

Houses in Amsterdam

The van Alderwerelt family in Amsterdam during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The 17th century is generally referred to the “Golden Century” in Dutch history. Some historians feel that this very important period actually started around 1585, when Spain had lost control over the Netherlands.

The “Golden Century” saw tremendous strides in the discovery of far-off lands and great increases in world trade in spices and other goods. Dutch traders sailed over the world and brought goods from exotic lands back to the Netherlands for sale all over Western Europe and elsewhere. Artistic expression greatly blossomed during this period and we only need to think of Rembrandt (1609-1669) as one outstanding example of this. Wealth accumulated quickly from the trading, shipping and financing activities and this enabled individuals and families to have their portraits painted by some of the famous painters and also by some of the lesser known painters. Hermanus van Alderwerelt was one of the lesser known painters as discussed in more detail in the article entitled “An Artist in the Family?”

Amsterdam (which in 1578 had only some 30,000 inhabitants) quickly grew into a very important trade and financial center. By 1625 the population had increased to about 100,000. So in about 50 years the population more than tripled. A real building boom was fueled by trading and financing profits.

To put this in perspective in relation to American history, Jamestown, Virginia, the first English settlement in North America, was founded in 1607 while the Mayflower touched land in Massachusetts late in 1620.



Map of Amsterdam in late 16th century

Plans for expanding the city of Amsterdam were made as early as 1609 while actual work started in 1613. The expansion consisted of three rings of canals around the old city center. These canals were named Herengracht (Gentlemen's canal), Keizersgracht (Emperor's canal) and Prinsengracht (Prince's canal). Lots were sold by the city at auctions and lotteries.

Cornelis van Alderwerelt, who came from Menen, Belgium, had by 1580 settled in the Dutch city of Middelburg, in the province of Zeeland. His son Jan was born in that city in 1586. On 22 January 1614, Jan van Alderwerelt purchased at auction from the city of Amsterdam lots 31 and 32 on the west side of the Herengracht. Jan was also able to buy a small part of lot 33, all of lot 34 and a small part of lot 35, all on the Herengracht, from individuals who had purchased these lots from the city. In 1617 he also bought lot 29 on the Keizersgracht. What attracted him about that lot was that it is directly behind lot 34 on the Herengracht. Lastly, he also bought lots 12 and 13 on the Herengracht,



Amsterdam in late 17th or early 18th century.

The old city center can be seen in the middle and the 3 new canals are clearly visible immediately to the right and continuing around the top of the old city center. The area beyond the new canals was meant for later expansion.

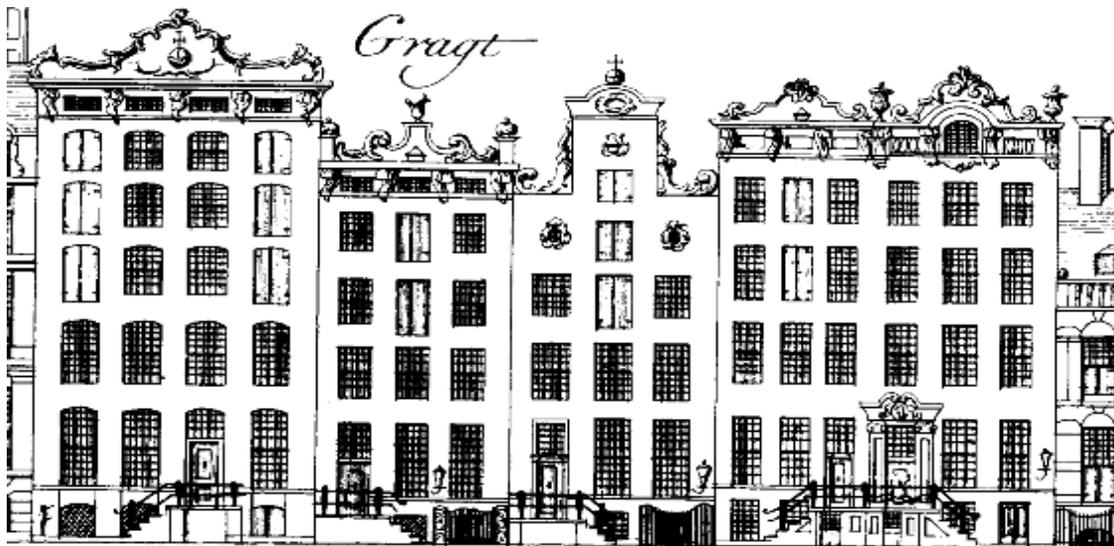
In the following descriptions we are using house numbers which came into effect in 1875. Prior to that date, no house numbers were used and properties were usually identified by describing who the neighbors were. Original lot numbers were used infrequently but these were often not correct.

