

Cambridge Coat of Arms

If you look up in Cambridge you can spot the Coat of Arms on bridges, signs, and above the door of the Guildhall. The Coat of Arms of Cambridge shows the River Cam with three ships on the water to demonstrate the important role the river played in the development of the city as a market town, with boats bringing wares to sell in Cambridge.

The red roses and gold Fleur de Lys (which means lily flower in French) are Royal symbols to show the status given to Cambridge by monarchs across the centuries, and specifically the charter granting this Coat of Arms by Elizabeth I in 1575. There is a bridge with fortifications to represent the “Great Bridge of Cambridge” which is the present Magdalene Bridge. The Castle at the top of the Coat of Arms is a symbol of the Castle site founded by the Romans and developed as an ongoing fortification for Cambridge where Castle Hill and Castle Street is now.

Most noticeable are the two red monsters either side of the Coat of Arms which are special mythical horses belonging to Neptune, called “Hippocampi”. These seahorses are symbols of the sea emphasizing the importance of Cambridge’s access to London and the World via the river route to the Wash and sea beyond!

