

FAMILY COATS OF ARMS

**A brief review of the coats of arms
in the van Alderwerelt family**

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Family Coats of Arms

Introduction

The origin of coats of arms, often called family crests, has been a matter of speculation by historians. There is no evidence of coats of arms being present at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, nor were family crests apparent in continental Europe by the beginning of the 12th century. However, in the 13th century, coats of arms were used throughout Europe. During this time, the Crusades undoubtedly helped spread their use.

When offensive weapons were cudgel, spear, sword or lance, a warrior carried a shield for his defense. Shields were often marked with an emblem or device to show ownership or kinship, as were the banners which served as rallying points in hand-to-hand combat. The central feature of any coat of arms is such a shield.

Shields gave limited protection, and so to some early blacksmiths we owe the invention of armor. As skills developed, armor became more elaborate and heavier. Armor was usually covered by a cloth surcoat. This cloth would also be marked with an emblem or device, and it is from this that the phrase coat of arms is derived.

If the need for identification in war was the origin of coats of arms, the rapid growth of heraldry which took place in the 12th century was a product of mock battles -- the tournament. The tournament had its beginnings in Normandy, and was imported into England after the Conquest (The battle of Hastings in 1066). For the young noble, the tournament was training for war. For the population at large, it was a pleasing diversion and crowd-drawing spectacle. Those taking part sported their colors -- their coats of arms. The tournament led to an increasingly elaborate and stylized system of devices on shields and surcoats and to the decorations of helmets with crests.

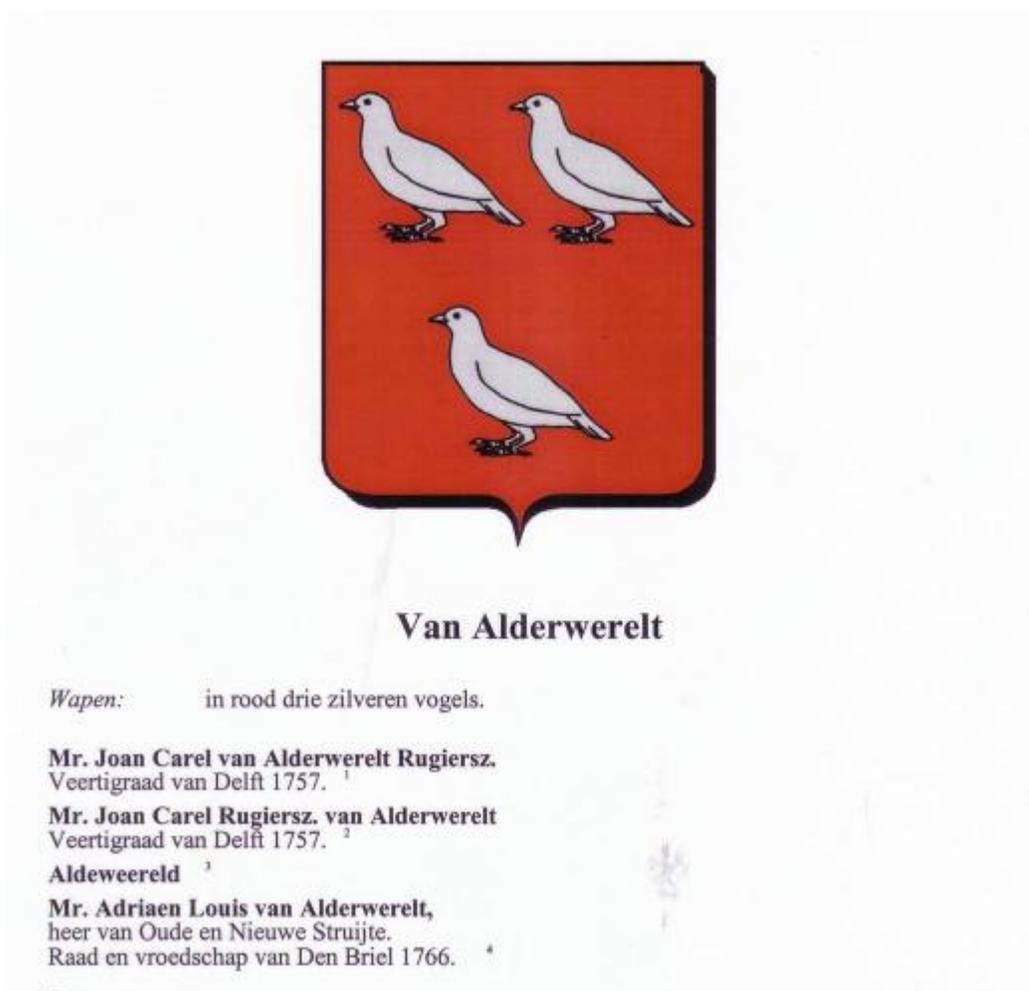
Another use of family crests has been for the sealing of documents or letters. A small version of the crest carved in stone or metal was often used to make an imprint in hot wax that sealed a document or letter. In the Netherlands, a ring bearing a family crest is referred to as a *zegelring*, which translates to signet ring. Such rings were originally also used for sealing but are now worn more as a function of family identity.

