

An artist in the family?

Hermanus van Aldewerelt (1629-1669)

The painter Hermanus (sometimes called Herman or Hermann) van Aldewerelt lived and worked in Amsterdam in the 17th century. This was the golden century which saw so many Dutch and Flemish artists painting portraits of individuals and family groups because it was a very prosperous time.

While Hermanus was not among the well known painters, it is known that a number of his paintings have survived. These are mostly in private collections except for two that are in museums.

A painting by Hermanus van Aldewerelt called “The Concert” was included in an exhibition in the Nicholas Hall of the Winter Palace, State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia from October 2006 to January 2007 marking the 400th anniversary of the birth of Rembrandt. This painting came in the 1870’s into the hands of P.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky, a celebrated Russian traveler, geographer and explorer of Central Asia whose large collection is now housed in the Hermitage Museum.

The slide collection of the Arts Department of Manhattan College in Riverdale, New York, contains an image of a painting by Hermanus van Aldewerelt called “Musical Party” painted in 1652. This is believed to be the painting that is in the Hermitage Museum as it is thought that the paintings called “The Concert” and “Musical Party” are one and the same.

The Syracuse University Library also contains a slide of a painting identified as “Musical Party 1652” but it was not possible to obtain an image of that. I assume it is the same slide as the one at Manhattan College.



“Musical Party” 1652

The Staatliches Museum, Schwerin, Germany, has in its collection a painting by Hermanus van Aldewerelt called “Allegory of the Five Senses” painted in 1651.



“Allegory of the Five Senses” 1651

At an auction by Christie's in April 1981, a auction lot described as "Portrait of Gerard Kock; and his wife" sold for 3,000 British Pounds which at today's exchange rate would equal \$ 6,000.00. Christie's has advised me that the auction catalogue did not contain an illustration of this lot.

The Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon published in Leipzig, Germany in 1872 includes a reference to paintings by Hermanus van Alderwereld of Gerard Kock and his wife Geertruid van Schuilenberg with the notation that these two portraits were painted in 1639 and were in private hands. We can therefore definitely conclude that the lot auctioned at Christie's in 1981 consisted of two portraits and that they were of Gerard and Geertruide Kock.

The Van Alderwerelt family archives contain black and white photos of two portraits, a man and a woman. Based on some correspondence in the family files and the above information I am now comfortable with concluding that these photos show the portraits of Gerard and Geertruide Kock.



Gerard Kock 1639



Geertruid van Schuilenberg

The Van Alderwerelt family archives also contain black and white reproductions of two family group paintings by Hermanus van Aldewerelt. Neither is identified nor are dates given. Both are portraits of 17th century patrician families in Amsterdam.





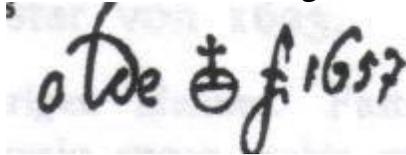
Hermanus van Aldewerelt had an interesting way to sign some of his paintings, namely:

H. V. Alde 

Some art historians have tried to interpret this to mean that he had abbreviated his name to Van Alde but that is a totally incorrect interpretation. In Dutch, the word for globe or world is wereld or in very old times werelt. So he simply used the world globe to spell out his name. To me there is a further implication from the use of the globe with the cross on top as that is part of the Van Alderwerelt coat of arms and suggests that he is part of “our” family. I will write more about that later in this article.

Syracuse University also gave me a reference from a German art history publication that enabled me to locate an 1899 publication named Galerie Jos. V. Novak in Prague. Apart from mentioning the “Allegory of the Five Senses” in the Schwerin Museum it mentions a painting dated 1657 by Hermanus entitled “The Slaughtered Pig”. A detailed description in German was given but no illustration nor any information as to its whereabouts was provided.

