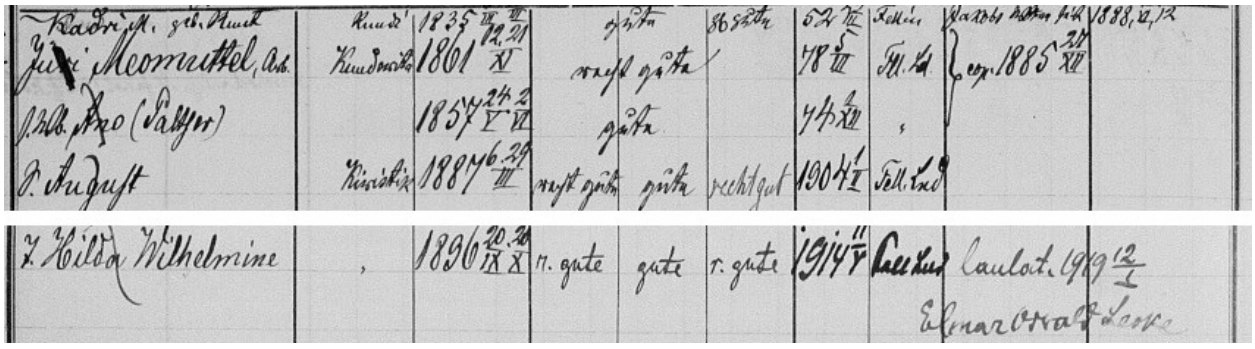
worked in the wartime aircraft industry. Although he had lived in the United States for years, his papers record his admission as a permanent resident on 26 March 1943 at Blaine, Washington, arriving by car from Vancouver. He declared his intention to become a citizen on 24 May 1943, giving his occupation as carpenter.

By May 1943 he was living at 138 Witmer Street, Los Angeles. His home would later become a base for his brother's family and for Pilvi and Elmar Koik.

## Elmar Oswald, Hilda and their daughters

## Hilda's family, the Meomüttels

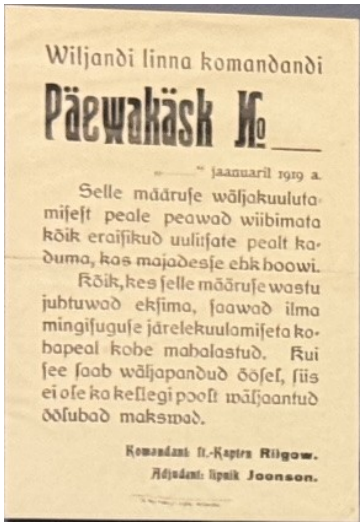
Hilda was the daughter of Jüri Meomüttel and Ann née Paltser. Jüri was born in 1861 at Kudewitte, a village on Viljandi manor, the son of Jakob Meomüttel and Kaddri née Ruud. Ann was born on 24 May 1857 at Wirro Lauri farm on the same manor, the daughter of Hans Paltser and Mari née Naar. Jüri and Ann, both then living at Kivistik on Viljandi manor, married at Viljandi on 27 December 1885 O.S.[13] Hilda was born at Kivistik on 20 September 1896 O.S. and baptized on 20 October; one of her godparents was a Hugo Paltser, perhaps a relative of her mother.[14] Jüri died in 1927 and Ann in 1940. The household book records Hilda's siblings August, Anna Marie and Jüri; their entries are retained in Appendix C.



**Jüri Meomüttel, his wife Ann née Paltser and son August (top), and Hilda Wilhelmine with the note of her marriage to Elmar Oswald Leoke (bottom).** *EAA.1290.1.557, pp. 591–592.*

## Viljandi, Tartu and Tallinn

Elmar Oswald Leoke was confirmed in 1913. According to the *Album Academicum* of the University of Tartu, he took part in the War of Independence.[15] He later described himself as a *Diplom-Kaufmann* (business graduate) and, in America, as an economist. On 12 January 1919 he married Hilda Wilhelmine Meomüttel in Viljandi.[16]



Wiljandi linna komandandi

**Päewakäsk №___**

_____" jaanuaril 1919 a.

Selle määruse wäljakuulutamiseſt peale peawad wiibimata kõik eraiſikud uuliſate pealt kaduma, kas majadesſe ehk hoowi.

Kõik, kes ſelle määruſe wastu jubtuwad ekſima, ſaawad ilma mingiſuguſe järelekuulamiſeta kohapeal kohe mahalastud. Kui ſee ſaab wäljapandud öösel, ſiis ei oſe ka kellegi pooſt wäljaantud öölubad makswad.

Komandant lt.-Kapten Riigow.
Adjudant: lipnik Joonson.

**A curfew order printed in January 1919 with the date left blank, to be posted if the town was attacked: anyone found in the streets "will be shot on the spot".** *Viljandi Museum.*



Wiljandi linna Komandandi

**käsukiri № 3.**

**lubata sõit keelatud.**

Lubad antakse wälja ainult bädaliſe tarwiduſe korral.

**mille enam kui ühe kuu jaoks.**

Cohaba loowijad

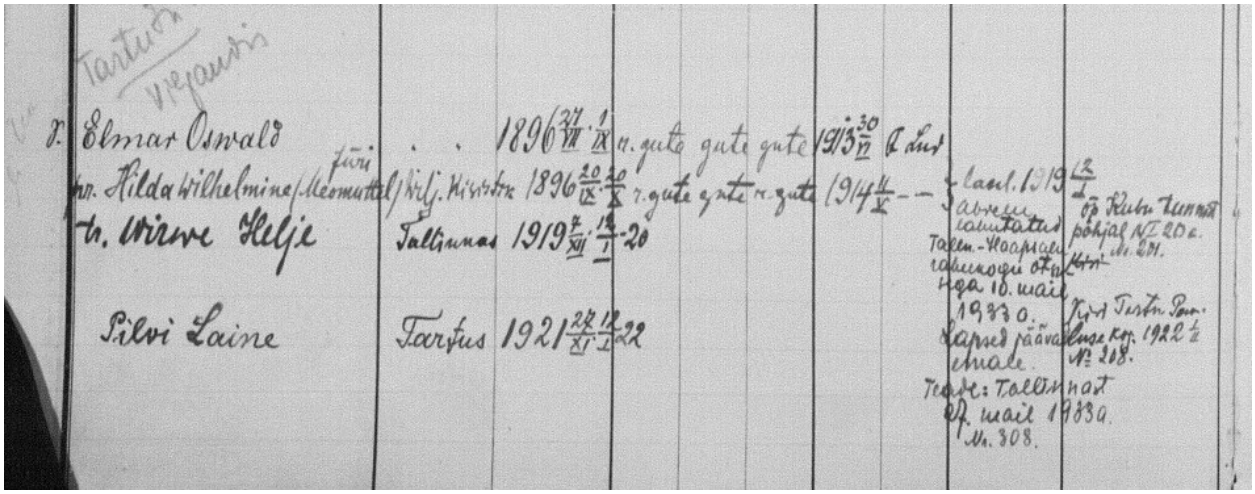
**peawad kaks päewapilti sisse andma,**

Wiljandi linna Komandant: Warres.
Abijubant: Korwits.

**Order No. 3, December 1918: no travel without a permit, granted only in urgent need.** *Viljandi Museum.*

They married in a town under martial law. The Red Army had taken Tartu at Christmas, and a week before the wedding the front ran through Karksi manor, 35 km to the south, where the Koiks later lived.

The Viljandi household book records Elmar Oswald, Hilda and their daughters on the page for Hans Leoke's family:



**Elmar Oswald, Hilda "(Meomüttel), daughter of Jüri", Virve Helje and Pilvi Laine in the Viljandi household book.** The pencil note at top left reads "Tartu tn. 11, Viljandis"; the marriage, divorce and baptism notes are on the right. *EELK Viljandi Pauluse congregation, household book for Vana-Võidu, pp. 229–230.*

Their elder daughter, **Virve (Wirwe) Helje**, was born in Tallinn on 7 December 1919 and baptized at home on 12 January 1920; the baptism is entered in the register of Tallinn's St John's congregation.[17] She trained as a bookkeeper.

**Pilvi Laine** was born in Tartu on 27 November 1921 and baptized on 12 January 1922 in Tartu's St Paul's church; her godparents included her uncle Peter.[18] Although family memory placed her birth in Viljandi, both the household book and her German records give Tartu. She grew up in Viljandi and recalled attending school in the building at Hariduse 2. Her age at attendance, the years she attended and the school's name at that time remain unknown. German records list her occupation as typist.



**The school building at Hariduse 2, now Viljandi Gümnaasium, in October 2026.** Pilvi recalled attending school here; the years are not yet known.

An undated household-book annotation gives the family's address as Tartu 11, the shop and home, and Pilvi went to school in Viljandi. A Tallinn address register records Elmar Oswald, as a university student, lodging for a week in January–February 1925 at Viru 22 in Tallinn, the flat where his brother Hans was then registered and where Peter had lived until 1924; he came from Viljandi and left for Tartu.[12] Otherwise, when the family moved between Tallinn, Tartu and Viljandi is not known. Elmar Oswald ran the lending library with his brother Jaan.

The *Album Academicum* also outlines Elmar Oswald's working life between the wars. He taught at secondary schools in Tartu and Tallinn and was an official of the Bank of Estonia in Tallinn and Viljandi. From 1935 he was an accountant at Eesti Kunstsarve Tehased, an artificial-horn works in Tallinn. Later he became deputy director and chief accountant of the paper mill at Räpina, in

southeastern Estonia, and also taught at the Räpina horticultural school. Apart from 1935, the entry gives no dates for these posts.

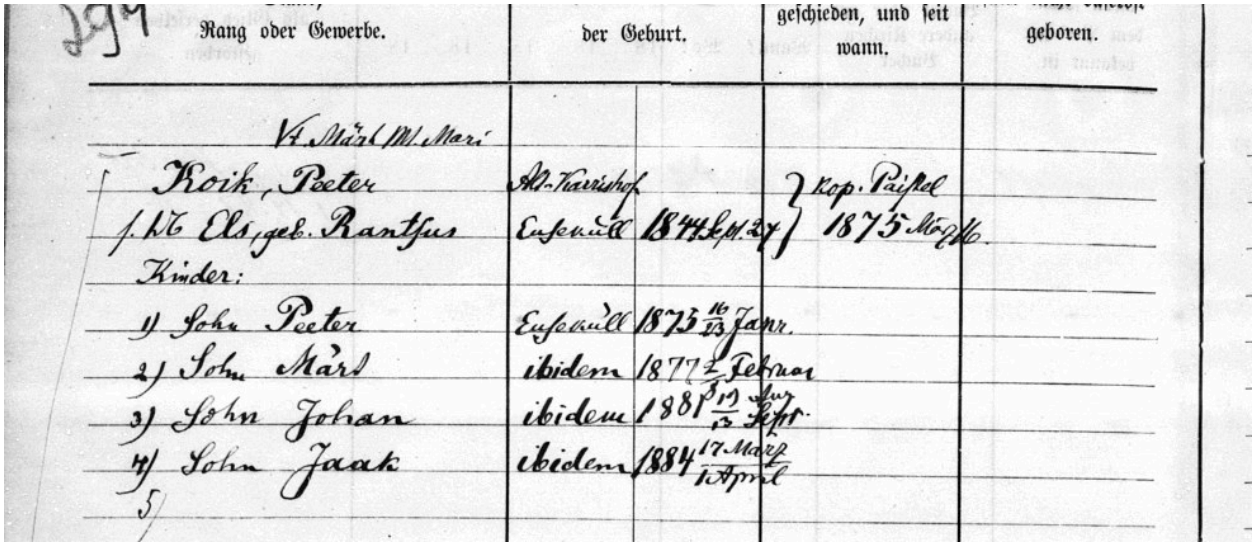
The Tallinn–Haapsalu district court dissolved Elmar Oswald and Hilda's marriage on 10 May 1933. The household-book annotation states that the children were to remain with their mother.[19] On 17 February 1939 Virve and Pilvi, then 19 and 17, were issued identity cards in Tallinn.[20] Neither parent was found in the Tallinn identity-card indexes for 1935–1939, so where Hilda lived in those years, and when Elmar Oswald moved from Tallinn to Räpina, remain unknown. In 1944, however, the parents and both daughters were registered together in Germany; in 1948, Elmar Oswald and Hilda emigrated as husband and wife. Whether they remarried or reunited without remarrying is unknown. Their last address before leaving Estonia in 1944 was in Tallinn, at Baltischportstraße (today Paldiski maantee) 42.

Part two

# The Koiks of Karksi

## Juhan's parents and the earlier Koiks

Juhan's parents came from Vana-Kariste and Õisu, married in Paistu and later moved to Halliste:




Paistu household book: Peeter Koik, born at Alt-Karrishof (Vana-Kariste), parents Märt and Mari; his wife Els, entered as née "Ranthus" and born at Euseküll (Õisu) on 27 September 1844 (the baptism register gives Rantsus and 24 September); married in Paistu in 1875; and their sons, including "Sohn Johan", born 19 August 1881 (Old Style). *EAA, Paistu congregation.*

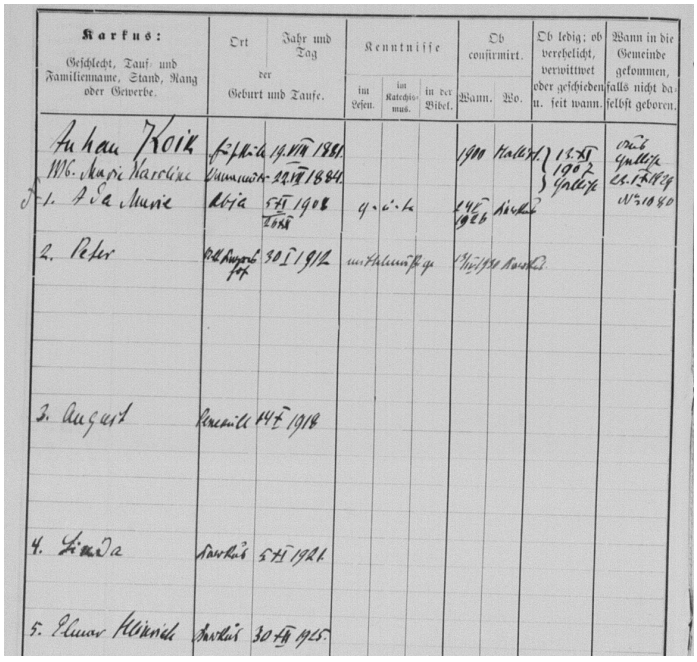
- **Peeter Koik** was born at Sönni farm on the Vana-Kariste estate in Halliste parish on 7 February 1849 O.S., the son of **Märt Koik and Mari née Riig**.[21]
- **Els** was born at Õisu (Euseküll) on 24 September 1844 O.S., the daughter of Henn and Ann **Rantsus**. The household book's *Ranthus* is a variant spelling of the same name.
- They married at Paistu on 16 March 1875 O.S. Their sons were all born at Õisu: Peeter, born on 16 January 1875 and baptized as Peter Rantsus, under his mother's surname, two months before the wedding; Hans (2 February 1877), whose later life is unknown; Märt (probably 12 April 1878, from the household book); **Johan, born 19 August 1881 (Old Style) and baptized 13 September**; and Jaak (17 March 1884).
- A parish certificate dated 1 September 1887 records the family's move to **Halliste**, which explains why Juhan was confirmed and married there.

- Peeter died on the Vana-Kariste estate on 6 January 1896 O.S., aged 46, of consumption, when Juhan was fourteen. He was then a lodger on Ilbaku farm.
- The same books list **Hans Koik** (22 January 1846 – 22 June 1903), Peeter's elder brother: Juhan's uncle.

Peeter's parents, Märt Koik and Marri Riig, had married at Halliste on 22 March 1845; Marri came from Lobbine farm on the same estate. Märt was the youngest son of Hans Koik and Kert, Endrik's daughter, of Kama Peter farm. In 1811, before peasants on the estate had surnames, Hans was a farmhand there, aged 32. The family name first appears in a list of peasants released from serfdom, handed in on 18 January 1825, which names "Hans Koik", 44, and his wife "Kert Koik". The list does not say why the name was chosen. Koik is an old Estonian personal name, and the surname probably comes from it; Koiksaare, a neighboring farm once suggested as its source, was home to other families. Märt and Marri moved to Õisu in 1871. Märt died there in 1874, and Marri in 1885.[22] Appendix C gives the earlier generations of Peeter's and Els's families.