Discussion of different coats of arms used by the van Alderwerelt family.

(CBG Databank stands for Databank of Centraal Bureau voor Genealogy, The Hague).

Joan Carel van Alderwerelt (generation VIb, 1726-1791) held many functions in Delft, among them membership in the Council of Forty, which governed the City of Delft. Several books written about this Council include a 1757 listing of him together with a description of his coat of arms. This description mentions “in a red field, three silver birds”.

The CBG Databank includes:



Note that the description clearly states birds and that the illustration also clearly shows birds and not parrots that appear in later versions of the coat of arms.

Several pieces of 18th century china showing the family coat of arms have survived. Probably the most outstanding piece is shown here. This is in the possession of W.H.C. de Roo van Alderwerelt in Hoofddorp, who provided this excellent photograph.



Clearly, this also shows birds and not parrots. One possible conclusion is that this china was custom made for Joan Carel. Experts have concluded that this piece of china is typical of “chine de commande” (custom made china) produced in China during the second half of the 18th century. Note that the globe is blue, ringed in gold with a gold cross on top.

It should also be noted that the Databank illustration includes a reference to the fact that this coat of arms with birds was also used in 1766 by Adriaan Louis van Alderwerelt (generation VIa.1, 1739-1781) when he was a member of the council of the city of Den Briel or Brielle.

No other references to birds were found with respect to any other members of the family; all further references show parrots.

In 1762, Rogier van Alderwerelt (generation Vb.2, 1728-1804), a brother of Joan Carel, sealed a document in Leiden with a seal that has been described as showing parrots.

The CBG Databank includes the following:



Van Alderwerelt

Wapen: in rood drie zilveren papagaaien, goud gepoot.
Helmteken: een gouden rijksappel, blauw omgord, tussen een vlucht van zilver en rood.
Dekleden: rood, gevoerd van zilver.

Van Alderwerelt ¹

Bron

1. CBG, A.A. Vorsterman van Oijen, Stam- en Wapenboek van aanzienlijke Nederlandsche Familiën met genealogische en heraldische aantekeningen, pl. 2.

The description reads: in a red field three silver parrots, with gold feet. On the helmet a gold globe, ringed in blue. There is no mention of the cross on the globe, and no date is shown for the book in which this was found.

In 1768, Pieter Francois van Alderwerelt (generation VIa.3, 1744-1769), a brother of the above mentioned Adriaan Louis, sealed his last will and testament in The Hague with a seal described as showing parrots.

The following pictures originated from an individual who as a hobby collected seals from old letters and documents. The three parrots are clearly visible in these two van Alderwerelt seals. No date was given.



Below are two clear wax imprints, one of the van Alderwerelt and the other of the de Roo van Alderwerelt coat of arms. Parrots appear in both. These imprints are in the writer's collection. .



It was in 1755 that Jean Louis van Alderwerelt (generation VIa, 1711-1778) was elevated to the title of Rijksbaron (baron of the Holy Roman Empire) by Emperor Frans I.

The CBG Databank shows the following for him:



Van Alderwerelt

Wapen: in zilver drie groene papegaaien, rood geoogd.
Hartschild: In rood een zilveren leeuw, rood getongd.
Helm: twee helmen: elk met kroon van drie bladeren en twee parels.
Helmteken: rechts: een uitkomende leeuw van het schild; links: een papagaai van het schild.
Dekleden: rood, gevoerd van zilver.
Schildhouders: twee omziende leeuwen van natuurlijke kleur, rood getongd.
Opmerkingen: het geheel geplaatst op een bruin voetstuk.

Mr. Jean Constantijn baron van Alderwerelt

Geb. 's-Gravenhage 13 april 1748, overl. 's-Gravenhage 23 maart 1825.
Bij K.B. van 15 april 1815, nr. 17 ingelijfd in de Nerderlandse adel.^{1,2,3}

Jean Louis van Alderwerelt

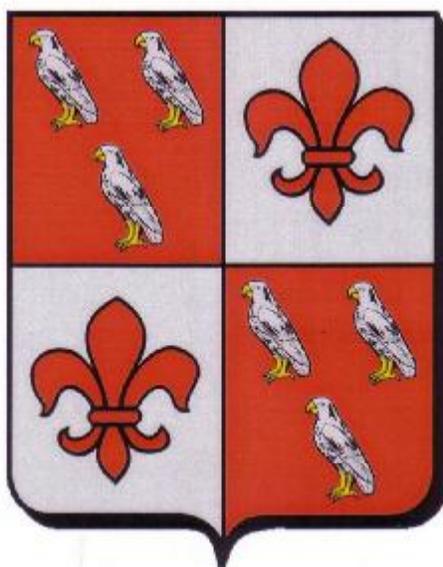
Geb. Amsterdam 8 okt. 1711, overl. Brielle 29 dec. 1778. Bij besluit van Keizer Frans I d.d. 16 jan. 1755 verheven tot Baron des H.R.Rijks.^{1,2,3}