All of this has created some considerable confusion when trying to reconstruct the history of individual buildings. This is very evident in the descriptions of Herengracht 64, 66 and 68 as they appeared in the 7th Yearbook of Amstelodamum 1909 and of Herengracht 60 and 62 as they appeared in the 8th Yearbook of Amstelodamum 1910. The document recording the sale of Herengracht 68 in 1740 incorrectly identified this house as having been built on lots 31 and 32 and this information was used in the above mentioned Yearbooks. When the author, Dr. Joh. C. Breen, realized the incorrect lot identifications in the Yearbooks, he wrote a document correcting the lot numbers for all these houses. We are using the corrected lot numbers in the following discussions.

Jan van Alderwerelt had the following buildings constructed for him:

- Herengracht 60 and 62 on lot 31 and a small part of lot 32
- Herengracht 64 on part of lot 32 and a small part of lot 33
- Herengracht 68 on lot 34 and a small part of lot 35
- Keizersgracht 85 on lot 29

The drawings in the Grachtenboek (Canal book) by Caspar Philips published in 1768 and reprinted in 1967, shows numbers 60 to 68 as follows:.



68

66

64

62

60



The same houses in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

Herengracht 60 and 62.

Where Herengracht 60 and 62 now stand, Jan van Alderwerelt originally had one very large house constructed and that was sold by him about 1631 to a Arnoult van Lybergen . In 1636 this house was described in documents as “daer de Werrelt voor ende in de Gevel placht te staen” or “where the world globe is shown on the gable of the house”. So the globe from the van Alderwerelt coat of arms was part of the original construction. In about 1734, or perhaps somewhat earlier, the then owner Anthony Waterman apparently had the old house demolished and had two new houses built in its place which we today know as nos.60 and 62. Subsequent remodeling changed the roof line.



Herengracht 62 & 60 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

The website of “City of Amsterdam / Municipal Department for Preservation and Restoration of Historic Buildings and Sites” includes a picture and brief discussion of the front door of number 60, as follows:



Louis XIV decoration:
cornice and attic, Oudezijds Voorburgwal 215-217 (2nd
quarter 18th cent.)
entrance to Herengracht 60 (1734)

“The period 1700-1740 was the hey-day of the Louis XIV style, characterized by heavy, symmetrically arranged shapes which often seem pompous to modern eyes. Many original 17th century canal houses were extensively renovated in the course of the 18th century, a custom which resulted in a large supply of 17th century houses updated and fitted out with Louis XIV interiors”.

In the late 1890 and early 1900’s Herengracht 60 was called The King of France.

Herengracht 60 and 62 are no longer private residences. Over the years the interiors were drastically changed to accommodate commercial businesses.

Herengracht 64.

Available information suggests that this house was built for Jan van Alderwerelt shortly after 1625 with “De Waerelt or De Werelt” (world globe) as part of the gable and so the house was known as De Werelt (the world). It seems that Jan named all the houses that were built for him in that fashion. We know that Jan van Alderwerelt (1586-1637) lived there with his family and his 6 sons, namely Cornelis, Jan, Anthony, Pieter, Jacob and Salomon were born there.

Cornelis died at the young age of 27 without leaving any issue. Jan started the branch of the family that eventually became van Alderwerelt Houtuyn and which died out in 1905. Anthony only had one daughter named Catharina. Pieter started the branch that ultimately became van Alderwerelt van Rosenburgh and de Roo van Alderwerelt. Descendants from Jacob all died in the 18th century as did the descendants of Salomon.

On April 12, 1663, the son Jan van Alderwerelt (1614-1682), who had inherited the house from his father, sold it for 30,000 Dutch guilders to his brother Pieter van Alderwerelt (1619-1681) who lived at Herengracht 68.

1663
12 April 1663
Contract between Jan and Pieter for Herengracht 64

Page 1 of the 2 page contract dated 12 April 1663 between Jan and Pieter for Herengracht 64

When Pieter died in 1681, he left the house to his widow, Clara van Buren (1626-1704) and when she died in 1704, she left the house to the six children of their daughter Clara van Alderwerelt (1659-1695) and her husband Hendrik de Penijn. Around 1716 the house was remodeled or rebuilt and it remained a rental until it was sold in 1731 by the last remaining descendent of Clara van Alderwerelt and Hendrik de Penijn.