## The household of Juhan Koik

The Karksi household register (*personaalraamat*) for 1904–1932 lists the whole family together under "Karkus", the Karksi manor district:




**Karksi household register, page 524.** *EAA.1276.1.341.*

- **Juhan Koik**, born 19 August 1881 (Old Style). Confirmed in 1900, apparently in Halliste; married in Halliste church on 18 November 1907 (Old Style), when he was a lodger at Paloja farm in Abja.[23]
- **Marie Karoline**, his wife, born 22 July 1884 (Old Style) at Friedrichsheim in Halliste parish, the daughter of **Peter Purtsak** and Anno; a margin note in the register also names her father. In 1907 she was a maid on the Kaubi (Neu-Bornhusen) estate.
- **Ida Marie**, born 5 November 1908 at Palua farm in Abja. Confirmed in Karksi in 1926; moved to Halliste on 10 December 1929 and married Johan Põder of Vana-Kariste there on 22 December.
- **Peter**, born 30 January 1912.
- **August**, born 14 October 1918.
- **Linda**, born 5 June 1921 (month uncertain) in Karksi.
- **Elmar Heinrich**, born 30 December 1925 in Karksi.

A note records the family's membership being transferred from Halliste congregation.

A sixth child, **Martin**, born on 7 May 1910 at Lesmendi farm on the Vana-Kariste estate, is not on this page. He drowned on 21 July 1919, aged nine, and was buried at Halliste; his death entry gives the place as Karksi manor, though that reading is uncertain.[24]

In November 1920, Juhan was recorded as a married father of three, registered in Vana-Kariste and engaged in agricultural work. His military papers record earlier service as a private from 1915 to 1918. On 13 November 1920, the Pärnu County military commission accepted him for service and released him into the reserve under demobilization provisions.[25]

A Karksi residents' list for 1924–1927 records the household living at the manor ("Mõisa"), previously registered at Vana-Kariste. Entered beside them is Els, Peeter's widow, born in 1844: Juhan's mother, who died at the manor on 9 March 1926, aged 81, and was buried in the new cemetery at Karksi. Juhan and Marie were both still living in December 1929, when Ida married; no later record of them has yet been found.[26]

## Life on the Karksi manor estate

Karksi manor's center lay about two kilometers northeast of Karksi castle, a fortress of the Livonian Order whose ruins date from the 14th–16th centuries. The parish church stands on part of the castle site, in what is now Karksi-Nuia; the manor buildings are in Karksi village.

Before 1917 the parish lay in the Pärnu district of Livonia, a province of the Russian Empire, so the old records say “Karkus, Kreis Pernau”. After the Great Northern War the Russian crown granted General Georg Reinhold von Lieven the use of the manor, and through the 18th and 19th centuries it belonged to Baltic German noble families, the von Lievens and later the von Duntens. The Lievens’ eighteenth-century Baroque chapel still stands near the ruins.

The wooden manor house is gone, but the granary (1840), the steward’s house (now the village library and museum), the chief forester’s house and the forge survive, and Karksi Brewery operates on the former estate.

## How a manor worked

When Juhan and Marie married in 1907, most of the land in what is now Estonia still belonged to a few hundred Baltic German noble families. Serfdom ended in Livonia in 1819, but emancipation did not give peasants ownership of the land. For decades, many owed labor on the manor’s fields as rent for their holdings. During the 1850s and 1860s, cash rents increasingly replaced labor obligations, and peasants could buy their farms. By 1900 many Mulgimaa farmers owned theirs. The manor’s own home farm and forests stayed with the baron.

Rural workers included hired hands on farms, cottagers, and manor workers: farmhands paid partly in grain, potatoes, milk and a room in a workers’ house, and craftsmen such as gardeners, smiths, foresters, coachmen and brewers. Juhan is entered as a laborer (*tööline*) living on “Karkus”, the manor district.

## War and land reform

The War of Independence reached Karksi in January 1919. Estonian forces drove the Red Army from the manor and Nuia on 4–5 January. The date when the Koiks settled on the estate has not been established. Martin’s death entry may place the family at the manor by July 1919, but the reading is uncertain, and in November 1920 Juhan was still registered at Vana-Kariste. A fuller account and the battle map appear in Appendix B.

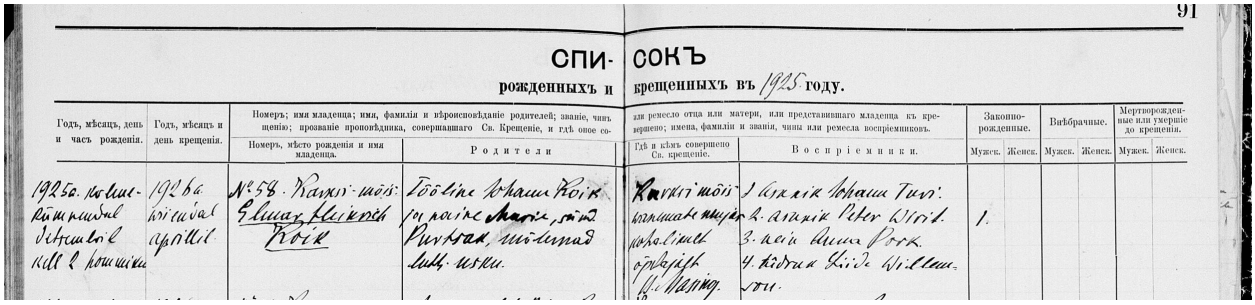


**Karksi manor house about 1914: the long, low house with its pillared porch.** The building no longer survives. *Information board, Karksi.*

In October 1919, during the War of Independence, Estonia's Land Reform Act took over almost every noble estate, around a thousand manors and more than half the country's farmland. Compensation was addressed by later legislation in 1926. The land was cut into thousands of new smallholdings for landless people, with priority for war veterans, and the manor centers became schools, offices or state farms, or were left to decay. So when Elmar was born there in 1925, "Karksi manor" meant a former estate owned by the state, with the old manor center, workers' houses and new smallholdings around it. Whether Juhan applied for or received a farm is not known. At Karksi, a board in the village records that the manor's land was divided in 1920 into 54 settler holdings.

## Elmar Koik's birth and baptism

Elmar Heinrich Koik was born on 30 December 1925 and baptized on 5 April 1926 by Pastor Benedikt Masing, apparently at the family's home on the manor. His parents are entered as Johann Koik and Marie née Purtsak. The entry, No. 58 in the Karksi Lutheran register of births for 1925, is handwritten in Estonian on a printed Russian form; a fuller transcription, including the godparents and uncertain surname readings, appears in Appendix C.



91

СПИ- СОКЪ

рожденныхъ и крещенныхъ въ 1925 году.

| Годъ, мѣсяцъ, день и часъ рожденія. | Годъ, мѣсяцъ и день крещенія. | Номеръ; имя младенца; имя, фамилія и вѣроисповѣданіе родителей; званіе, чинъ щенію; прозваніе пропов'ѣдника, совершавшаго Св. Крещеніе, и гдѣ оное со- | | или ремесло отца или матери, или представляющаго младенца къ крещенію; имена, фамилія и званія, чины или ремесла восприемниковъ. | | Законно-рожденные. | | Внѣбрачные. | | Мертворожденные или умершіе до крещенія. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Номеръ, мѣсто рожденія и имя младенца. | Родители | Гдѣ и кѣмъ совершено Св. крещеніе. | Восприемники. | Мужск. | Женск. | Мужск. | Женск. | Мужск. | Женск. |
| 1925. 10 Dec. | 1926 | №58. Karksi-mõis. | Tõõline Johann Koik | Karksi mõis | 1. Arukirik Johann Turi. | | | | | | |
| | April. | Elmar Johannes | ja naine Maria, sünd | | 2. Arukirik Peter Wirk. | 1. | | | | | |
| | | Koik | Purkas, mõlemad | | 3. naine Anna Koik. | | | | | | |
| | | | luth. usku. | | 4. kiidrun Liide Wilhelm | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Soni. | | | | | | |

**Karksi congregation, birth register for 1925, page 91.** Elmar's entry, first on the page, records his birth in December 1925 and baptism in April 1926. *Estonian National Archives, EAA.1276.1.335.*

The register describes Juhan as a laborer but does not name his employer. Two godparents were gardeners; this does not establish that Juhan also worked in the manor gardens.

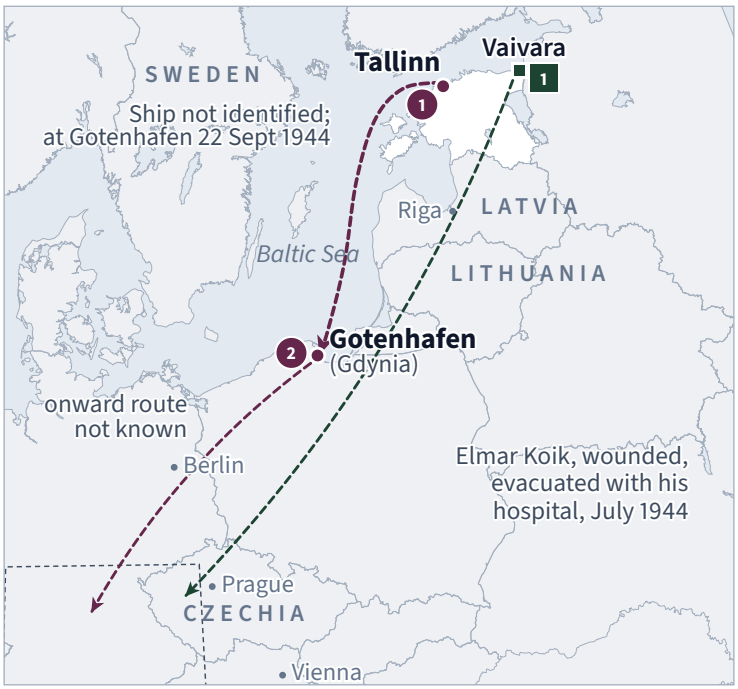
## Elmar's school and working years

Elmar attended elementary school in Karksi-Nuia for six years, from 1934 to 1940. In 1938 he joined the Estonian Scouts, the civilian Boy Scout movement. Scouting was banned after the Soviet occupation of 1940. His later questionnaire records work as a locksmith in Tallinn in 1942–1943; Karksi parish issued his identity card in July 1942.[27]

Map 2 · Escape and refuge

# Leaving Estonia, 1944–1949

How the two families reached Germany, and where they lived until they emigrated



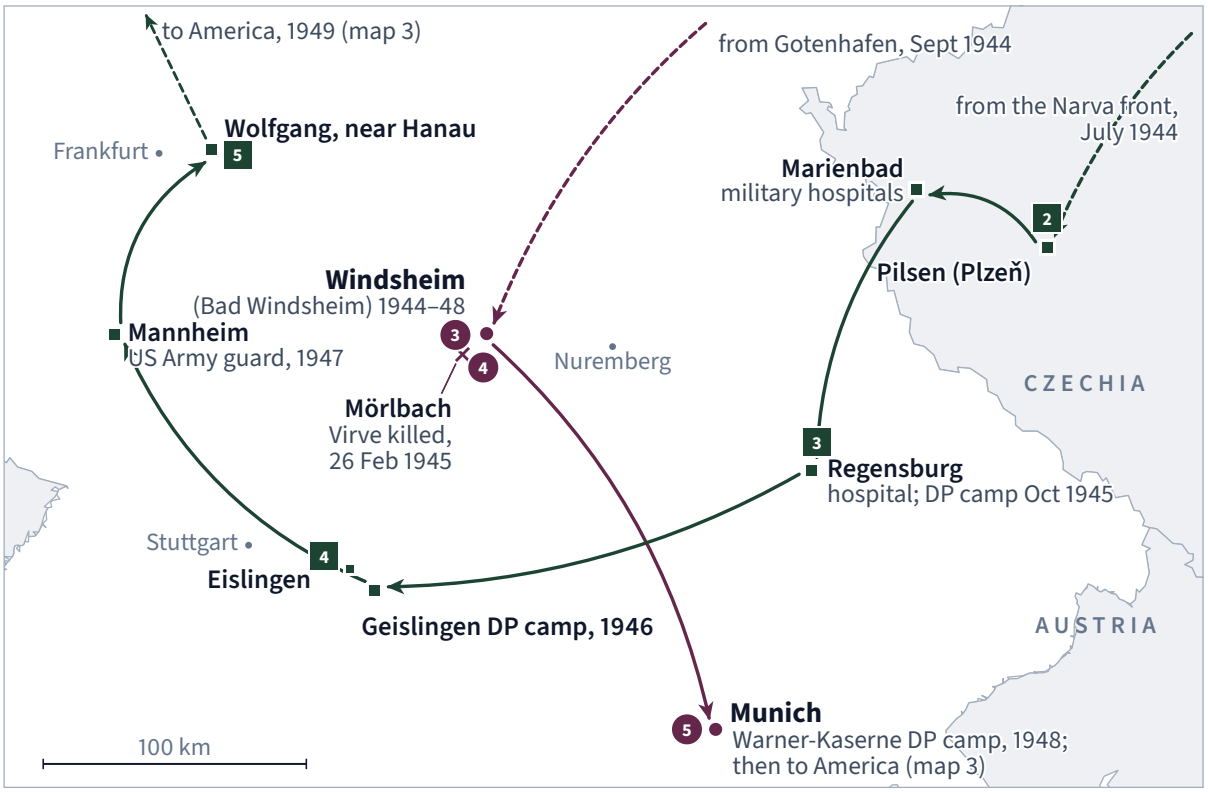

## Leoke

1. **Tallinn**: by sea, September 1944; ship not identified
2. **Gotenhafen**: entry recorded 22 Sept 1944
3. **Windsheim**: from 26 Sept 1944 to 1948
4. **Mörlbach**: Virve killed, 26 Feb 1945
5. **Munich**: DP camp, 1948; then to America

## Koik

1. **Vaivara**: wounded, 1 July 1944
2. **Pilsen, Marienbad**: hospitals, 1944–45
3. **Regensburg**: hospital; DP camp, Oct 1945
4. **Geislingen, Eislingen**: DP camp, 1946; DP status refused
5. **Mannheim, Wolfgang**: US Army guard, 1947–49; emigrates 1949

**Southern Germany and Bohemia, 1944–1949**




Leoke · Koik · documented · approximate or uncertain

Solid lines join recorded places; dashed lines: route or connection approximate.
Sources: Arolsen Archives (Windsheim cards, Mörlbach death certificate, DP and UNRRA files); Historisches Marinearchiv. Modern borders shown. Coastlines © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Part three

# Leaving Estonia, 1944

Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union in June 1940, by Nazi Germany in 1941, and again by Soviet forces as the German armies withdrew in 1944.[28] Elmar Koik left with his hospital after being wounded in July. The Leokes departed during the September evacuation of Tallinn.

Koik family

## Elmar Koik: mobilization and evacuation

By his own account, Elmar was mobilized at 18 on 2 February 1944 by the Estonian Self-Administration under German occupation. His military paybook was issued at Klooga on 16 March, and he described his unit as an Estonian military drivers' school.

On 1 July he was badly wounded at Vaivara, on the Narva front. His later questionnaire records that he arrived in Germany with his hospital on 10 July. His departure from Estonia was an evacuation for medical treatment, months before the Leokes' September journey.[27]

Leoke family

## Escape from Estonia, September 1944

In mid-September 1944 the German front in Estonia collapsed, and between 17 and 22 September the German navy evacuated some 50,000 soldiers and more than 27,000 civilians from Tallinn. The main departures were on 20 and 21 September, as Soviet forces closed on the city; Red Army tanks entered Tallinn on the 22nd.