The description reads: in a silver field three green parrots with red eyes; with a center piece of a silver lion in a red field. We presume this was created in or shortly after 1755. There is no mention of a gold globe or a cross on the globe. Instead, the description refers to a lion and a parrot placed on the helmet.

His son Jean Constantijn (generation VIIa, 1748-1825) is listed as having used the same coat of arms. His title of baron was recognized under Dutch law in 1815. We believe that all his descendants used this same coat of arms. This branch of the family, which in 1824 obtained approval to change its name to van Alderwerelt Houtuyn, died out in 1906.

In 1809, Willem Pieter de Roo van Alderwerelt (generation VIIc, 1765-1837), at that time President of the Council of the City of Brielle, sealed a document in The Hague with a combination of the van Alderwerelt and de Roo coats of arms.

The CBG Databank shows the following:



De Roo van Alderwerelt

Wapen: gevierendeeld: I en IV in rood drie zilveren papegaaien, goud gesnaveld en gepoot; II en III in zilver een rode lelie.
Helmteken: een gouden wereldbol, blauw omgord, getopt met een gouden kruis.
Dekkloden: rood, gevoerd van zilver.

Mr. Willem Pieter de Roo van Alderwerelt
President van de Raad van Brielle.
Lakafdruk Den Haag 16 juli 1809. ¹

The first recorded use of the de Roo van Alderwerelt name was in a document executed by him in 1789. We assume that this coat of arms was designed that year or very shortly thereafter. Note we are clearly looking at parrots. The lily is the de Roo coat of arms. The description includes: a gold world globe, ringed in blue with a gold cross on top.

The family archives contain an elaborate presentation of the de Roo van Alderwerelt coat of arms:



In this traditional presentation, note that the globe is blue and the ring and cross are gold, identical to the china made for Willem Pieter's father (generation VIb 1726 -1791). This could therefore have been painted at the time of or shortly after the creation of the de Roo van Alderwerelt name in 1789.

In 1883, Rugier Pieter Magdalenus van Alderwerelt (generation IXc, 1831-1895) obtained official approval to add van Rosenburgh to his name. As a result, the name van Alderwerelt van Rosenburgh and the corresponding coat of arms were created.

The CBG Databank shows:



Van Alderwerelt van Rosenburgh

Wapen: in rood drie zilveren papegaaien, rood gesnaveld en gepoot.
Hartschild: In goud twee rode palen, de eerste beladen met twee gouden rozen, de tweede paal met een zilveren burcht.
Helmteken: Een gouden wereldbol, blauw omgord, getopt met een gouden kruis.
Dekleden: Rood, gevoerd van zilver.

Rugier Pieter Magdalenus van Alderwerelt van Rosenburgh
Geb. Groningen 27 januari 1831, overl. Wageningen 22 april 1895. ¹

The description includes, in a red field, three silver parrots with red beaks and feet and, in the center in a gold field, two red beams, the first with two gold roses, the second with a silver castle. It also mentions a gold globe ringed in blue with a gold cross on top.

Conclusion

We do not know when the van Alderwerelt family first used a coat of arms. Actual documentation of use dates from the mid 18th century.

It is known that the family used the globe with cross on top as early as the beginning of the 17th century when Jan van Alderwerelt (generation II, 1586-1637) built four houses in Amsterdam that displayed the globe and cross. See the article "Houses on the Herengracht".

The two earliest presentations of the van Alderwerelt coat of arms showed silver birds, namely Joan Carel in 1757 and Adriaan Louis in 1766. Yet, Rugier, Joan Carel's two-year younger brother, in 1762 sealed with what were described as parrots. Or was the seal hard to read and someone just wanted to say that they were parrots?

Jean Louis, Adriaan Louis' father, is being given credit for the design of the coat of arms showing green parrots. In 1768, Pieter Francois, one of Adriaan Louis' younger brothers, sealed with what is reported as parrots. Another younger brother of Adriaan Louis, namely Jean Constantijn, is reported to have used the green parrots coat of arms.

Of one thing there is no doubt: the coats of arms of the surviving two branches of the family, namely van Alderwerelt van Rosenburgh and de Roo van Alderwerelt, both display silver parrots, and have a gold globe, ringed in blue, with a gold cross on top.