The drawing in the Grachtenboek (Canal book) of 1768 shows the globe and cross on the roof line:



64



Herengracht 64 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

KLM (Royal Dutch Airline) at one time used small replicas of old buildings from all over the Netherlands, filled with genever (Dutch gin), as a gift to their business class passengers. This included Herengracht 64 as shown here and the writer and his two children each have one of these in their collection.

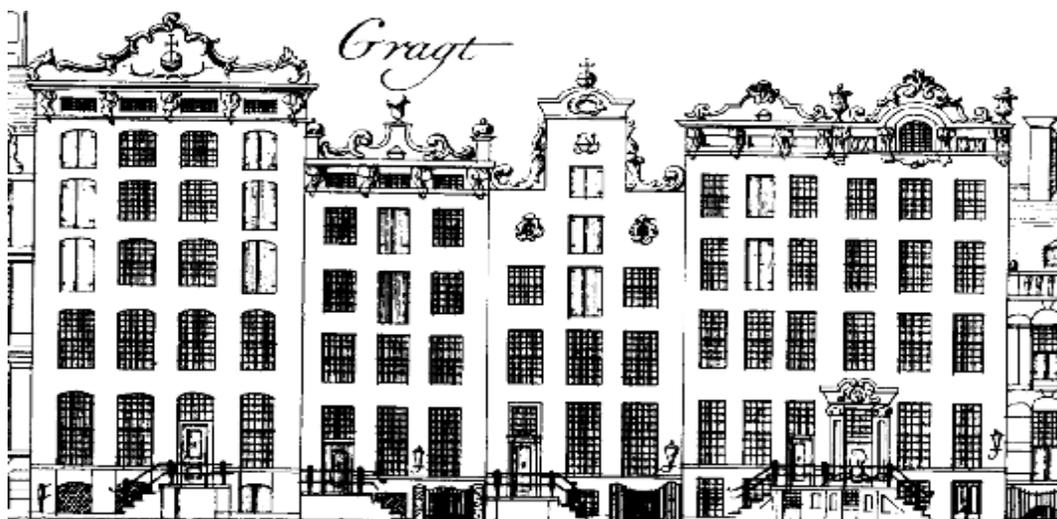


KLM house no.56

Herengracht 68.

This rather large house was built for Jan van Alderwerelt in or shortly after 1615 and as was the case with all the other houses built for him, the world globe and cross were clearly visible on the roof line.

The drawing in the Grachtenboek (Canal book) of 1768 shows the house at the left:





Herengracht 68 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

The first owner, Jan van Alderwerelt (1586-1637) left the property to his son Pieter van Alderwerelt (1619 - 1681). Pieter in turn left the house to his wife Clara van Buuren (1626 – 1704) who left the house to the seven children of their son Jan van Alderwerelt (1663-1716). These seven were Willem (1694 - ?), Rogier (1695 – 1738), Jan (1696 – 1736), Hendrik (1702 – 1734), Jacob (1703 - ?), Marcus (1706 – 1733) and Clara (1709 - ?). Jan, Rogier, Hendrik and Marcus had died at an early age in the Dutch East Indies.

The circumstances of the deaths of the other 3 are unknown but they were alive at the time of the sale of the house in 1740. So, as can be seen, the house remained in the family for about 125 years.

The sale was concluded on 24 May 1740 for 35,600 Dutch guilders to Barend Luykink who at that time already owned # 66. The transaction covered not only the house at # 68 but also the warehouse behind it on the Keizersgracht. The documentation describes the sale as being for “Een Huys en Erve, staande en leggende binnen deese stad op den Heerengracht, daar de wereld voorstaat en ‘t packhuys daarachter op de Keyzersgracht, daar mede de wereld voortsteat” (A house and grounds situated on the Heerengracht decorated with a world globe and a warehouse behind it on the Keyzersgracht, also decorated with the world globe