Elmar Oswald's German registration card records the family of four entering Germany through Gotenhafen (now Gdynia, Poland) on 22 September 1944. The Historisches Marinearchiv database lists three ships arriving there from Tallinn that day: *Wartheland*, *Minden* and *Hansa* (formerly *Glengarry*). Any of these may have carried the Leokes, but their ship has not been identified.[29]



**Leoke · General Commissioner Litzmann and his staff going to the ship in Tallinn harbor, September 1944, probably the Wartheland on 20 September.** The photograph illustrates the evacuation; it does not establish that the Leokes traveled on this ship. Refugees crowd the rails above. St Olaf's spire is on the left, so this is the main harbor north of the Old Town. From the photo archive of the Stockholm exile newspaper *Eesti Päevaleht*. *Estonian National Museum, ERM Fk 3051:5377.*

In Soviet-occupied Estonia, the family's departure was recorded a year later. On 12 October 1945 the Tallinn First State Notary Office declared Elmar Oswald, Hilda, Virve and Pilvi missing since 22 September 1944, the day Soviet forces entered Tallinn, and gave their last address as Paldiski maantee 42. The certificates were issued to "Mari Jaani t. Leoke" (Mari Leoke, daughter of Jaan), Elmar Oswald's mother, who had stayed in Estonia. The declaration was a legal classification of their absence; it does not show what Mari knew of their fate. By then Virve had been dead for more than seven months.[30]

## Germany, 1944–1948

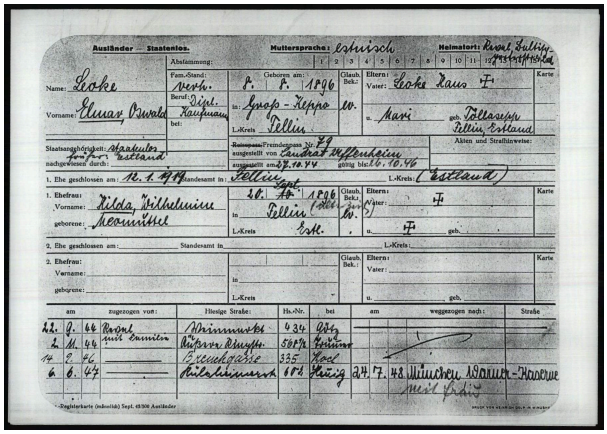
**Leoke family**

### Refuge in Windsheim

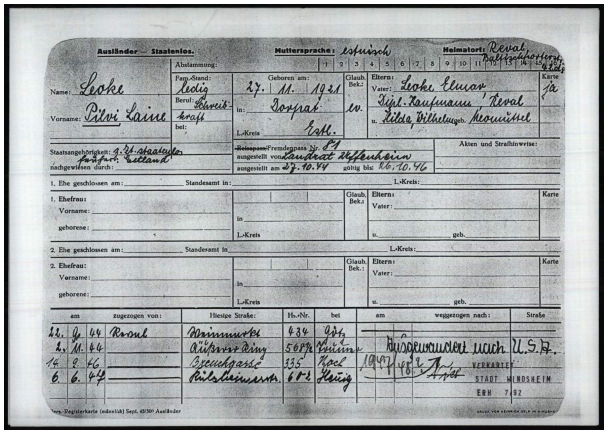
From Gotenhafen the family went on to the small Franconian town of Windsheim (today Bad Windsheim) in Bavaria. Their residence notification was filed on 26 September 1944. Stateless-alien passports followed on 27 October.[31] They lodged in rooms rented from local families rather than in a camp. The registration card gives 22

September both for entry through Gotenhafen and for the first Windsheim lodging. The repeated date does not establish that they reached Windsheim on the day they arrived at Gotenhafen.

| Date recorded | Address in Windsheim |
|---|---|
| 22 Sep 1944 | Weinmarkt 434, with the Götz family |
| 2 Nov 1944 | Äußere Ringstraße 568½ |
| 14 Feb 1946 | Brenkgasse 335, with the Koch family |
| 6 Jun 1947 | House no. 602 (street name uncertain), with the Hönig family |
| Not dated | Oberntiefer(?) Straße 562, on the family's Estonian exile register cards[32] |




**Leoke · Elmar Oswald Leoke's Windsheim registration card: born 8 August 1896 at Groß-Keppo (Suure-Kõpu), parents Hans and Mari née Tõllasepp, married Hilda Wilhelmine on 12 January 1919 in Viljandi.** *Arolsen Archives.*



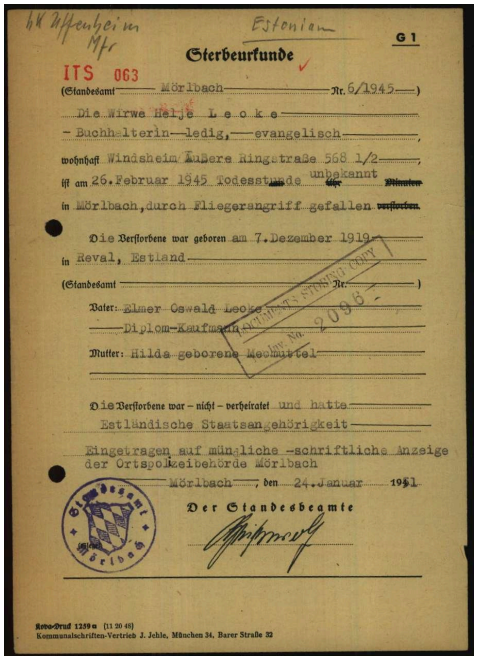

**Leoke · Pilvi Laine Leoke's card: born 27 November 1921 in Dorpat (Tartu), single, typist.** The note on the right reads "emigrated to U.S.A." *Arolsen Archives.*

Pilvi worked in Windsheim as a typist and was registered with the local labor office in February 1945. Hilda was employed by the district administration (*Landrat* Uffenheim) from October 1945 to April 1947. According to the *Album Academicum*, Elmar Oswald was manager of a brewery in Windsheim.

**Leoke family**

## Virve

Five months after the family arrived in Germany, Virve was killed in an Allied air attack. She died on 26 February 1945 at Mörlbach, a village about 10 km southwest of Windsheim (now part of Gallmersgarten), aged 25. She was living with her parents at Äußere Ringstraße 568½.[33]



Sterbeurkunde

G 1

ITS 063

(Standesamt Mörlbach Nr. 6/1945)

Die Witwe Helje Leoke

- Buchhalterin - ledig, - evangelisch,

wohnhaft Windsheim Äußere Ringstraße 568 1/2,

ist am 26. Februar 1945 Todesstunde unbekannt

in Mörlbach, durch Fliegerangriff gefallen verstorben.

Die Verstorbene war geboren am 7. Dezember 1919

in Reval, Estland

(Standesamt Nr.)

Vater: Elmer Oswald Leoke

Diplom-Kaufmann

Mutter: Hilda geborene Meelmittel

Die Verstorbene war – nicht – verheiratet und hatte

Estländische Staatsangehörigkeit

Eingetragen auf mündliche – schriftliche Anzeige der Ortspolizeibehörde Mörlbach

Mörlbach, den 24. Januar 1951

Der Standesbeamte

Kommunalschriften-Vertrieb J. Jehle, München 34, Barer Straße 32

**Leoke · Virve's death certificate, Mörlbach registry no. 6/1945, issued 24 January 1951.** *Arolsen Archives.*

She was buried in Windsheim cemetery, in the old section, grave no. 110a, according to a list compiled in January 1951. Whether her grave survives, and in what condition, is not yet known.

Family memory holds that Virve was killed in an attack on a train.[34] Local accounts collected in *Königshofen 1945*, a history of a Franconian village whose pastor died in the attack, describe such an event. On 26 February 1945 low-flying aircraft fired on a crowded passenger train near Mörlbach for almost half an hour, while passengers took cover under the carriages and beside the track. Pastor Hermann Bauernfeind of Königshofen, on his way to visit his daughter in Würzburg, was killed. The book's editor cites an account by the local pastor, Dannhaimer: the train was carrying soldiers, Soviet prisoners of war and civilians, and after the attack a carriage, two field barns and a house annex were burning, with the dead and wounded lying around the train.[35]

None of these accounts names Virve or gives a named passenger's eyewitness account, and the surviving versions of two of them were transcribed in 1954. They give the same date and place as Virve's death certificate, and with the family's recollection of a train attack, they make the Mörlbach attack the probable circumstance of her death. Her presence on the train rests on family memory rather than on a document. The US Army Air Forces chronology records XIX Tactical Air Command armed reconnaissance in the Aschaffenburg–Würzburg area that day; it provides regional context, not identification of the aircraft that attacked the train.[36]

**Koik family**

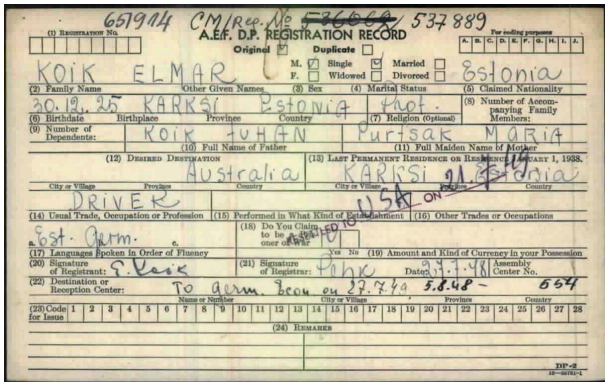
# Elmar Koik: hospitals and refugee status

Elmar spent more than a year in military hospitals at Pilsen, Marienbad and Regensburg. American forces reached Marienbad in May 1945. In October, after recovering, he walked to the displaced-persons (DP) camp at Regensburg.

By 1946 he was at Geislingen DP camp, administered by Team 190 of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). In September a US Army screening board refused him DP status and he was evicted. He moved into a private room in nearby Eislingen.

**The 1946 decision on DP status.** Elmar described his unit as an Estonian military drivers' school. The US screening board recorded him as a grenadier in an Estonian division and gave "SS" as the reason for refusing DP status. The division number is unclear in the record. The board also noted that he had been "mobilized against will", had remained in hospital during his stay in Germany, and was "not believed to be a security suspect". A later compilation of Estonians in Finnish and German service lists him as a soldier in the field battalion of the 3rd Estonian Volunteer Brigade; how that listing relates to his own account and to the board's has not been established.[37]

In 1947–1948 he worked as a civilian guard for the US Army, first at Mannheim and then with the 501st Engineers at Wolfgang near Hanau. His case was referred to the Military Appeal Board on 28 June 1947. A separate DP registration record is dated 27 July 1948, but no final appeal decision has been found.[27]



A.E.F. D.P. REGISTRATION RECORD

(2) Family Name: KOIK — Other Given Names: ELMAR — (3) Sex: M ☑ F ☐ — (4) Marital Status: Single ☐ Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced ☐ — (5) Claimed Nationality: Estonia

(6) Birthdate: 30.12.25 — Birthplace: KARKSI — Province: Estonia — Country: [illegible] — (7) Religion (Optional): Prot. — (8) Number of Accompanying Family Members:

(9) Number of Dependents: KOIK — (10) Full Name of Father: JUHAN — (11) Full Maiden Name of Mother: Purtsak MARIA

(12) Desired Destination: Australia — (13) Last Permanent Residence or Residence: January 1, 1938: KARKSI — City or Village: [illegible] — Province: [illegible] — Country: Estonia

(14) Usual Trade, Occupation or Profession: DRIVER — (15) Performed in What Kind of Establishment: Est. Germ. — (16) Other Trades or Occupations

(17) Languages Spoken in Order of Fluency: a. Est. b. Germ. c. — (18) Do You Claim to be a Displaced Person of War? Yes ☑ No ☐ — (19) Amount and Kind of Currency in your Possession

(20) Signature of Registrant: E. Koik — (21) Signature of Registrar: [illegible] — Date: 27.7.48 — Assembly Center No.: 554

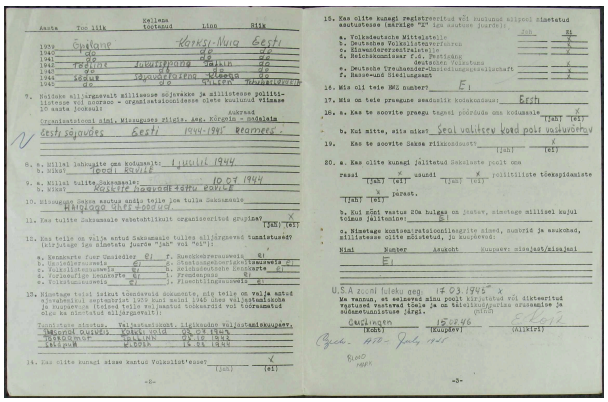
(22) Destination or Reception Center: To Germ. Bcau on 22.7.48 5.8.48 — Name or Number — City or Village — Province — Country

(23) Code for Issue: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

(24) Remarks

DP-2

**Koik** · Elmar Koik's DP registration record, 27 July 1948: a driver, speaking Estonian and German, last resident in Karksi.

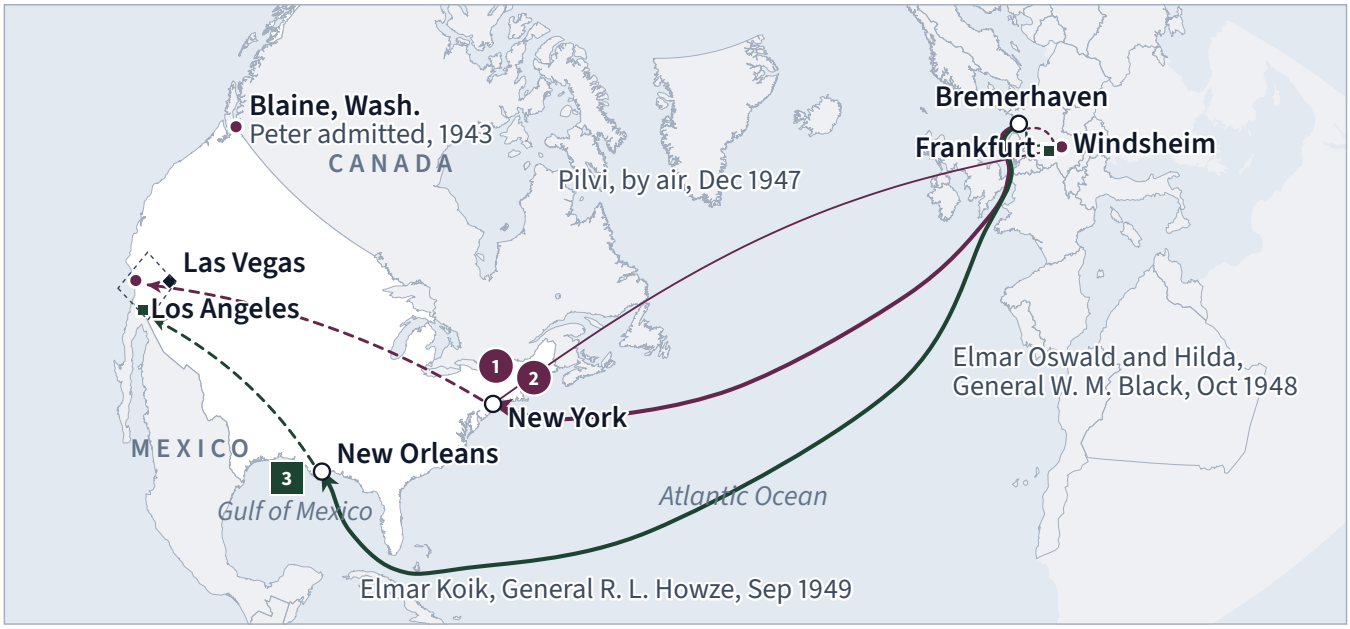


**Koik** · Elmar's 1946 questionnaire, recording his wounding at Vaivara and his hospitals. *Arolsen Archives.*

Map 3 · A new life

# To America, 1947–1952

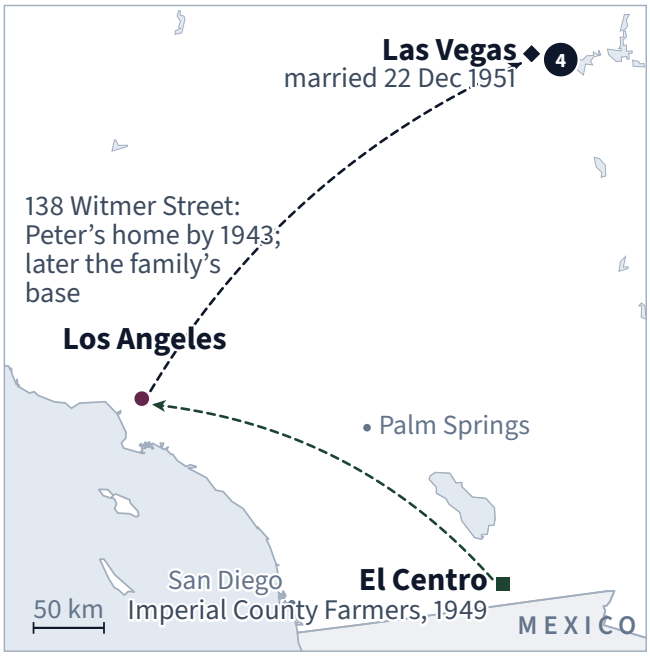
Three separate crossings, and a wedding in Las Vegas




Leoke  Koik  documented  approximate or uncertain

by sea  by air (thin line)  Ocean and air tracks are schematic; overland legs are approximate.