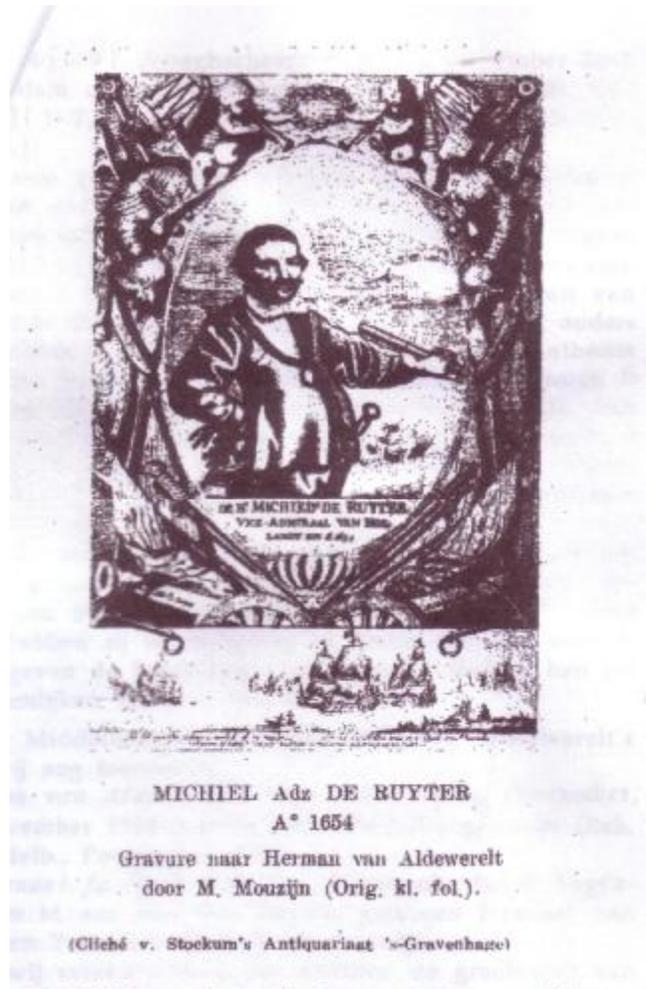
The listing did show how Hermanus had signed this painting, namely,



This is very similar to the earlier signature on the previous page. Lastly, there was also a reference to a painting called “geboorte Christi” or “The birth of Christ” but absolutely no further information on this was provided.

Michael Mosyn, a prolific engraver who worked in the mid 17th century, produced engravings based on paintings by Herman van Aldewerelt of well known individuals, including Admiral de Ruyter, Jan Evertsen, Jan van Galen, Maarten Harpertz Tromp and Witte Cornelisz de Witte. What has become of all these paintings is unknown.

The following is Mosyn’s engraving based on the painting of Admiral de Ruyter.



So now we finally get to the question: Is Hermanus van Alderwerelt a member of “our” branch of the family? When using the phrase “our branch” I mean all those individuals who are descended from Cornelis van Alderwerelt who came from Flanders and is known to have arrived in the city of Middelburg, Province of Zeeland in or just before 1580. The answer to that question is a definite “No”; he was not a descendant of Cornelis van Alderwerelt.

But then who was he? In trying to answer that question we need to step into the area of assumptions. One assumption would be that Cornelis had two brothers and that all three moved north to Middelburg at more or less the same time. The name of one of his brothers would then be Anthonis while we do not know the name of the other one. The next assumption is that Hermanus the painter would then be a grandson of the brother whose name we do not know. The link would therefore be back in Flanders in the form of the father of these three men. His name is thought to have been Anthonis.

In a sense we could therefore say that based on these assumptions Hermanus is part of the same “clan”. The fact that he used the world globe with the cross on top, which is part of “our” coat of arms, as part of his signature would fit this scenario and would also strongly suggest that the coat of arms was already being used by the family in the Flanders area of Belgium.