3600 font: Wij Balthazar Huydecoper en
Gerard Deutz, Veheyenen in Amfteladam,
aerkenden en kennen dat voer ons gecompereert
Eyn Willem van Aldewerelt, Jacob van Al-
dewerelt en Clara van Aldewerelt, alle
meerderjarig; mit byadere Jan Pitter als by
appohtement gade Dele en aerkbare Heeren
Veheyenen dezer Stad van dato 26 Janus 1740,
en geregistreert in t 192^{ste} Veheyenen Stiput
Regt. fol. 77^{vo}, gecommittiert om de per-
sonen van Marcus en Hendrick van
Aldewerelt - die in Doff Indien, te weten
de eerste op den 15 August 1733, en de tweede
op den 9. December 1734, Eyn overleeden, ye-
lykt blykt by de repackte declaratoiren
van de Do. Heeren Bewindheeren van de
Doff Indien de Compagnie te samere dezer
Stad; op swel sovelverre Roddel in allen
gave de Naalsteftchap van Clara van
Beuren Madame Peter van Aldewerelt
betreffende, te representeren, en het recht
en interest van de representanten van
de voorn. Marcus en Hendrick van
Aldewerelt in de ewangem. Naalsteftchap
in allen opsigten waer te neemen in
die qualiteit by nader appointement
van walgem. Heeren Veheyenen sub dato
17. februarie 1740, en geregistreert in het
102^{ste} Veheyenen Stiput Regt. fol. 99^{vo}

In 1939 the then owners of no. 68 had a plaque installed over the front door.



Herengracht 68 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

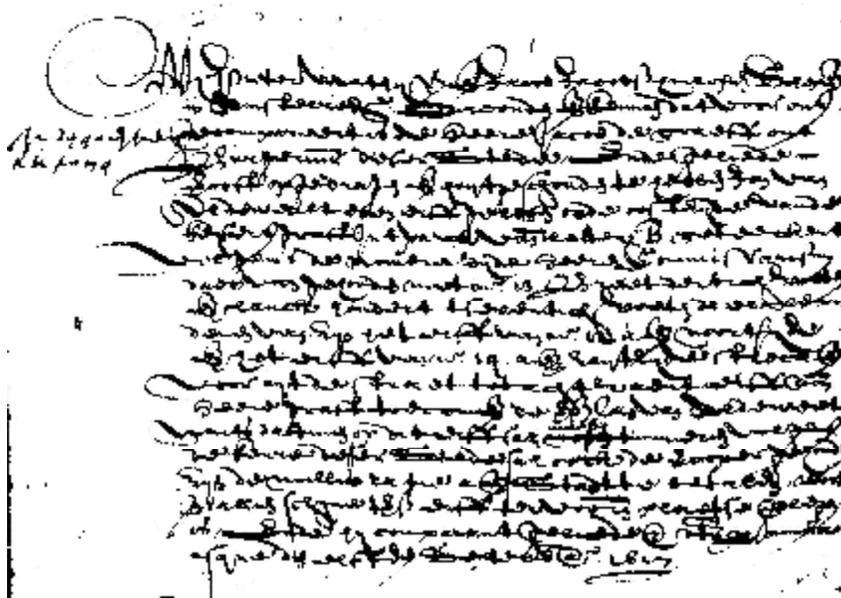
This design of this plaque was clearly based on the descriptions in the old title papers.



It appears that # 68 now contains several businesses on the upper floors while the lower floors have been converted into apartments.

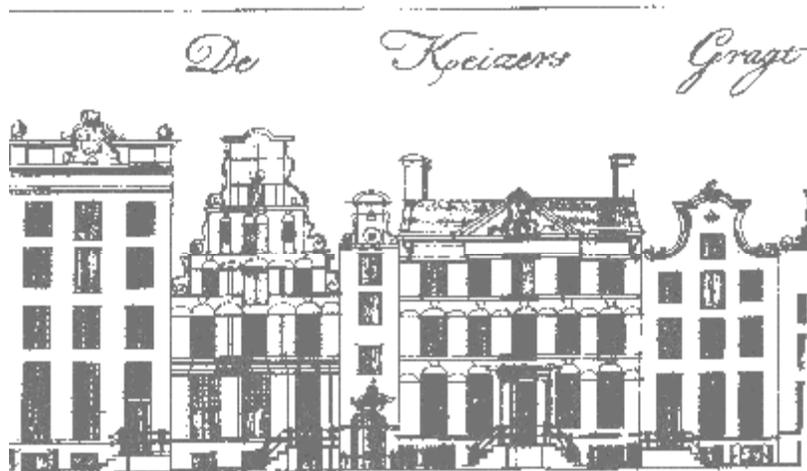
Keizersgracht 85

On 11 September 1617 Jan van Alderwerelt purchased the lot 13 on the Keizersgracht from Jacob de Graeff, ex mayor of Amsterdam. The warehouse at Keizersgracht 85 was subsequently constructed on that lot. The following purchase document was found in the Municipal Archives in Amsterdam:



Purchase document for lot 13 subsequently Keizersgracht 85

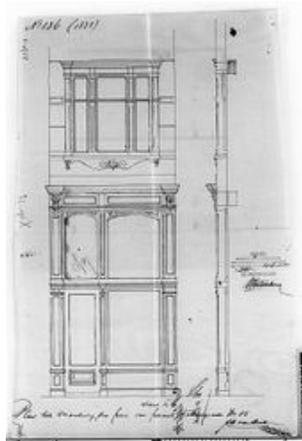
The drawing in the Grachtenboek (Canal book) of 1768 shows this warehouse as follows:



85

It is difficult to see but above the door is the world globe with the cross. Jan certainly liked to put his stamp on everything he had built for him.

In 1888 architect J.B. van Berg submitted a drawing for a proposal to change the facade of the structure. It is presumed that this actually involved the conversion of the warehouse into a dwelling. This drawing was located in the Municipal Archives in Amsterdam.



It is unclear if this drawing was acted upon but some very major changes were eventually made that resulted in # 85 becoming part of # 87.

The combination now looks like this:



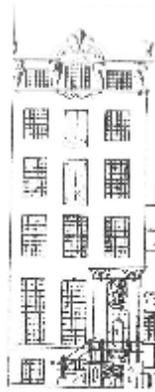
Keizersgracht 87 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

It is a bit hard to see because of the tree but you can see 3 windows to the left of the front door and 2 to the right. Even in the roof line you can see that the 3 windows are centered over the front door. The 1768 drawing clearly shows # 87 with very symmetrical proportions of 2 windows on either side of the front door. # 85 was therefore where now the extreme left windows are, now hidden by the tree.

OTHER LOCATIONS

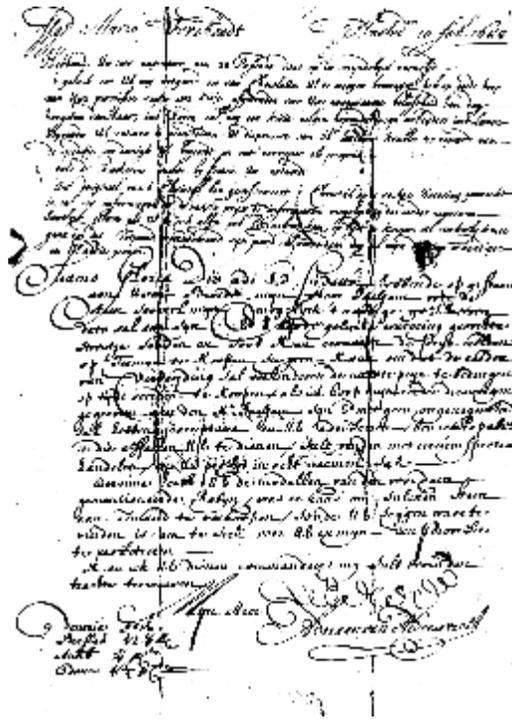
Herengracht 20

In 1669 Adriaen van Alderwerelt (1641 – 1691) purchased this house for 20,150 Dutch Guilders. Upon his death it became the property of his widow Geertruid Anslø (1640 – 1697). In 1699 the house was sold on behalf of the heirs for 28,100 Dutch Guilders.