## Southern California and Nevada




### Leoke

**Background, 1924–43**: Peter in New York, then Los Angeles; admitted as a permanent resident at Blaine, 26 March 1943

1 **New York, 2 December 1947**: Pilvi arrives alone by air from Frankfurt

2 **New York, 30 October 1948**: Elmar Oswald and Hilda arrive on the *General W. M. Black*; on to Peter in Los Angeles

**April 1950**: census finds all four at 138 Witmer Street

### Koik

**21 April 1949**: applies to emigrate; visa issued at Frankfurt, 14 July

3 **New Orleans, 5 September 1949**: lands from the *General R. L. Howze*, bound for El Centro

### Together

4 **Las Vegas, 22 December 1951**: Pilvi and Elmar marry

**1952**: both living at 138 Witmer Street

Sources: Pan American manifest, 1947; ship manifests and arrival cards; declarations of intention, 1943 and 1952; 1950 US census; Arolsen Archives. Coastlines © OpenStreetMap contributors.

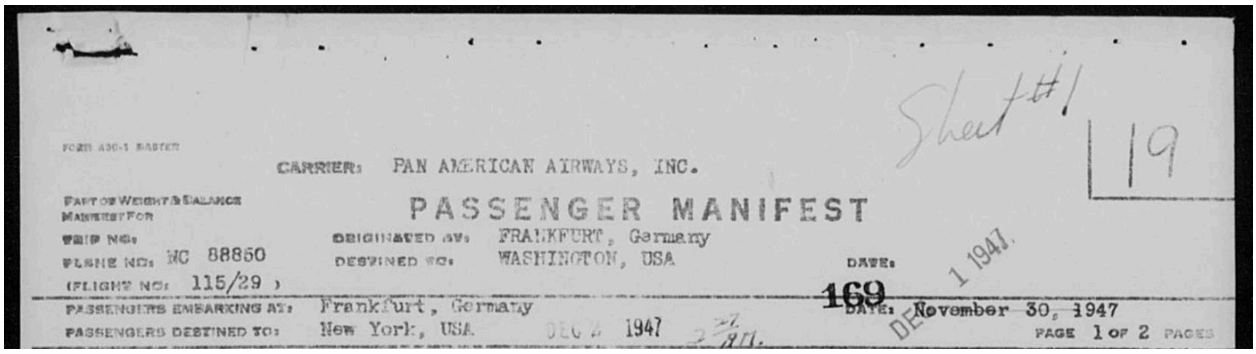
Part four

# To America, 1947–1952

Leoke family

## Pilvi and her parents, 1947–1948

Pilvi traveled alone to the United States, ahead of her parents. Aged 26, she left Frankfurt on Pan American Airways flight 115/29 on 30 November 1947 and arrived in New York on 2 December. The manifest gives her address in the United States as 487 South ...ackley Drive, Wichita, Kansas; the first letter of the street name is obscured. Whether she lived there, and for how long, is not known. A later annotation on the manifest records that she was granted permanent residence under Section 4 of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, the provision for displaced persons who had already entered the United States temporarily.[38]



CARRIER: PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, INC.

PASSENGER MANIFEST

ORIGINATED AT: FRANKFURT, Germany

DESTINED TO: WASHINGTON, USA

FLIGHT NO: 115/29

PASSENGERS EMBARKING AT: Frankfurt, Germany

PASSENGERS DESTINED TO: New York, USA

DATE: November 30, 1947

PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

Sheet #1

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**Leoke · The header of the Pan American Airways passenger manifest for Pilvi's flight, Frankfurt, 30 November 1947.** *US National Archives.*



17 LEOKE, Pilvi 0300-183056 261PA18494 26 F MEP 53491 Germany

487 S. [illegible]ckley Drive, Wichita, Kansas

Visa 2499

HEAD TAX DUE

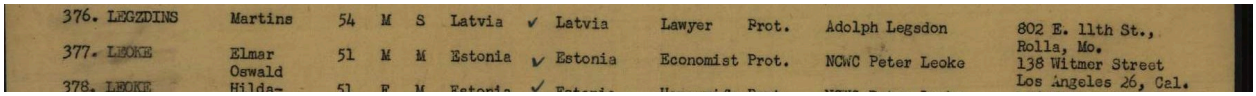
**Leoke · Pilvi's entry, line 17 of the same manifest, with the Wichita address and the later handwritten note "Lawful entry for perm. res. created in C.O. pursuant Sec. 4 D.P. Act", beside her registration number.** *US National Archives.*

Arolsen records give 24 July 1948 for Elmar Oswald and Hilda's move to the Warner-Kaserne DP camp in Munich; an undated exile-register card also associates Elmar Oswald with the camp in April 1948.[32] Their emigration was sponsored by Elmar Oswald's brother Peter Leoke, of 138 Witmer Street, Los Angeles 26, through the National Catholic Welfare Conference. On 21 October 1948 they sailed from Bremerhaven on the US Army transport *General W. M. Black*, the first ship to bring displaced persons to the United States under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. When it docked in New York on 30

October, US Attorney General Tom Clark welcomed the passengers at the pier and a fireboat sprayed a salute. From New York they went on to Peter in Los Angeles.




**Leoke · "Ship to Freedom!" The *General W. M. Black* leaving Bremerhaven in October 1948 on the first DP sailing to America, with its nameboard above the banner.** Elmar Oswald and Hilda were aboard. *US Army Signal Corps photograph 111-SC-310938; US Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of NARA.*



| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 376. LEGZDINS | Martins | 54 | M | S | Latvia | ✓ | Latvia | Lawyer | Prot. | Adolph Legsdon | 802 E. 11th St., Rolla, Mo. |
| 377. LEOKE | Elmar Oswald | 51 | M | M | Estonia | ✓ | Estonia | Economist | Prot. | NCWC Peter Leoke | 138 Witmer Street Los Angeles 26, Cal. |
| 378. LEOKE | Hilda- | 51 | F | M | Estonia | ✓ | | | | | |

**Leoke · Emigration list naming Elmar Oswald Leoke (economist) and Hilda Wilhelmine Leoke (housewife), both listed as 51, sponsored by Peter Leoke of Los Angeles.** A later penciled note gives Hilda's alien registration number; the place and date written with it may belong to the next passenger on the list. *Arolsen Archives.*

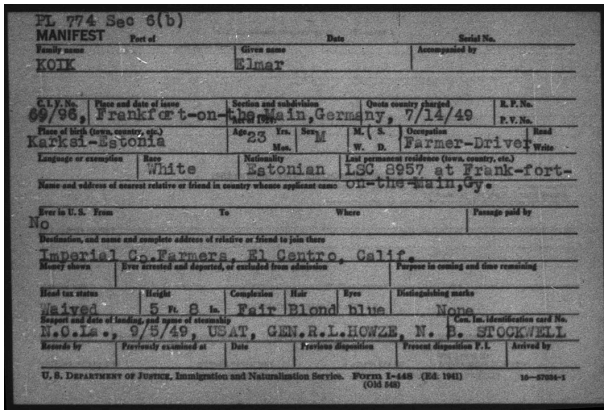
**Koik family**

## Elmar Koik, 1949

Elmar applied to emigrate to the United States on 21 April 1949. His visa was issued at Frankfurt on 14 July, with sponsorship through the National Lutheran Council to work for Imperial County Farmers in El Centro, California. He sailed from Bremerhaven on the Army transport *General R. L. Howze* and landed at New Orleans on 5 September 1949.[27]



**Koik · The transport *General R. L. Howze*, which carried Elmar from Bremerhaven to New Orleans in September 1949.** The *Times-Picayune* listed it in the port's shipping column on 9 September. *US Navy photograph, early 1950s.*



FL 774 Sec 6(b)
MANIFEST

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Family name: KOIK | Given name: Elmar | Accompanied by |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C.I.V. No. 69/96, | Place and date of issue: Frankfurt-on-the-Main,Germany, 7/14/49 | Section and subdivision | Quota country charged | | R.F.No. P.V.No. |
| Place of birth (town, country, etc.): Karksi-Estonia | Age: 23 Yrs. Mos. | Sex: M | M. (S. W. D.) | Occupation: Farmer-Driver | Read / Write |
| Language or examination | Race: White | Nationality: Estonian | Last permanent residence (town, country, etc.): LSC 8957 at Frank-fort-on-the-Main,Gy. | | |

Name and address of nearest relative or friend in country whence applicant came

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ever in U. S. From: No | To | Where | Passage paid by |

Destination, and name and complete address of relative or friend to join there: Imperial Co.Farmers, El Centro, Calif.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Money shown | Ever arrested and deported, or excluded from admission | | | | Purpose in coming and time remaining |
| Head tax status: Waived | Height: 5 Ft. 8 In. | Complexion: Fair | Hair: Blond | Eyes: blue | Distinguishing marks: None |

Vessel and date of landing, and name of steamship: N.O.La., 9/5/49, USAT, GEN.R.L.HOWZE, N. B. STOCKWELL

Cert. No. Identification card No.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Records by | Previously examined at | Date | Previous disposition | Present disposition P.L. | Arrived by |

U. S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form I-448 (Ed. 1941) (Old 548) 16—87284-1

**Koik · Elmar's arrival card, filled in at the dock: born Karksi, farmer-driver, last residence a US Army labor company at Frankfurt, bound for Imperial County Farmers; landed "N.O.La., 9/5/49, USAT Gen. R. L. Howze".** *US National Archives.*

## Together in Los Angeles

Elmar Koik's destination was El Centro in Southern California. Peter Leoke and Pilvi's parents were living in Los Angeles. In April 1950 the census taker found Peter, Elmar Oswald, Hilda and Pilvi together at 138 Witmer Street. Peter, 57, was neither working nor looking for work that week. Elmar Oswald, formerly an official of the Bank of Estonia, was working as a janitor at a savings bank; Hilda kept house; and Pilvi, 28, was working 40 hours a week for a porcelain manufacturer, her occupation entered as "factory group insurance & typist".[39]

Pilvi Leoke and Elmar Koik married in Las Vegas on 22 December 1951.[40] Their declarations of intention to become American citizens, filed in February and March 1952, give the same address: 138 Witmer Street. Pilvi was working as a clerk and Elmar as a template-maker.

**Appendix A**

# Places connected with the families

| Place | Connection | Where |
|---|---|---|
| **Tartu 11, Viljandi** | Leoke bookshop and family home, 1909–1936; also the address recorded for Elmar Oswald, Hilda and their daughters in an undated household-book annotation. | Now the Grand Hotel Viljandi |
| **Tartu 9** | Ado Tõllasepp's house; the shop's home c. 1907–09. Still standing. | Next to the Grand Hotel |
| Tartu 15, Lossi street, Jakobsoni/Koidu corner | Earlier shop sites, 1891–1907. | Viljandi old town |
| **Viljandi Museum** | Hans's archive library, the 1913 bust, family photographs. | Johan Laidoneri plats 10 |
| **Viljandi Old Cemetery** | Grave of Hans, Mari and Jaan Leoke. | Riia mnt; Pauluse IX, 124-8 |
| School building at Hariduse 2 | Pilvi recalled attending school here; attendance years and historical institutional name remain uncertain. Now Viljandi Gümnaasium. | Viljandi |
| Vana-Võidu (Alt-Woidoma) manor estate: Wardja Matzi, Saare Annuse and Kangilaski farms; Arumetsa | Hans's birthplace (Wardja Matzi) and childhood home (Saare Annuse); Mari Tõllasepp's birthplace (Kangilaski); Hans's school, 1876–1890. | Near Viljandi |
| Kudewitte and Kivistik, Viljandi manor | Homes of the Meomüttel family; Hilda's birthplace (Kivistik). | Near Viljandi |
| Suure-Kõpu (Louisenhütte) | Birthplace of Peter and Elmar Oswald Leoke. | Kõpu, west of Viljandi |
| Old Harbour (Vanasadam) | Departure harbor for evacuation ships in September 1944; the Leokes' ship remains unidentified. | Tallinn, north of the Old Town |
| Baltischportstraße 42 | Elmar Oswald's family's last address in Estonia, 1944. | Paldiski mnt, Tallinn |
| Räpina paper mill | Where Elmar Oswald was deputy director and chief accountant, before 1944. | Põlva County, southeastern Estonia |

| Place | Connection | Where |
|---|---|---|
| **Karksi manor and park** | Where Elmar Koik was born and his family lived. The steward's house is now a village museum. | Karksi village, Pargi street |
| Battle of Karksi memorial | The fight for the manor, 4–5 January 1919. | Karksi village |
| St Peter's Church, Karksi | The Karksi parish church. | Karksi-Nuia |
| Õisu (Euseküll) | Birthplace of Els Rantsus (1844) and Juhan Koik (1881); where Märt Koik died in 1874. | Paistu parish |
| Vana-Kariste (Alt-Karrishof) | Home of Hans and Kert Koik at Kama Peter farm and of Märt and Mari Koik; Peeter's birthplace (Sönni farm, 1849). | Halliste parish |
| **Bad Windsheim**, Bavaria | The Leokes' refuge, 1944–48; Virve's burial in the old section, grave no. 110a, according to the 1951 list. | Mittelfranken, Germany |
| Mörlbach | Where Virve was killed, 26 February 1945. | Gallmersgarten, Germany |
| Wichita, Kansas | The US address on Pilvi's 1947 airline manifest (487 S. …ackley Drive); whether she lived there is not known. | Kansas |
| **138 Witmer Street** | Peter Leoke's address by May 1943; in 1950 the home of Peter, Elmar Oswald, Hilda and Pilvi. | Los Angeles |
| Forest Lawn Memorial Park | Grave of Peter Leoke, Elmar Oswald and Hilda, in one lot. | Hollywood Hills, Los Angeles |

**Leoke family**

## The bookshop addresses

| Years | Address | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| 1891–1896 | Corner of today's Jakobsoni and Koidu streets (then Veski and Harjutuse), in the Hentson house | The first shop: 18 m², rent 80 rubles a year. |
| 1896–1900 | Lossi street, Lohrberg house | Hans now ran the shop himself. |
| 1900–1907 | Tartu 15, in the Graf house | Formerly a tavern and beer shop. |
| Same period | Lossi 16 | A small grocery and haberdashery with toys and funeral wreaths, run in Mari's name. |

| Years | Address | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| c. 1907–1909 | Tartu 9 | A modern building owned by Ado Tõllasepp, whose own printing house and bookshop were also there. The lease ended in 1909. |
| 1909–1936 | **Tartu 11** | The shop and family home. Hans lived and worked here until he died in 1919, and his son Jaan carried on the shop. The site is now the Grand Hotel Viljandi. |

**Leoke family**

## The grave at the Old Cemetery

Hans, Mari and their eldest son Jaan share a three-person plot in the Viljandi Old Cemetery (*Vana kalmistu*) on Riia maantee: Pauluse section IX, plot 124-8. It sits at the north edge of the cemetery, next to the roundabout.

| Buried | Born | Died | Buried on |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hans Leoke | 27.12.1852 (O.S.) | 16.08.1919 | 20.08.1919 |
| Mari Leoke, née Tõllasepp | 05.05.1867 | 18.02.1954 | 23.02.1954, reburied here 23.02.1957 |
| Jaan Leoke | 14.11.1886 | 17.03.1959 | 22.03.1959 |

The table reproduces the cemetery register, which gives Hans's birth date in Old Style, as on his stone, and the other dates in New Style.