On the other hand, we do not find individuals of the several branches of the family mentioned together in any family documents in Dutch archives. Baptisms or burials were always recorded by the church and relatives were usually listed as witnesses. In addition, while our Cornelis and his offspring were obviously very successful textile merchants, which is clearly illustrated by their ability to have houses built for them along one of main canals in Amsterdam, the two sons of the unnamed brother were listed as one being a “droogscheerder” (cloth shearer) and the other as a “snijder” (cutter or carver) while the husband of Hermanus’ sister is listed as being a “ebbenhoutwerker” (ebony woodworker). That points to a different economic level which could also account for the apparent lack of contact.

Lastly, while all branches of the family were Protestant, there were several different sects involved which particularly at that time did not promote contact between the branches. Only “our” branch started by Cornelis has survived to the present; the other branches appear to have died out.

These assumptions do explain some of the fairly substantial number of individuals named Van Alderwerelt or Van Aldewerelt that are listed in early church records in Middelburg and Amsterdam. For those readers who are interested in more detail, page 9 shows the relationship between the individuals discussed above.

For the genealogical information in this article, I am greatly indebted to my father who published an article about this in the genealogical magazine *Nederlandsche Leeuw* in 1943 and to Mr. H.F.Wijnman who wrote extensively about this in the same publication in 1931.

D.M.O. de Roo van Alderwerelt
February 2008

Sources:

De Roo van Alderwerelt archives at Nationaal Archief in The Hague and at the residence of Willem de Roo van Alderwerelt in Hoofddorp.

Nederlandsche Leeuw 1931 pages 208/216 and 1943 pages 30/34.

Arts Department, Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY – www.manhattan.edu

Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, NY – www.syr.edu

Hermitage Museum, St. Peterburg, Russia - www.hermitagemuseum.org

Christie's – www.christies.com

Publication by *Kunstler-Lexikon*, Leipzig, Germany.

Museum Listings – www.codart.nl

Information about Artists – www.artinfo.com

Publication by Galerie Jos. V. Novak, Prague

ANTHONIS VAN ALDERWERELT

Hermanus used the name Van Alderwerelt and perhaps some others did also.
Many different spellings have been observed in old documents.

<p>ANTHONIS Born in Meenen Came to Middelburg</p>	<p>CORNELIS Born about 1565 in Meenen Listed in Middelburg in 1580 Cathelyne Pleviers</p>	<p>NAME NOT KNOWN Came to Middelburg Born in Meenen Died before 4 May 1624</p>		
<p>CORNELIS Born about 1576 in Meenen went to Middelburg Died 2 September 1632 in Middelburg Married 16 January 1605 in Amsterdam Barbara Jacobs Bloks Born about 1581, died before 26 February 1619</p>	<p>JAN Born 1 August 1586 Middelburg Moved to A'dam Died 7 June 1637 Amsterdam Elisabeth Block (Houses in A'dam)</p>	<p>CORNELIS Born Middelburg Int. 10 Nov 1618 A'dam Trijntgen Lambertsdr Born 1595 Bloxsiel</p>	<p>ANTHONIS Born Middelburg about 1596 Died before 17 June 1662 Int. 4 May 1624 A'dam Aagttie Haomans (Aeltje Hermans) Born 1596</p>	<p>ISAAK Born about 1603 Int. 5 June 1627 Middelburg Lysbeth Quackelbeen</p>
<p>ANTHONI Born about 1606 Died before 29 Jul 1659 Married 22 March 1630 in Middelburg Philippina Engels Died before 29 Jul 1659</p>	<p>CORNELIS Born about 1617 Buried 8 January 1623 In Middelburg</p>	<p>OUR BRANCH ↓ ↓ ↓</p>	<p>HERMANUS Born about 1629 Amsterdam Buried 17 July 1669 A'dam Int. 30 Aug 1662 A'dam Tietje Jans Born about 1635 Amsterdam</p>	<p>↓ MARIA Born about 1631 Amsterdam Int. 17 June 1662 A'dam Cornelis Pieterse van Warmelo Born 1631</p>