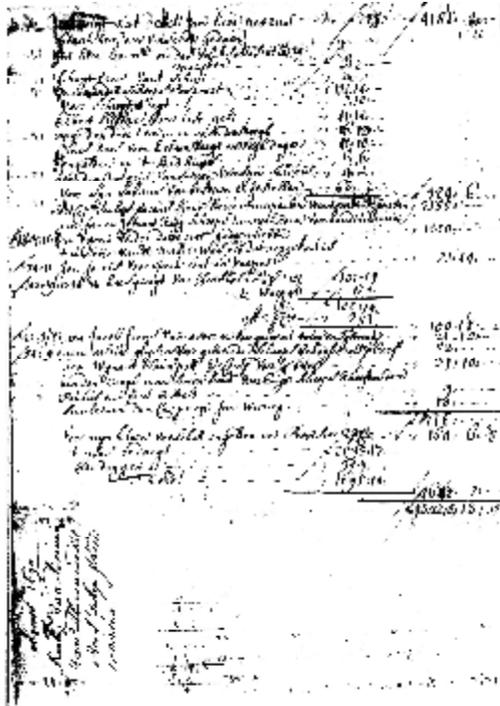


Herengracht 20
Canal Book 1768

Adriaen van Alderwerelt was a merchant. However, unlike most of the other family members who dealt in wool cloths, Adriaen traded in jewels, chocolate, etc. The following is a copy of a letter dated 10 February 1655 that he wrote to Marco Forchoudt, a merchant in Vienna, concerning trade in jewels and a shipment of diamonds.



Another document we found is an accounting of shipments made by Adriaen van Alderwerelt in August 1690 on the vessel Jesus Maria. This is the last page thereof and shows his name in the lower left hand corner.



Herengracht 66

The van Alderwerelt family had nothing to do with this house except that the owner of 66 later bought 68 from the family so it is interesting to list some details.

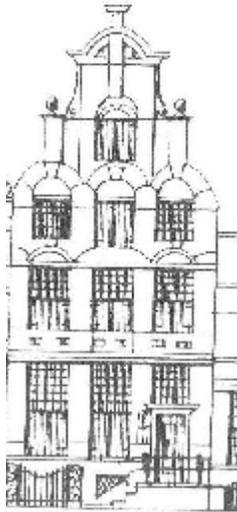
The house at Herengracht 66 is on most of lot 33 and was built for Joost Willemsz Nieuwerkerk (about 1587-1645); hence the plaque with the name “Nieuwerkerk” above the front door. In 1731, the then owner Barend Luykink had the building remodeled or totally rebuild. This is the same Barend Luykink who in 1740 bought the adjacent Herengracht 68 from the van Alderwerelt family.



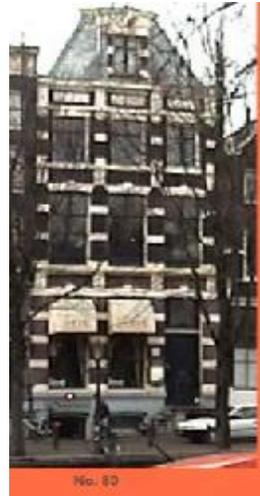
Herengracht 66 in 2003
Photo by Maarten Timmer

Herengracht 88

This house was built in or shortly before 1625 for Jan Pieterszn du (of de) Bien who had many houses built on lots he had purchased. In 1656 the house was purchased by Antonie van Alderwerelt (1617 – 1693) who was married to Rachel van Halmael (1621 – 1663). Upon his death the house went to their daughter Catharina van Alderwerelt (1657 - ?) who was married to Hendrik van der Does (1646 – 1726). The house, which was apparently named “Hamburg”, was sold at auction in 1694 for 26,700 Dutch Guilders.



Herengracht 88 in
1768 Canal Book



Herengracht 88 in 2003
(Photo Maarten Timmer)

Herengracht 93

The first known transaction concerning this house is that it was sold in 1621. In 1695 it was bought by Pieter Michielsz Blok (Blocq) (1660 – 1703) who on his death left it to his widow Johanna van Alderwerelt (1663 – 1737). She passed the property on to her children.

Herengracht 95

After construction this house passed through several hands until Michiel Pietersz. Blok purchased it in 1664. He left it to his son Pieter Michielsz Blok who later also owned the adjacent no. 93 – see above. Upon his death, his widow Johanna van Alderwerelt became the owner and she passed the property to her children.



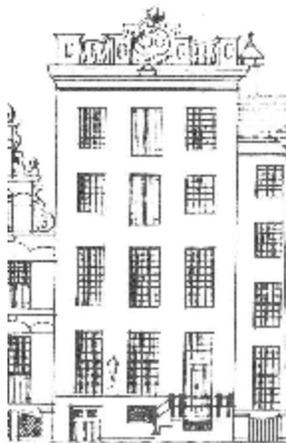
Herengracht 93 & 95 in
1768 Canal Book



Herengracht 93 & 95 in 2003
(Photo Maarten Timmer)

Herengracht 98

In 1614 Jan van Alderwerelt had also bought lots 12 and 13 but elected not to build on those lots himself. In 1618 he sold the lots to Adriaen Willemsz Hardeb who, in 1620, had a large house built on them which is now known as Herengracht 98.