The Soviet town government closed the Old Cemetery to burials from 1 January 1954, and Mari died seven weeks later. She was buried instead at the Pauluse cemetery on Pärnu road, and was moved to the family plot in 1957, once the ban was lifted.

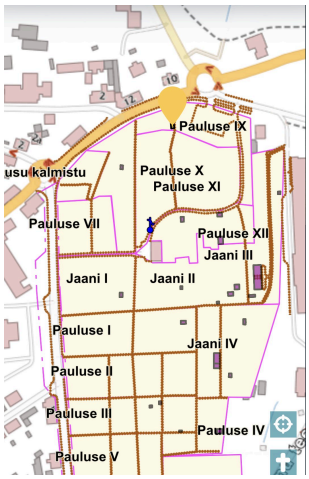

Viljandi Vana kalmistu

Pauluse kogudus, Pauluse IX, 124–8, 3-person plot kirstuplats

| Buried person | Date of birth | Date of death | Date of burial |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hans Leoke | 27.12.1852 | 16.08.1919 | 20.08.19 |
| Jaan Leoke | 14.11.1886 | 17.03.1959 | 22.03.19 |
| Mari Leoke (Tõllasepp) | 05.05.1867 | 18.02.1954 | 23.02.19 |

Mari Leoke suri 18.02.1954, kuid Viljandi Linna TSN Täitevkomitee otsusega nr. 284 (24.09.1953) oli Vana kalmistu alates 01.01.1954 matmisteks suletud. Mari Leoke maeti 23.02.1954 hoopis Viljandi Pauluse kalmistule Pärnu mnt. ääres. Peale matmiste keelu tühistamist toimus ümbermatmine 23.02.1957 oma perekonna platsile Vanal kalmistul.

**Leoke** · The grave record on kalmistud.ee, Estonia's national grave register.




**Leoke** · The plot (yellow pin) in Pauluse section IX, at the northern edge of the cemetery.




**Leoke · Hans's marker, a fieldstone boulder with a plaque: "Hans Leoke 18 27/XII 52 – 19 16/VIII 19", his birth date in the Old Style.** Very likely the original 1919 stone. October 2026.



**Leoke · The family plot in October 2026: Hans's boulder (left), Mari's slab (center, its inscription worn away) and Jaan's slab (right, confirmed by a rubbing).**

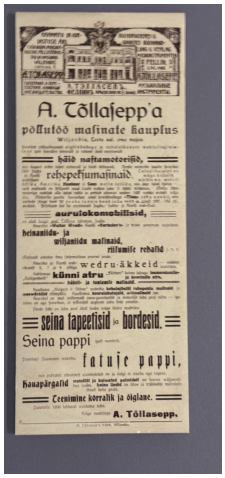
**Appendix B**

# Local history and photographs

**Leoke family**

## Hans Leoke's Viljandi

Photographs and printed items from the Viljandi Museum's displays, and the same streets in October 2026.




**Leoke · An advertisement for Ado Tõllasepp's shop "in his own house" on Tartu street: Tartu 9, the building shown in its header.** Mari's brother printed much of what Hans published. *Viljandi Museum.*



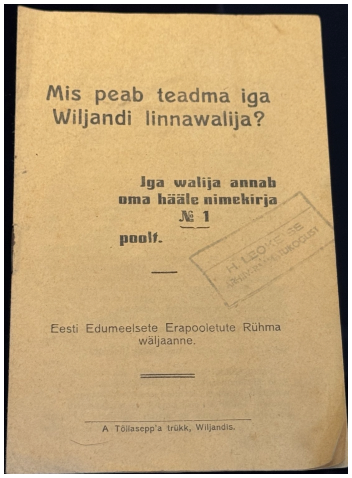

**Leoke · Tartu 9 in October 2026: the only one of the family's shop buildings securely identified as still standing.** Hans's shop was here in about 1907–09.




**Leoke · Telephone lines going up at the corner of Tartu and Lossi streets in the early 1900s.** The long building behind the corner house is very likely the Leoke shop. *Viljandi Museum.*



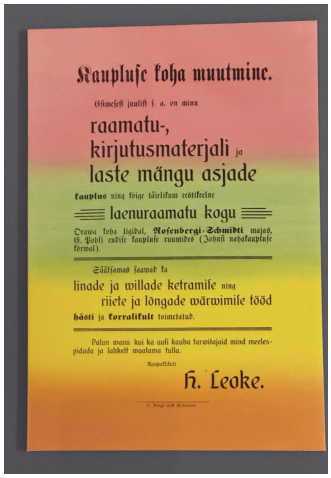

**Leoke · Today's Tartu 15, where the shop stood in 1900–07 in the Graf house, a former tavern.** Street numbers may have changed since then.




**Leoke · "What every Viljandi town voter must know": an election leaflet urging votes for List No. 1, printed by Ado Tõllasepp and stamped by Hans's archive library.** From 1910 Hans could vote in these elections himself. *Viljandi Museum.*




**Leoke · The corner of Tartu and Lossi streets in October 2026.** The wooden buildings were cleared in the late 1930s for the EVE building, now the Grand Hotel Viljandi. Beyond it, the pale Art Nouveau house is Tartu 9, where the shop stood in 1907–09.



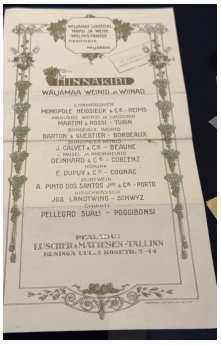

**Leoke · Hans's own poster announcing a move: "From the first of July this year my book, stationery and children's toy shop and the most complete Estonian-language lending library will be in the Rosenberg-Schmidt house… Flax and wool spinning and the dyeing of cloth and yarn will also be done well and properly. Respectfully, H. Leoke." Which move it records is not yet known.** ***Viljandi Museum.***




**Leoke · Carl Robert Jakobson, whose ideas Hans supported, with an 1878 issue of his newspaper *Sakala*, which Hans wrote for while schoolmaster at Arumetsa.** *Viljandi Museum.*



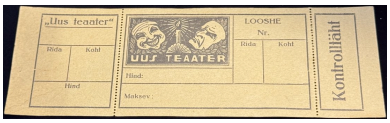

**Leoke · *Salome* in the castle ruins, 1920: Viljandi's first open-air performance.** *Viljandi Museum.*




**Leoke · A 1920s price list of the Viljandi liqueur and wine company, with the Leoke archive stamp.** *Viljandi Museum.*




**Leoke · A 1934 poster for a temperance society's summer party "in Mr Treial's barn at the naturally beautiful Tusti settlement", with a play and dancing.** Stamped by the Leoke archive library. *Viljandi Museum.*




**Leoke · A ticket for Viljandi's "Uus teater" (New Theater), with spaces for box, row, seat and price, from the museum's display on the town's cultural life.** The Leoke shop sold theater tickets, though this one carries no shop stamp. *Viljandi Museum.*




**Leoke · "Please try WIRWE boot cream and 'Polli' waterproof leather grease": a 1926 advertisement for M. Kõiva of Viljandi, collected and stamped seven years after Hans died.** *Viljandi Museum.*

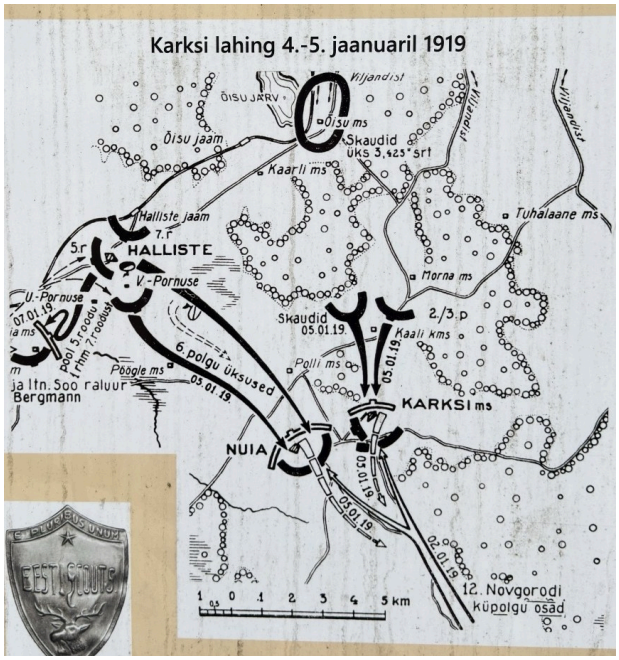



**Leoke · The first class of the Viljandi Estonian Education Society's girls' progymnasium, 1912.** Photographed before Pilvi's birth; this is not her class. *Viljandi Museum.*

**Koik family**

## War on the manor, January 1919

In the first days of 1919 the War of Independence reached Karksi. The Red Army held Karksi manor and Nuia, and on the night of 4–5 January they were driven out, almost without a shot, by the newly formed Scouts Battalion, the 2nd company of the 3rd Infantry Regiment and men of the Defence League. Jaan Kutsar walked into the manor posing as a Communist courier and convinced the Red commanders that a thousand English, Finnish and Swedish troops had reached Halliste station; a field gun fired from Morna on cue, and the Reds withdrew. The date when the Koiks settled on the estate has not been established. A memorial stone of 2019 marks the battle, and a fragment of a plaque carved with the Scouts' badge, taken from the manor house wall, is in the Viljandi Museum.




**Koik · The battle of Karksi, 4–5 January 1919, on a map that covers the Koiks' home district: Õisu, Halliste, Polli, Nuia and Karksi manor.** *Information board, Karksi.*

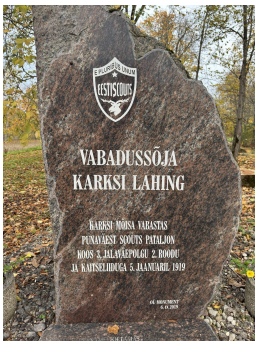
**Koik family**

## Karksi, then and now

Photographs from the visit in October 2026, with two from the Viljandi Museum.



**Koik · St Peter's Church, Karksi, built in 1778 on the old castle site: the Koiks' parish church, where Ida was confirmed in 1926.**




**Koik · The memorial stone of 2019: "War of Independence.** The battle of Karksi. The Red-occupied Karksi manor was freed by the Scouts Battalion with the 2nd company of the 3rd Infantry Regiment and the Defence League on 5 January 1919."



**Koik · The manor park in October 2026, with one of the ponds and a surviving manor building beyond.**




**Koik · Fragment of a memorial plaque with the Scouts' elk-head badge, "Sellest majast…" ("From this house…"), taken from the wall of the manor house.** *Viljandi Museum.*




**Koik · Holstre-Pulleritsu school, 1911.** Some early Koik households came from a farm recorded as Koiga on Holstre manor, in Paistu parish; Elmar Koik's own line is traced to Vana-Kariste. *Viljandi Museum.*

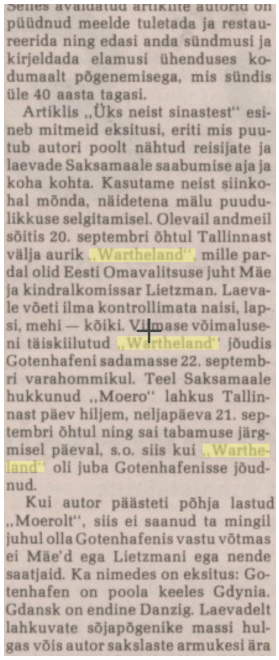



**Koik · Scouts in Viljandi in the 1930s.** Elmar Koik joined the movement in Karksi-Nuia in 1938; he is not identified in this photograph. *Viljandi Museum.*

**Leoke family**

## An evacuation account: Wartheland

This account describes one possible vessel, not an identified family voyage.



püüdnud meelde tuletada ja restaureerida ning edasi anda sündmusi ja kirjeldada elamusi ühenduses kodumaalt põgenemisega, mis sündis üle 40 aasta tagasi.

Artiklis „Üks neist sinastest" esineb mitmeid eksitusi, eriti mis puutub autori poolt nähtud reisijate ja laevade Saksamaale saabumise aja ja koha kohta. Kasutame neist siinkohal mõnda, näidetena mälu puudulikkuse selgitamisel. Olevail andmeil sõitis 20. septembri õhtul Tallinnast välja aurik „Wartheland", mille pardal olid Eesti Omavalitsuse juht Mäe ja kindralkomissar Lietzman. Laevale võeti ilma kontrollimata naisi, lapsi, mehi — kõiki. Viimase võimaluseni täiskiilutud „Wartheland" jõudis Gotenhafeni sadamasse 22. septembri varahommikul. Teel Saksamaale hukkunud „Moero" lahkus Tallinnast päev hiljem, neljapäeva 21. septembri õhtul ning sai tabamuse järgmisel päeval, s.o. siis kui „Wartheland" oli juba Gotenhafenisse jõudnud.

Kui autor päästeti põhja lastud „Moerolt", siis ei saanud ta mingil juhul olla Gotenhafenis vastu võtmas ei Mäe'd ega Lietzmani ega nende saatjaid. Ka nimedes on eksitus: Gotenhafen on poola keeles Gdynia. Gdansk on endine Danzig. Laevadelt lahkuvate sõjapõgenike massi hulgas võis autor sakslaste armukesi ära

**Leoke · *Meie Elu* (Toronto), 15 October 1987.** *DIGAR.*

The steamer Wartheland sailed from Tallinn on the evening of 20 September, with the head of the Estonian Self-Administration, Mäe, and General Commissioner Litzmann aboard. Women, children and men were taken aboard without checks — everyone. Filled to the last possible place, the Wartheland reached Gotenhafen harbour in the early morning of 22 September. The Moero left Tallinn a day later and was hit the following day, when the Wartheland had already reached Gotenhafen.

— *Meie Elu*, Toronto, 15 October 1987 (translated from the Estonian). Another account gives the departure as midday on the 20th.

Appendix C

# Family and record details

## Spellings and dates

- **Leoke** first appears, in 1826, as *Loeuk*, and later as *Leok*, *Look*, *Löök*, *Löuk*, *Louk* and *Lõuk*. Officials sometimes confused it with the separate surname *Lõoke* (“lark”). **Koik** is written so from its first appearance in 1825. Els’s maiden name, **Rantsus**, also appears as *Ranthus* and *Rantsar*. An unrelated Leoke family lived in Torma parish and Tartu. **Juhan** appears as *Johann* or *Johan*; German records write Virve as *Wirwe* and Pilvi as *Pilwi*. Hilda’s maiden name appears as *Meomüttel* or *Meomuttel*.
- Dates taken from Estonian church books and estate revisions before 1918 are Old Style, as written in the records, unless marked otherwise; dates from German, American and later Estonian records are New Style. Until 1918, Estonia used the Julian (Old Style) calendar. The difference from the Gregorian (New Style) calendar was 12 days for the nineteenth-century births discussed here and 13 days after February 1900. Calendar styles are identified where the sources permit; dates from later records are retained as recorded, with conflicts noted. Hans Leoke was born on 27 December 1852 Old Style / 8 January 1853 New Style; Elmar Oswald on 27 July 1896 Old Style / 8 August 1896 New Style. Mari was born on 23 April 1867 Old Style; the cemetery record’s 5 May 1867 is the New Style date. Hilda was born on 20 September 1896 Old Style / 2 October 1896 New Style.
- German place names in the records: *Fellin* = Viljandi, *Dorpat* = Tartu, *Reval* = Tallinn, *Groß-Keppo* = Suure-Kõpu, *Euseküll* = Õisu, *Alt-/Neu-Karrishof* = Vana-/Uue-Kariste, *Alt-Woidoma* = Vana-Võidu, *Schloss Fellin* = Viljandi manor, *Gotenhafen* = Gdynia.

Leoke family

## Hans Leoke’s parents and grandparents

The estate’s soul revisions (1811, 1816, 1826, 1834, 1850 and 1857–58) and the Viljandi church books trace Hans’s family back three generations. Ages in the revisions are often rounded, so birth years taken from them are approximate. Before peasants on the estate took surnames in the 1820s, they were identified by patronymic and farm.[41]

- **Peet** (about 1731–1803), Hans's great-grandfather, lived at Wardja Matzi with the family of his brother **Jaan**; Jaan's son Hans held the farm until he died in 1813. The 1811 revision lists Peet's sons Jaak (aged 20 in 1795) and Andres (9).
- **Jaak, Peet's son** (about 1775–1819), Hans's paternal grandfather, a landless lodger on Wardja Matzi farm, and his wife **Greth, Jürri's daughter** (about 1777–after 1826). Their children were Marri (about 1806), Jürri (about 1808), Hans (about 1811) and Jaak (1813), Hans Leoke's father. In the 1826 revision the widowed Greth and her children carry the surname "Loeuk". Jaak's brother Andres, Peet's son (about 1787–1844), lived on the same estate.
- **Hans, Matz's son**, farm holder of Wardja Matzi, and his wife **Marri, Margus's daughter**, Hans's maternal grandparents. Their children included Matz (about 1815), Kaddri (1818), Ann (about 1820), Greth (about 1822) and Jaan (about 1825). The 1826 revision lists the farm holder's family and the Leoke lodgers on the same page. A Hans Wardja, aged 55, who died of dysentery at Wardja Matzi on 6 November 1846, may have been Kaddri's father; this is not confirmed.
- **Jaak Leok (Lõuk)** (1813–1867) married **Kaddri Wardja** (1818–1853) at Viljandi on 5 April 1838; the household book of 1852–64 gives their births as 1813 and 8 January 1818. Their children were Marri (born 23 September 1841, died 23 January 1843), Rööt (born 21 August 1844, died 14 June 1848), a third child not yet found, and Hans (born 27 December 1852 O.S.). Rööt's godparents were her mother's brother and sister, Jaan and Ann Wardja, and Madde, the wife of her father's brother Jürri.
- **Jürri, Jaak's son** (about 1808), Hans's uncle, became farm holder of Nuija Jahn farm in 1835. With his wife Madde he had Jaak (born 19 September 1839), Reet, Kaddri and Ann (born 9 September 1847). On the probable identification of this Jaak with the Jaak Lõuke of the household books, see Appendix D.

**Leoke family**

## Mari's parents and grandparents, the Tõllasepps

- **Jaan Tõllasepp** (written *Töllasep*), born 22 May 1840, son of Jaan and Marri, of Kangilaski farm on the Vana-Võidu estate, married **Kaddri Orrik**, born 14 October 1842, of Orrika Hinno farm, daughter of Ado Orrik and Rööt, at Viljandi on 7 April 1863 O.S. Jaan died at Kangilaski on 11 April 1907 O.S., aged 66, and Kaddri on 26 September 1919, aged 76. Both are buried in the Viljandi Old Cemetery, plot Pauluse XI 146-8.

- Their children were baptized from Kangilaski: a child born in March 1866, who received an emergency baptism and probably died young; **Mari**, born 23 April 1867 O.S.; **Ado (Aadu)**, born 27 June 1869 O.S., later a Viljandi printer and bookseller; **Tõnis** (1871–1904), who is buried in his parents' plot; and **Kadri**, born 27 November 1874. Mari's brothers Ado and Tõnis were probably the godfathers of those names at the baptisms of her sons Jaan, Hans and Peter. Mari's baptism writes the farm as "Rangilaski", probably a slip for Kangilaski, the name written at her marriage.
- Jaan's parents, **Jaan Tõllasepp** (1806–1863) and **Marri née Peia** (1810–1880), from Peia farm on the same estate, married at Viljandi on 21 May 1839. Jaan the elder died of a stroke at Kangilaski on 6 November 1863, aged 57, and Marri on 30 December 1880, aged 70; they lie in their son's plot. Besides Jaan, their children included Kaddri (1842), Marri (1844) and Tõnis (1849).
- Other Tõllasepp households lived at Waigo Jahn farm on the same estate in the 1850s; how they were related to Jaan has not been established. An earlier suggestion that Mari's father was a son of Tõnis Tõllasepp of Waigo Jahn is contradicted by the records.

**Leoke family**

## Hilda's parents and siblings

- **Father: Jüri Meomüttel**, born 12 November 1861 at Kudewitte, a village on Viljandi manor, and baptized on 19 November, son of Jakob Meomüttel and Kaddri née Ruud. He married Ann Paltser at Viljandi on 27 December 1885 O.S. (8 January 1886 New Style); both were then living at Kivistik on Viljandi manor. In 1896 he was a laborer at Kivistik. He died on 22 July 1927.
- **Mother: Ann (Ano)**, née **Paltser** (also written Pältser or Paltzer), born 24 May 1857 at Wirro Lauri farm on Viljandi manor, the daughter of Hans Paltser and Mari née Naar. She died on 7 March 1940. Hilda's 1944 German registration card also records that both her parents were deceased.
- **August**, born 1887. His passport was issued in St Petersburg in 1913, so he seems to have moved to Russia.
- **Anna Marie**, born 1890, died 4 July 1903.
- **Jüri**, born 14 October 1893. He married Minna née Teng in 1921 and had a son, **Hillar Mairold** (b. 1930). He died on 28 January 1938 and is buried with Minna (1888–1963) in the Viljandi Old Cemetery.
- **Hilda Wilhelmine**, born 20 September 1896 O.S. at Kivistik, baptized on 20 October 1896 and confirmed in 1914. She died on 30

June 1988; her last recorded residence was in Los Angeles.

Leoke family

## Hilda's grandparents

**Jakob (Jaak) Meomüttel**, born at Kudewitte on 24 June 1841 O.S. and baptized on 29 June, the son of Jaan Meomüttel and Kaddi, married **Kaddri Ruud** at Viljandi on 15 May 1860; he was then living at Kudewitte. The church books usually write her surname Ruud, after Rudi farm; the household book's *Rund* is a variant. Kaddri was born about 1835, the daughter of Jürri Ruud and Marri. Their children were Jürri, born 12 November 1861, Hilda's father, whose godparents included a Jürri Ruud, three daughters born at Rudi, Marri (1864), Kaddi (1866) and Ann (1869), and a son, Jaak (1872). The household book for 1864–1877 lists the family, and Marri appears in it again as "Mari Meomüttel, daughter of Jaak and Kadri". Jakob and Kaddri were both living at Jüri's marriage in 1885. Jakob died at Kivistik on 12 June 1888 O.S., aged 47. In April 1898 Kaddri moved to Tartu, where the household book of St Peter's congregation records her with her son Jaak; her death has not been found, nor has her baptism. Hilda's aunts Marri (1864–1943) and Ann (1869–1904), who married Jüri Ott in January 1892, share a plot in the Viljandi Old Cemetery. Several other Meomüttel households lived at Kudewitte in the mid-1800s, but their relationship to Jakob has not been established.

Ann Paltser's father, Hans Paltser, was born on 27 September 1827 and died on 26 March 1884 O.S.; her mother, Mari née Naar, born on 12 March 1823, died on 19 February 1909, aged 85. Ann's sisters included Mari (born 1854), Liisa (1860) and Kadri (1863–1897).[42]

Koik family

## Juhan Koik's grandparents and earlier generations

- **Hans Koik** (about 1780 – between 1826 and 1834) and **Kert, Endrik's daughter** (about 1781 – after 1834), Peeter's grandparents, lived at Kama Peter farm on the Vana-Kariste estate. In 1811 Hans, aged 32, was a farmhand there, with his sons Hindrich and Peter; the farm was held by another man, also named Hans, whose relationship to him is not recorded. In the release list of January 1825 he and Kert are "Koik". In 1826 Hans headed the Koik household at Kama Peter with Kert and their children Endrik, Peter, Hans, Märt, Anne, Tina and Els. By 1834 Kert was a widow.
- **Märt Koik** (about 1821–1874) married **Marri Riig** (about 1819–1885), of Lobbine farm, at Halliste on 22 March 1845; his parents were

then both dead. They lived at Sönni farm, where Peeter was born in 1849, and by 1858 at Kordimatsi with Märt's brother Peter. Their children included Hans (1846), Peeter (1849), Els (born in the early 1850s) and Märt (1860). In 1871 they moved to Õisu, where Märt died on 26 May 1874; Marri died at Carlsberg on 31 July 1885.

- **Henn Rantsus** (about 1813), Els's father, was the son of **Margus Rantsus, Peter's son** (about 1753 – before 1834), of Nachsepp farm at Õisu (Euseküll). Henn and his wife **Ann** (about 1822) farmed Kurwitze in 1850, the farm written "Kuuwitse" at Els's baptism, and Kümmo in 1858. Els's brother Johan (about 1848) was very probably the Juhan Rantsus who was godfather to her eldest son in 1875; her sisters were Reet (about 1852) and Marri (about 1855).[43]

**Koik family**

## Elmar Koik's baptism record

| | |
|---|---|
| Born | 30 December 1925, at 2 a.m. |
| Baptized | 5 April 1926 |
| Place | **Karksi manor** (Karksi-mõis) |
| Name | Elmar Heinrich Koik |
| Parents | Johann Koik, laborer (*tööline*), and his wife Marie, née Purtsak, both Lutheran |
| Baptized by | Pastor Benedikt Masing, apparently at the family's home on the manor |
| Godparents | Johann Tuvi, gardener; Peter Wirk(?), gardener; Miss Anna Pork(?); Liide Willemson. Some surname readings are uncertain. |

**Koik family**

## Elmar Koik's chronology

| | |
|---|---|
| 1934–1940 | Six years of elementary school in Karksi-Nuia; a member of the Estonian Scouts, the civilian Boy Scout movement, from 1938 until scouting was banned after the Soviet occupation of 1940. |
| 1942–1943 | Identity card issued by Karksi parish in July 1942; worked as a locksmith in Tallinn, according to his 1946 questionnaire. |
| 2 February 1944 | By his own account, mobilized at 18 by the Estonian Self-Administration under German occupation. He reported that his military paybook was issued at Klooga on 16 March 1944, and described his unit as an Estonian military drivers' school. |
| 1 July 1944 | **Badly wounded at Vaivara**, on the Narva front, according to his later statements. His questionnaire records arrival in Germany with his hospital on 10 July. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1944–1945 | More than a year in military hospitals at Pilsen, Marienbad and Regensburg. American forces reached Marienbad in May 1945. |
| October 1945 | Recovered, he walked to the DP camp at Regensburg. |
| 1946 | Geislingen DP camp (UNRRA Team 190). In September a US Army screening board refused him DP status and he was evicted, moving to a private room in nearby Eislingen. |
| 1947–1948 | Worked as a civilian guard for the US Army, at Mannheim and then with the 501st Engineers at Wolfgang near Hanau. His case was referred to the Military Appeal Board on 28 June 1947; no final appeal decision has been located in the records examined. A separate DP registration record is dated 27 July 1948. |
| 1949 | Applied to emigrate to the United States on 21 April. US visa issued at Frankfurt on 14 July, sponsored by the National Lutheran Council to work for **Imperial County Farmers, El Centro, California**. He sailed from Bremerhaven on the Army transport *General R. L. Howze* and landed at **New Orleans on 5 September 1949**. |

## Later family lives

From 1956 until he retired in 1965, Elmar Oswald was assistant head of the budget section at the Sierra Army Depot in Herlong, northeastern California, according to the *Album Academicum*. He died in Los Angeles on 26 February 1972. Hilda died on 30 June 1988; her last recorded residence was in Los Angeles.[44] Mari had died in Viljandi in 1954 and Jaan in 1959.

Peter and Elizabeth had no children. The Estonian Society of Los Angeles made him an honorary member in 1953. Peter died in Los Angeles on 22 April 1973 and is buried at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood Hills, in the same lot as Elmar Oswald and Hilda.[45]

Elmar Koik later became a scout leader in Los Angeles, continuing his involvement in the Estonian scouting movement in exile.

Appendix D

# Unresolved family connections

The Viljandi household books also list a Jaak Lõuke (1839–1909), born at Nuia, with his wife Mari Niggol and children Ann, Jaan and Jüri (b. 1878; died in Tallinn in 1934). He is probably Hans's first cousin, the son of Hans's uncle Jürri. Jürri's son Jaak was born on 19 September 1839, and Jürri held Nuija Jahn farm from 1835, which fits the household book's "Nuia"; the baptism, however, gives the child's birthplace as Saare Annuse. The identification rests on the name, the birth year and the farm; no record yet states the relationship.[46]

An early Viljandi household book lists another Hans Leoke, born at Võhma (Wohma) on 11 June 1796, with a daughter Marri born in 1831. He was once considered a possible father for Jaak, but Jaak's father is now known to have been Jaak, Peet's son (Appendix C). Whether this Hans was related to the family is unknown.

Leoke family

## Other Leokes

Two Leokes found in the records appear to belong to other families:

- **Hugo Leoke** (1929–1984), born in Tallinn, who came to New York alone in 1949. His Tallinn family-register entry names his parents as Johannes, born 1900, and Wilhelmine. A Johannes Leoke born on 18 March 1900 at Peningi, Harju County, son of Hinrik, is probably his father; if so, Hugo was not a grandson of Hans.[47]
- **Heinz (Hans) Leoke**, born in Tallinn on 22 May 1891, licensed as a merchant-marine officer in Los Angeles in 1925 and a naturalized US citizen by 1929. His birth date and birthplace do not match those of Hans the younger, born at Arumetsa in 1888.[48]

Koik family

## Other Koik households

Other Koiks born at Vana-Kariste in the 1840s–1870s appear across the neighboring parishes and may be related, though the links are not yet proven:

- **Jaan Koik**, born 1 September 1842 at Vana-Kariste, perhaps a cousin of Peeter: Märt's brother Peter had a son Jaan living with him in 1850. He settled at Patti in Saarde parish, and in 1895 his family emigrated to Mogilev province in Russia. Some of his

children and grandchildren returned to Estonia in the 1920s. His son **Juhan (b. 15 August 1887)** was a different person from Juhan Koik (b. 1881), Elmar's father.

- The children of **Hendrik and An Koik** of Vana-Kariste: Hans (b. 1865) and Elise Marie (b. 1877), whose family later took the surname Pärnaste.
- The household of **Märt and Ello Koik** at Uue-Kariste, whose son Hans took the surname Ants in 1935. The Paistu records show that they were not Juhan's parents, though they may have been relatives.

Several early Koik households, including one that moved to Helme in 1844, came from a farm recorded as Koiga on Holstre manor in Paistu parish. No farm or village of that name appears in the Estonian place-name registers; the nearest is Koigu, a former village in Paistu parish whose name, like the surname, probably comes from the old personal name Koik. Elmar Koik's own line already had the surname at Vana-Kariste in January 1825, and another Koik family lived at Uue-Kariste in 1826. Whether these families were related is not known.

Appendix E

# Further research

## Family experiences and unresolved events

- **Pilvi's schooling:** her age and years at Hariduse 2, and the school's institutional name then; attendance itself is confirmed by her recollections.
- **Virve's grave and death:** the Bad Windsheim burial register for 1934–45 and the 1945 burial registers of Steinach and Burgbernheim (all on Archion), the cemetery office for grave 110a, the full Mörlbach death-register entry and police notification, and the Mörlbach parish burial register, which may list other victims of the train attack. Any report by Pastor Dannhaimer, and XIX Tactical Air Command mission records for 26 February 1945, may add detail; whether the book's "Steinbach" means Steinach should be checked first. Virve's presence on the train rests on family memory: who first told the story, and from whom, should be recorded.
- **The voyage:** identification of the family's ship, with Wartheland, Minden and Hansa among the possibilities to investigate using US immigration files or Arolsen CM/1 forms, and comparison of the related 1987 *Meie Elu* accounts.
- **After the 1933 divorce:** where Hilda and the girls lived; when Elmar Oswald moved between Tallinn and Räpina; and whether he and Hilda remarried before 1944 (Tallinn congregation books, civil registers and Räpina residents' lists).
- **America:** the immigration files for Pilvi (withheld), Elmar Koik (withheld) and Hilda (withheld), whose present custody needs to be checked; Pilvi's file may explain her Wichita address and change of status. Peter's naturalization file.
- **Hans Leoke the younger** (1888–1945): his life after 1930, and how and where he died in 1945, probably in the United States.
- **Family recollections:** the sisters' early lives, the Koik household and siblings remaining in Estonia, and how Pilvi and Elmar met.