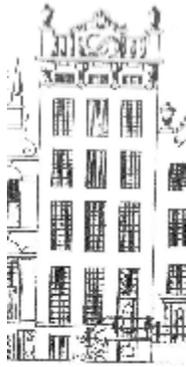
Herengracht 98 in
1768 Canal Book



Herengracht 98 & 96 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

Herengracht 246

This house was built in 1615. Helena Pietersdr (1630 – 1667) inherited the house from her father who had bought it in 1626. Helena was married to Salomon van Alderwerelt (1624 – 1679) and left it to their daughter Elisabeth van Alderwerelt (1653 – 1689) who was married to Arnoldus van Westreenen (1649 – 1716).



Herengracht 246 in
1768 Canal Book



Herengracht 244 & 246 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

Herengracht 615

Jacob van Alderwerelt (1621 – 1677), one of the 6 sons of Jan van Alderwerelt (1586 – 1637), purchased lots 15 and 16 from the City. On these two lots he had a large house with an adjacent warehouse built and literature states that a world globe was depicted above the front door of the house. After his death, the complex went to his 2 daughters, Geertruid van Alderwerelt, married to Wijnant Blaeupot, and Johanna van Alderwerelt, married to Pieter Michielsz Blok. Johanna and Pieter Blok also owned nos. 93 and 95 described above. The property was finally sold to Jacob Cornelis Backer in 1717.



Herengracht 615 & 617
In 1768 Canal Book



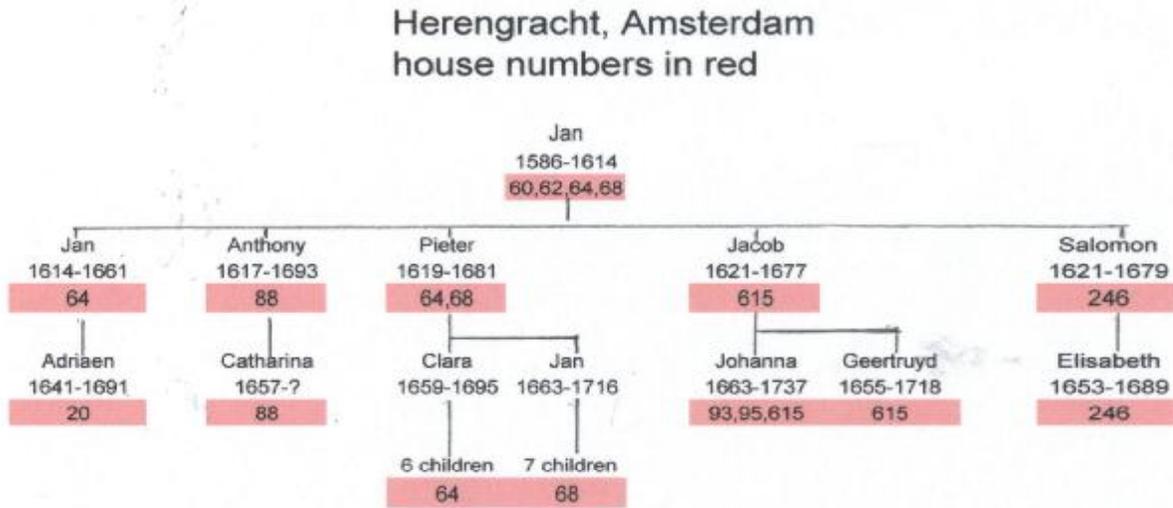
Herengracht 615 & 617 in 2003
(Photo by Maarten Timmer)

Various lots, etc.

The records at the Municipal Archives also show that Pieter van Alderwerelt (1619 – 1681) and his son Jan van Alderwerelt (1663 – 1716) purchased various lots on other less known street but because of lack of precise details we do not know what happened to these lots. In addition, the records list a purchase in about 1647 by Jacob van Alderwerelt of a house on Warmoerstraat but here again further identification is lacking.

Summary.

As the following chart shows, there was a heavy concentration of at least 3 generations of the family in Amsterdam in the 1600's and early 1700's.



Later generations were more wide spread across the country with a number of family members going to the Dutch East Indies. Out of the seven children who jointly inherited # 68, four died in the Dutch East Indies.

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

Sources

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