## Genealogy and identification

- **Hans's family:** the third child of Jaak and Kaddri; whether the Hans Wardja who died in 1846 was Kaddri's father; a record confirming that Jaak Lõuke (1839–1909) was Jürri's son; the Vana-

Võidu revisions of 1782 and 1795 and the Viljandi baptisms before 1834, which are not available online.

- **The Leoke papers:** the family papers at the Estonian Literary Museum (EKLA f. 224), which probably include Jaan's notes on the family.
- **Mari's family:** the baptisms of Jaan Tõllasepp (1840) and Kaddri Orrik (1842), Marri Peia's parents, and the relationship to the Waigo Jahn Tõllaseps.
- **Hilda's family:** Kaddri Ruud's baptism (about 1835) and her death after her move to Tartu in 1898; Ann Meomüttel's marriage to Jüri Ott (1892) and her death in 1904; the identity of Hugo Paltser, Hilda's godparent.
- **Photographs:** whether Hans is among the 1873 schoolmasters; the 1910 family photograph follows the museum's identifications.
- **The Koik line:** the deaths of Juhan and Marie, who were living in December 1929, and the children's marriages (the Karksi household book after 1932, which is not online); Märt's baptism (1878) and any other children of Peeter and Els; the death of Hans Koik (between 1826 and 1834) and the parents of Marri Riig; the household and marriage of Marie's parents, Peter Purtsak and Anno, and of Els's parents, Henn and Ann Rantsus; whether the Koiks of Uue-Kariste and Holstre were kin; a First World War militia list naming Juhan Koik of Vana-Kariste (EAA.316.1.502, image 66), not yet read; the Karksi land-reform files. Koik households found in the Viljandi books of 1900–1939 came from Suure-Jaani and Pilistvere and are not this family.

Reference

# Sources and notes

This history draws on family recollections, research conducted in October 2026, museum collections, parish registers, and wartime and refugee papers. The account of Hans's work draws chiefly on the Viljandi Museum article based on Linda Sarapuu's study. The numbered notes give the source for each specific claim; photographs and documents carry their credits in their captions.

## Archives

Estonian National Archives (Saaga): EELK Viljandi congregation metrical books, 1838–1907 (EAA.1290.1.52–88, .316–349), marriage lists, 1847–1889 (EAA.1290.1.503–504), deaths lists, 1892–1929 (EAA.1290.1.555–556), and household books, including those for Vana-Võidu (pp. 229–230) and Viljandi manor (EAA.1290.1.557, pp. 591–592); soul revisions of the Alt-Woidoma (Vana-Võidu) estate, 1811–1858 (EAA.1865.3.282, .283, .284, .288 and .293), the Alt-Karrishof (Vana-Kariste) estate, 1811–1858 (EAA.1865.3.171–174), and Euseküll (Õisu), 1834–1858 (EAA.1865.5.106; EAA.1865.3.213 and .216); Alt-Karrishof release-from-serfdom list, 1825 (EAA.931.1.22); EELK Paistu congregation, births and marriages (EAA.1286); EELK Halliste congregation (EAA.1275), births, marriages, deaths and household books; EELK Karksi congregation, births 1914–1926 (EAA.1276.1.335), deaths (EAA.1276.1.340) and household books (EAA.1276.1.341); EELK Tartu St Paul's congregation, births 1914–1925 (EAA.5357.1.101), and St Peter's household books (EAA.3150.1.690); household books of the Helme, Saarde and Tarvastu congregations; files of the Estonian Consulate General in New York (ERA.1608.1.51, .570 and .808) and Hans Leoke's officer's file (ERA.495.7.2663); Juhan Koik's military papers (ERA.680.3.9); Karksi residents' list, 1924–1927 (ERA.3446.1.77); Viljandi town residents' list, 1936 (ERA.3077.1.629); exile register cards (ERA.4942.4).

Tallinn City Archives: identity-card registration book, 1939 (TLA.186.1.881); address-register sheets, 1921–1926 (TLA.1376.1.134); EELK Tallinn St John's congregation, births 1918–1926 (TLA.1358.2.59).

Arolsen Archives: Windsheim registration cards and foreigners' lists (Elmar Oswald, Hilda, Pilvi and Virve Leoke); Mörlbach death certificate no. 6/1945; US emigration lists; Elmar Koik's DP registration record, US Army and UNRRA questionnaires, and IRO emigration list.

US National Archives: Pan American Airways passenger manifest, Frankfurt–New York, 30 November–2 December 1947; manifest of USAT *General W. M. Black*, Bremerhaven–New York, 21–30 October 1948; arrival card of Elmar Koik, New Orleans, 5 September 1949; declarations of intention, US District Court, Los Angeles: Peter Leoke (1943), Pilvi Laine Koik and Elmar Koik (1952); 1950 US census, Los Angeles, enumeration district 66-1226.

kalmistud.ee, Estonia's national grave register: Viljandi Vana kalmistu, the Leoke plot (Pauluse IX, 124-8), the Tõllasepp plot (Pauluse XI, 146-8) and the Meomüttel plots.

## Published works

Linda Sarapuu, "Hans Leoke – raamatukaupmees ja kirjastaja", *Viljandi Muuseumi aastaraamat* 2007, pp. 184–214, and the Viljandi Museum article "Hans Leoke 1853–1919" based on it.

Institute of the Estonian Language, *Eesti kohanimeraamat* (dictionary of Estonian place names) and the place-name database KNAB, for the names Koik, Koiksaare and Koigu.

*Album Academicum Universitatis Tartuensis 1918–1944*, as quoted in the WWII refugees database.

Michael Weber (ed.), *Königshofen 1945* (Books on Demand, 2020).

Kit C. Carter and Robert Mueller, *U.S. Army Air Forces in World War II: Combat Chronology, 1941–1945* (Center for Air Force History, 1991).

*Eesti NSV Teataja Lisa* 1945, no. 2 (11 December 1945), via DIGAR.

*Meie Elu* (Toronto), 15 October 1987; Estonian exile newspaper of 30 August 1979 on the Wartheland and Infantry Regiment 200; *Kultuur ja Elu* and *Postimees* accounts of the September 1944 evacuation; *Times-Picayune*, 9 September 1949.

"Peter Leoke" and "Ameerika Eestlane", English Wikipedia.

## Online databases and indexes

WWII refugees database (wwii-refugees.ee), including Estonian family-register references and lists of Estonians in Finnish and German forces, 1940–1945.

memoriaal.ee, searched for Leoke and Koik.

Historisches Marinearchiv, Ostseeflucht voyage database.

Social Security Administration Death Master File and Clark County, Nevada, marriage index, as indexed at sortedbyname.com.

Find a Grave, memorials for Peter, Elmar Oswald and Hilda Leoke, Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood Hills.

German Genealogy Group, index of New York City deaths, 1862–1948.

Geni family-tree summary (2014) for Elmar Oswald and Hilda Leoke.

## Museums, places and images

Viljandi Museum (MuIS): VMF 176:92, 424:330 and 424:415; VMF 75 F 713, 716, 725 and 3887; VM 9248 F 75:2518; and the museum's permanent displays, photographed in October 2026.

Estonian National Museum, ERM Fk 3051:5377 (photo, Tallinn harbor, September 1944).

US Holocaust Memorial Museum, photograph 111-SC-310938 and film of the *General Black*'s arrival, 30 October 1948; US Navy photograph of USNS *General R. L. Howze*.

Estonian Manors Portal (mois.ee), "Karksi"; Puhka Eestis and Visit Estonia, "Karksi Manor and Park"; information boards in Karksi village.

Maps: coastlines and lakes © OpenStreetMap contributors (ODbL), via geo-maps; modern borders shown.

## Family recollections

Family recollections gathered by the compiler, including Pilvi's memory of attending school at Hariduse 2, confirmation that she traveled to America alone, and the memory that Virve was killed in an attack on a train (confirmed with relatives, October 2026).

## Notes

1. EELK Viljandi congregation, baptisms 1853, EAA.1290.1.67, p. 10, No. 4: Hans, son of Jaak Louk and Kaddri, born on the evening of 27 December 1852 at Wardja Matzi and baptized on 4 January 1853

by Pastor Carlblom; godparents Mikhel Rambek, Ann Wardjamets and Jaan Kangor. ↩

2. Marriage: EELK Viljandi congregation, 1838, EAA.1290.1.52, image 41, marriages No. 12, where Jaak is "of Saare Annuse". Soul revisions of the Alt-Woidoma estate: 1811 (EAA.1865.3.282/19, image 25, where Peet, "Jaan's brother", aged 64 in 1795, is marked as having died in 1803), 1816 (EAA.1865.3.283/5a, image 15), 1826 (EAA.1865.3.283/13, image 41, p. 23), 1834 and 1850 (EAA.1865.3.284/7, image 8; EAA.1865.3.288/4, images 5–6). ↩

3. Viljandi Museum, "Hans Leoke 1853–1919". Marri: EELK Viljandi congregation, births 1841, EAA.1290.1.55, image 17; deaths 1843, EAA.1290.1.57, image 31, No. 19 (as "Leok"), aged one and a quarter. Rööt: births 1844, EAA.1290.1.58, image 21, No. 297; deaths 1848, EAA.1290.1.62, image 49, No. 317. Kaddri: deaths 1853, EAA.1290.1.67, pp. 40–41, No. 179. The revision of 1857–58: EAA.1865.3.293/3, images 5 (Saare Annuse, p. 4) and 21 (Wardja Matzi, p. 20). Jaak: deaths 1867, EAA.1290.1.84, image 58 (p. 53), No. 191; buried 12 October. ↩

4. Viljandi congregation household book, EAA.1290.1.532, image 625: note "71 21/II F." (confirmed 21 February 1871 at Fellin). ↩

5. EELK Viljandi congregation, marriage index 1885, EAA.1290.1.327, image 41, No. 85; full entry in the marriage lists, EAA.1290.1.504, image 211, No. 109 (betrothed 7 November; banns 10, 17 and 24 November 1885). Mari's birth: births 1867, EAA.1290.1.84, image 16 (p. 14), No. 178. Her parents' marriage: EAA.1290.1.504, image 13, 1863 No. 42. ↩

6. "Vene kirjandus venestusaja eesti koolides / Russian Literature in the Estonian Schools of the Russification Era," *Methis. Studia humaniora Estonica*. The article describes the introduction of Russian as the language of instruction through school reform. ↩

7. EELK Viljandi congregation, births: Jaan, 1886, EAA.1290.1.328, image 21, No. 258, born 2 November 1886 at the Alt-Woidoma school and baptized 14 December; Hans, 1888, EAA.1290.1.330, image 22, No. 300, baptized 18 December; Peter, 1892, EAA.1290.1.334, image 17, No. 130; Elmar Oswald, 1896, EAA.1290.1.338, image 44, No. 45; Adolf Jakob, 1901, EAA.1290.1.343, image 24, No. 172, and deaths 1901, image 54, No. 145. The entries describe Hans as schoolmaster at Alt-Woidoma (1886, 1888), overseer (*надзиратель*) at Luisenhütte (1892, 1896) and bookseller in Viljandi (1901). ↩

8. Linda Sarapuu, *Viljandi Muuseumi aastaraamat* 2007, p. 206, which calls what was sold the *laenukogu* (lending library) and cites a sale agreement between Elmar Leoke and Taavet Mutsu, Estonian Literary Museum, EKLA f. 224, m. 92:10. Earlier editions of this history said it was the play collection. ↩

9. Hans's biography for the Estonian Literary Society, about 1923, in the files of the Estonian Consulate General in New York, ERA.1608.1.570, images 2–3; it names his parents as Hans, son of Jaak, and "Mari Jaani t. Tõllasepp". Handover of the consulate from Nikolai Köstner, 22 June 1922: ERA.1608.1.51. His officer's file, ERA.495.7.2663, includes his service sheet of 1920 and a Tallinn police note of 7 May 1925 that he was "at present in America and serves there as Estonian consul" (image 35). His passport and visa papers of 1924–29, ERA.1608.1.808, record his return to Ellis Island on the *Stockholm* on 20 April 1925 and an address at LaBelle, Florida, in 1926; his last dated signature, New York, 3 November 1930, is in the officer's file. Tallinn address register, TLA.1376.1.134, sheet 312802: Viru 22, 10 July 1924 – 6 April 1925, then "to Sweden". Linda Sarapuu, *Viljandi Muuseumi aastaraamat* 2007, p. 210: "Neist viimane oli 1920. aastatel Eesti Vabariigi konsuli kt USA-s" ("the last of them was acting consul of the Republic of Estonia in the USA in the 1920s"). A death date of 24 June 1945 appears only in an online family tree that gives no source. No death was found in the index of New York City deaths for 1862–1948 or in the memoriaal.ee repression database. On another Hans Leoke in America in the 1920s, see Appendix D. ↩

10. EELK Viljandi congregation, births 1892, EAA.1290.1.334, image 17, No. 130, entered as "Peeter Leoke (Peter Leoke)": born 9 May 1892 O.S. at Alt-Woidoma-Luisenhütte and baptized on 14 June. His 1943 declaration of intention gives 21 May 1892, the same day in the New Style. The household book also reads 9 May; an earlier reading of it as 2 May was mistaken. ↩

11. Files of the Estonian Consulate General in New York, passports and visas of Hans, Peter and Elisabeth Leoke, 1924–29, ERA.1608.1.808, images 2–8 (“Leoke-Porfireff”, born in Moscow, 23 June 1893, Russian Orthodox, “näitleja (õpilane)”, actress and student). ↩

12. Tallinn City Archives, address-register sheets, TLA.1376.1.134: sheet 312836, Peeter Leoke, Foreign Ministry official, at Viru 22, flat 3, from 16 November 1921 (arriving from Germany) to 30 September 1924, then to Sweden; sheet 312802, Hans Leoke, 10 July 1924 – 6 April 1925; sheet 312796, Elmar Leoke, university student, 27 January – 3 February 1925, from Viljandi, leaving for Tartu. ↩ ↩

13. EELK Viljandi congregation, marriage index 1885, EAA.1290.1.327, image 42, No. 90; full entry EAA.1290.1.504, image 212, No. 115: betrothed 12 December, banns 15, 22 and 26 December, married 27 December 1885 O.S. (8 January 1886 New Style). The date 24 December 1885 given in earlier versions of this history is the betrothal date converted to New Style. Ann’s baptism: births 1857, EAA.1290.1.71, image 15, No. 155, as “Anno Paltzer”. ↩

14. EELK Viljandi congregation, births 1896, EAA.1290.1.338, image 29 (p. 29), No. 232; baptized by Provost A. Westrén-Doll. Hugo Paltser’s relationship to Ann has not been established. ↩

15. *Album Academicum Universitatis Tartuensis 1918–1944*, entry for Elmar Oswald Leoke, as quoted in the WWII refugees database (2024.wwii-refugees.ee), consulted 19 October 2026. The Estonian entry reads: “Võttis osa Vabadussõjast. Kk-õp Tartus ja Tln-s, Eesti Panga ametnik Tln-s ja Viljandis. A-st 35 ASi Eesti Kunstsarve Tehased raamatupidaja Tln-s, hiljem Räpina paberivabriku abidir ja pearaamatupidaja, ühtlasi Räpina Aianduskeskkooli õp. 44 Sksm-le, õllevabriku juh Windsheimis (Baieri). 48 USAsse, 51 elas Los Angeleses, 56-65 Sierra Army Depot eelarveosak abijuh Herlongis. 65 pensionile.” In this publication’s abbreviations, *kk* is *keskkool* (secondary school) and *õp* is *õpetaja* (teacher), so “Kk-õp Tartus ja Tln-s” means a secondary-school teacher in Tartu and Tallinn (National Archives of Estonia, Album Academicum abbreviations). The database gives the entry’s heading as “Sünd: 1896-08-08, Vil Suure-Kõpu v. Surm: 1972-02-26, USA Los Angeles”. The entry is a retrospective biographical summary, not a contemporary record. ↩

16. Viljandi manor household book, EAA.1290.1.557, pp. 591–592: “laulat. 1919 12/I Elmar Oswald Leoke” (married 12 January 1919 to Elmar Oswald Leoke). ↩

17. EELK Tallinn St John’s congregation, births 1918–1926, TLA.1358.2.59, image 23 (p. 20). The Viljandi household book gives 18 January 1920. ↩

18. EELK Tartu St Paul’s congregation, births 1914–1925, EAA.5357.1.101, image 258, No. 5: baptized in church on 12 January 1922 by Pastor Habicht; godparents Marta Paris, “Minni Meomüttli”, probably her aunt Minna, wife of Hilda’s brother Jüri, and Peeter Leoke. The Viljandi household-book annotation gives the entry number as 208. ↩

19. Viljandi household book for Vana-Võidu, pp. 229–230: “Abielu lahutatud Tallinna-Haapsalu rahukogu otsusega 10. mail 1933 a. Lapsed jäävad emale” — “Marriage dissolved by decision of the Tallinn–Haapsalu district court, 10 May 1933. The children stay with their mother.” ↩

20. Tallinn City Archives, identity-card registration book 1939, TLA.186.1.881, images 46 (Virve) and 47 (Pilvi). ↩

21. Birth: Vana-Kariste births list, EAA.1275.1.169, image 18; baptism, EELK Halliste congregation, births 1849, EAA.1275.1.117, image 10, No. 59 (13 February 1849). Els: EELK Paistu congregation, births 1844, EAA.1286.1.75, image 25, No. 285 (baptized 1 October). Marriage: Paistu, 1875, EAA.1286.1.358, image 49, No. 17, with banns on 2, 9 and 16 March; Peeter is a bachelor of Alt-Karrishof, Els a single woman of Kildi farm, Euseküll. The entry gives his age as 33, a clerical slip; he was 26. Sons: Paistu births 1875, EAA.1286.1.298, image 4, No. 29; 1877, EAA.1286.1.300, image 3, No. 22; 1881, EAA.1286.1.304, image 15, No. 162; 1884, EAA.1286.1.307, image 8, No. 93; Märt’s date from the Halliste household book, EAA.1275.1.546, image 70. Peeter’s death: EELK Halliste congregation, deaths 1896, EAA.1275.1.565, image 60, No. 1, “Alt-Karrishof Ilbaku lodger Peter Koik”, aged 46 years 10 months, buried 9 January. ↩

22. Marriage of Märt Koik and Marri Riig: EELK Halliste congregation, marriages 1845, EAA.1275.1.530, image 29, No. 12. Alt-Karrishof soul revisions: 1811, EAA.1865.3.171/4, image 16 (Kama Peter, with no surnames); 1826, EAA.1865.3.171/11, image 35; 1834, EAA.1865.3.172/4, image 27. Release-from-serfdom list of Alt-Karrishof, handed in 18 January 1825: Pärnu County 3rd parish court, EAA.931.1.22, image 15, under the farm "Kammapeter", which held three households with three different surnames. On the old personal name Koik, which underlies place names such as Koigi (recorded as *Koic* in 1241 and *Koicke* in 1441), and on the farm names Koiksaare and Koigu: Institute of the Estonian Language, *Eesti kohanimeraamat* and the place-name database KNAB. Deaths: EELK Halliste congregation, deaths, EAA.1275.1.542, images 20 (1874, No. 95, at Euseküll, aged 53) and 103 (1885, No. 117, at Carlsberg, aged 65½). ↩

23. EELK Halliste congregation, marriages 1907, EAA.1275.1.563, image 240, No. 110, also in the short marriage list. The Karksi household register gives 13 November. Children's baptisms: Halliste births, EAA.1275.1.561, images 129 (Ida, No. 181), 167 (Martin, No. 79) and 212 (Peter, No. 47); EAA.1275.1.562, image 77 (August, No. 114). Marie Karoline: Halliste births 1884, EAA.1275.1.480, image 8, No. 142, baptized 5 August. ↩

24. EELK Halliste congregation, deaths 1919, EAA.1275.1.566, image 77, No. 155; Halliste household book, EAA.1275.1.546, image 70. ↩

25. Estonian National Archives, ERA.680.3.9, Juhan Koik's military papers, images 268 and 270, and a further service-history page from the same file. Identification rests on his name, father Peeter, and birth date 19 August 1881. The papers record registration in Vana-Kariste, agricultural work, a wife and three children, earlier service as a private in 1915–1918, and the Pärnu County commission's decision of 13 November 1920. ↩

26. Karksi residents' list, 1924–1927, ERA.3446.1.77, image 60, entries 140–141. Els's death: EELK Karksi congregation, deaths 1926, EAA.1276.1.340, image 74, No. 7. Ida's marriage, which names all four parents as living: EELK Halliste congregation, marriages 1929, EAA.1275.1.564, image 103, No. 54. ↩

27. Arolsen Archives, Elmar Koik's 1946–1947 questionnaires and screening papers, 1948 registration and IRO emigration records; US National Archives, New Orleans arrival card, 5 September 1949. Statements about mobilization, unit and wounding are attributed to his later accounts; the screening board's account is distinguished in the text. ↩ ↩ ↩ ↩

28. Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "75 years since the end of the Second World War". ↩

29. Historisches Marinearchiv, Ostseeflucht voyage database, entries for Wartheland, Minden and Hansa, arrivals at Gotenhafen on 22 September 1944. The database cites the Gotenhafen naval command war diary for Wartheland and Hansa (R.4041, scan 686). These ship movements do not identify the family's vessel. ↩

30. *Eesti NSV Teataja Lisa* 1945, no. 2 (11 December 1945), p. 9, entries XV–XVIII (DIGAR 232025). Mari's baptism names her father as Jaan, which identifies her as the "Mari Jaani t. Leoke" of the notice; her son Hans's biography of about 1923 likewise calls her "Mari Jaani t. Tõllasepp". ↩

31. Arolsen Archives, Windsheim residence notification and alien-passport records: notification filed 26 September 1944; passports issued 27 October, nos. 79 (Elmar Oswald), 80 (Hilda) and 81 (Pilvi). ↩

32. Estonian National Archives, exile register cards, ERA.4942.4.8, images 1873 (Elmar Oswald), 1874 (Hilda) and 1877 (Pilvi). The cards are not dated, and the street name is tentatively read. Elmar Oswald's card also notes the Warner-Kaserne camp in Munich in April 1948, earlier than the move of 24 July 1948 recorded in the Arolsen papers; the discrepancy is unresolved. ↩ ↩

33. Mörlbach death register no. 6/1945; surviving certificate issued 24 January 1951 for postwar tracing documentation. Its issue date does not establish when the family learned of Virve's death. The certificate records the hour as unknown and describes her as single and Lutheran. ↩

34. Family recollection, confirmed by relatives in October 2026. Who first told the story, and from whom they heard it, is not yet recorded. ↩

35. Michael Weber (ed.), *Königshofen 1945* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2020), ePub without stable page numbers; accessible preview. Three passages describe the attack. (1) Hans Greifenstein, "Die letzten Tage des 2. Weltkrieges in Königshofen," second paragraph, opening "Der Berichterstatter war am Sonntag, den 18. März 1945…"; the heading identifies a transcription made by Pastor Erwin Günther in July 1954, which is not necessarily the date of original composition. Greifenstein, who reached Königshofen in March 1945, does not claim to have witnessed the attack, and he dates it as three days after the Ansbach raid of 23 February rather than by calendar date. (2) Berta Bauernfeind, the pastor's widow, "Bericht über die Amtszeit von Pfarrer Hermann Bauernfeind 1936–1945," transcribed by Pastor Günther on 14 July 1954, which gives 26 February 1945. (3) The editor's biographical note on Hermann Bauernfeind, which also gives 26 February and reports Pastor Dannhaimer's description of the scene; it calls him "der dortige Pfarrer" (the pastor there) without naming his parish. These are local accounts, not testimony by named passengers. The book places the attack at "Mörlbach bei Steinbach". No Steinbach next to Mörlbach has been identified. Steinach, which like Mörlbach is now part of the municipality of Gallmersgarten, is the junction where the branch line from Bad Windsheim meets the Treuchtlingen–Würzburg line, the route a traveler to Würzburg would take; Steinach may be meant, but this is not confirmed. The German extracts and translations are kept with the research files. ↩

36. Kit C. Carter and Robert Mueller, *U.S. Army Air Forces in World War II: Combat Chronology, 1941–1945* (Center for Air Force History, 1991), entry "2/26/45 Ninth AF," PDF page 633 of 743. This is a high-level operational summary, not an individual mission report identifying the aircraft or unit responsible for Virve's death. ↩

37. WWII refugees database (2024.wwii-refugees.ee), entry for Elmar-Heinrich Koik, consulted 19 October 2026, quoting lists of Estonians in Finnish and German forces, 1940–1945, which cite Estonian National Archives files ERA.R-64, ERA.R-67.2.7 and 10, and ERA.R-165.1.5, 87 and 112: "In the German army, soldier, 3. Estonian Volunteer Brigade Field-Battalion." The entry reads "KOIK, Elmar, Juhan, m, s. 30.12.1925 Viljandimaa, Karksi v.", matching his birth date, father's name and parish; the underlying personnel files have not been examined. His exile register card (ERA.4942.4.6, image 2125) describes him as a driver from Tallinn; the card reads "30.12.25", although the database's index line for it gives 31 December 1929. ↩

38. Family confirmation that Pilvi traveled alone; US National Archives, Pan American Airways passenger manifest, Frankfurt–New York, 30 November–2 December 1947, line 17. The street name in the Wichita address is partly obscured; the number and "Drive" are clear. A later handwritten annotation reads "Lawful entry for perm. res. created in C.O. pursuant Sec. 4 D.P. Act", with her alien registration number, withheld. Section 4 of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 (Public Law 80-774, 62 Stat. 1009) allowed displaced persons who had entered the United States before 1 April 1948 to apply for permanent residence. The annotation does not show her original visa category or that she lived at the Wichita address. ↩

39. 1950 US census, California, Los Angeles, enumeration district 66-1226, sheets 12–13, enumerated 10–11 April 1950 (National Archives 1950 census website, images 14–15). The household: Peter Leoke, head, 57, married, naturalized, activity in the census week entered as "OT" (other), with "No" for work, looking for work and having a job; his brother Elmar O., 53, working ("WK"), 40 hours, occupation "Janitor", industry "Savings bank"; sister-in-law Hilda W., 53, keeping house ("H"); and niece Pilvi L., 28, single, working, 40 hours, occupation "Factory group insurance & typist", industry "Porcelain manufacturing", private employer. Peter's wife, Elizabeth, is not listed in the household. ↩

40. Pilvi's declaration of intention (no. 147597, US District Court, Los Angeles, 12 February 1952) gives the marriage as 22 December 1951 at Las Vegas. The Clark County, Nevada, certificate (no. 195112280220193) was recorded on 28 December 1951, as indexed at sortedbyname.com; that is the recording date, not the wedding date. ↩

41. Sources as in the notes to “Hans Leoke: from schoolmaster to bookseller”, with the soul revisions EAA.1865.3.282/19 (1811), 283/5a (1816), 283/13 (1826), 284/7 (1834), 288/4 (1850) and 293/3 (1857–58); Hans Wardja’s death, EELK Viljandi congregation, deaths 1846, EAA.1290.1.60, No. 317; Jaak, son of Jürri, births 1839, EAA.1290.1.53, image 21, No. 338; Ann, births 1847, EAA.1290.1.61, image 22. Tõllasepp family: births 1866, 1867, 1869, 1871 and 1874, EAA.1290.1.82, image 8; .84, image 16; .86, image 19; .88, image 18, No. 249; .316, image 26, No. 345; marriage 1863, EAA.1290.1.504, image 13; marriage 1839, EAA.1290.1.53, image 34, No. 34 (“Jaan Töllasep ü Peia Marri Peia”); household book 1852–64, EAA.1290.1.526, image 3; deaths: 1863, EAA.1290.1.78, image 6, No. 157; 1880, EAA.1290.1.322, image 58, No. 242; 1907, EAA.1290.1.349, image 46, No. 85; 1919, EAA.1290.1.556, image 141, No. 294; grave register, kalmistud.ee, plot Pauluse XI 146-8. The godparents named Aadu and Tõnis Tõllasepp: births 1886, 1888 and 1892, EAA.1290.1.328, image 21; .330, image 22; .334, image 17. Meomüttel family: marriage 1860, EAA.1290.1.83, image 27, No. 60, and EAA.1290.1.503, image 119, No. 67; births 1841, 1861, 1864, 1866 and 1869, EAA.1290.1.55, image 14, No. 214; .75, image 24; .80, image 13; .82, image 11; .86, image 13; Jakob’s death, deaths 1888, EAA.1290.1.330, image 46, No. 140; Kaddri in Tartu, EELK Tartu St Peter’s congregation, household book, EAA.3150.1.690, p. 245; Ann’s marriage, household-book note, EAA.1290.1.533, image 360; Jüri (b. 1893), Marri and Ann: grave register, kalmistud.ee. The marriage list of 1860 was earlier read as giving Jakob’s birth as 24 December; his baptism shows it was June. ↩

42. Hans Paltser’s death: EELK Viljandi congregation, deaths 1884, EAA.1290.1.326, image 43, No. 73. Mari née Naar: Viljandi deaths 1909, EAA.1290.1.555, image 281, No. 37; household books EAA.1290.1.533, image 447, and EAA.1290.1.557, image 367. Ann’s sisters: Viljandi manor household books. ↩

43. Alt-Karrishof soul revisions: 1811, EAA.1865.3.171/4, image 16; 1826, EAA.1865.3.171/11, image 35; 1834, EAA.1865.3.172/4, image 27; 1850, EAA.1865.3.173/2, image 12; 1858, EAA.1865.3.174/4, image 17. Release list, 1825: EAA.931.1.22, image 15. Euseküll revisions: 1834 (with the 1816 ages), EAA.1865.5.106, images 6 and 22; 1850, EAA.1865.3.213/7, image 37; 1858, EAA.1865.3.216/4, image 38. Juhan Rantsus as godfather: Paistu births 1875, EAA.1286.1.298, image 4, No. 29. Other sources as in the notes to “Juhan’s parents and the earlier Koiks”. ↩

44. Elmar Oswald: the *Album Academicum* entry as given in the WWII refugees database, “Surm: 1972-02-26, USA Los Angeles”; the Social Security Death Master File gives February 1972. Hilda: Death Master File, died 30 June 1988, last residence ZIP code 91306 (Winnetka, Los Angeles); the index does not give the place of death. Peter: Death Master File, April 1973. The Death Master File as indexed at sortedbyname.com. ↩

45. Find a Grave, memorials 85906083–85906085: Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood Hills, Enduring Faith section, map D05, lot 1235. ↩

46. Jaak, son of Jurri Look and Madde, born 19 September 1839 at Saare Annusse: EELK Viljandi congregation, births 1839, EAA.1290.1.53, image 21, No. 338. Jürri as farm holder of Nuija Jahn from 1835, with his son Jaak aged 18 in 1857–58: Alt-Woidoma revisions EAA.1865.3.288/4, image 12, and EAA.1865.3.293/3, image 10. Jaak Lõuke (1839–1909): Viljandi congregation household books. ↩

47. Hugo: Arolsen Archives, DP registration card (born Tallinn, 1929; father Johannes) and USCC emigration list for unaccompanied children; Tallinn family register vol. 22, p. 561 (parents Johannes, born 1900, and Wilhelmine, born 1905), as indexed in the WWII refugees database; Social Security Death Master File (died 31 July 1984). Johannes Leoke, born 18 March 1900 at Peningi, son of Hinrik: memoriaal.ee and Tallinn family register vol. 68, p. 51. The link between Hugo’s father and this Johannes rests on the same name and birth year and is not confirmed. ↩

48. NARA, Merchant Marine Applications for Licenses of Officers, RG 26 (NAID 230106752): licensed second mate, Los Angeles, 5 March 1925; application of 5 December 1929 giving birth at Reval (Tallinn), 22 May 1891, and US citizenship. A declaration of intention indexed as “Leoke, Hans”, no. 214568, US District Court, Southern District of New York (NAID 61751317), 1926, may be his or that of Hans the younger, who was then in New York; the index does not say which. ↩