

# CIVILWARTALK

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## Lincoln Abraham Lincoln and San Marino

John Hartwell · Dec 9, 2017



**John Hartwell**

Lt. Colonel

Forum Host

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Central  
Massachusetts

Dec 9, 2017

#1

About the first of May, 1861, Secretary Seward brought to President Lincoln's attention a letter recently received by the State Department. It was among hundreds of congratulatory letters from around the world addressed to the President, following his inauguration that spring. This one was a little bit different, however, for it came to the greatest republic of its day from the very oldest, and perhaps the smallest. The signatories of the letter were "the Regent Captains of the Most Serene Republic of San Marino."



Bust of Lincoln by Raymond Barger, presented by the United States in 1932.  
It is on display in the Palazzo Publico in San Marino

San Marino was then, as it is today, the last of the scores of independent city-states that flourished for centuries all over the Italian peninsula. It was established in the fourth century, and has managed, sometimes miraculously it seems, to maintain its independence ever since. It is a very small nation. even today. its population is barely 32,000. living in an area about the size of the District of Columbia. Its two

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*"My dear sir,*

*"We have wished to write to you in our own hand and in English, although we have little knowledge and no practice in the language. It is a some while since the Republic of San Marino wishes to make alliance with the United States of America in that manner as it is possible between a great Potency and a very small country.*

*"As we think not extention of territories but conformity of opinions to procure friendly relations, so we are sure you will be glad to shake hands with a people who in its smallness and poverty can exhibit to you an antiquity from fourteen centuries of its free government.*

*"Now we must inform you, that to give to the United States of America a mark of high consideration and sincere fraternity the Sovereign Counsel on our motion decreed ... that the citizenship of the Republic of San Marino was conferred for ever to the President pro tempore of the United States of America and we are very happy to send you the diploma of it.*

*"We are acquainted from newspapers with political griefs, which you are now suffering therefore we pray to God to grant you a peaceful solution of your questions. Nevertheless we hope our letter will not reach you disagreeable, and we shall expect anxiously an answer which proves us your kind acceptance."*



*Lincoln has been honored three times  
on San Marino postage stamps*

It was a dignified, respectful gesture from the little republic, and Lincoln was moved by it. Finding time on May 7th, amidst the great and terrible events unfolding around him, he wrote the following:

*"Abraham Lincoln,  
"President of the United States of America.*

*"To the Regent Captains of the Republic of San Marino Great and Good Friends*

*"I have received and read with great sensibility the letter which as Regent Captains of the Republic of San Marino you addressed to me on the 29th of March last. I thank the Council of San Marino for the honor of citizenship they have conferred upon me.*

*"Although your dominion is small, your State is nevertheless one of the most honored, in all history. It has by its experience demonstrated the truth, so full of encouragement to the friends of Humanity, that Government founded on Republican principles is capable of being so administered as to be secure and enduring.*

*"You have kindly adverted to the trial through which this Republic is now passing. It is one of deep import. It involves the question whether a Representative republic, extended and aggrandized so much as to be safe against foreign enemies can save itself from the dangers of domestic faction. I have faith in a good result.*

*"Wishing that your interesting State may endure and flourish forever, and that you may live long and enjoy the confidence and secure the gratitude of your fellow citizens, I pray God to have you in his holy keeping. Your Good Friend*

*"ABRAHAM LINCOLN*

*"Washington, May 7 1861*

*"By the President*

*"WILLIAM H. SEWARD Secretary of State"*

San Marino 29<sup>th</sup> March  
1861

Traduzione italiana  
dal testo inglese  
S. Marino 29 Marzo 1861

My dear Sir

It is a some while since  
the Republic of S. Marino  
wishes to make alliance  
with the United States  
of America in that man-  
ner it is as it is pos-  
sible between a great  
Potency and a very  
small country. As  
we think not extension

Signore.

E qualche tempo  
che la Repubblica di San  
Marino desidera di  
stringere alleanza con  
gli Stati Uniti d' Ame-  
rica nel modo che è  
possibile tra una grande  
Potenza ed un paese  
assai piccolo. Come  
noi crediamo che non  
la estensione del ter-

The letter from San Marino to Lincoln  
[National Archives]

Abraham Lincoln,  
President of the United States of America.

To the Regent Captains of the Republic of San Marino.

Great and Good Friends:

I have received, and read with great  
anxiety the letter which as Regent Captains of the Republic of  
San Marino you addressed to me on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March last.  
I thank the Council of San Marino for the honor of citizenship  
they have conferred upon me.

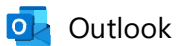
Although your dominion is small,  
your State is nevertheless one of the most honored in all history. It  
has by its experience demonstrated the truth, so full of encourage-  
ment to the friends of Humanity, that Government founded on  
Republican principles is capable of being so administered as  
to be secure and enduring.

You have kindly adverted to the trial through which  
this Republic is now passing. It is one of deep import. It involves  
the question whether a Representative Republic, extended and  
affranchized, so much as to be safe against foreign enemies,  
can save itself from the dangers of domestic faction. I have  
faith in a good result.

Wishing that your interesting State may

Bruce Vail, connecticut yankee, Cop

Lincoln's Response  
[San Marino Archives]



Outlook

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**World-Wide Lincoln**

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**From** jrconrad55@gmail.com [REDACTED]**Date** Wed 3/12/2025 11:31 AM**To** 'Walter Busch' [REDACTED]

Brother Walt,

I enjoyed your article in the latest Banner regarding Lincoln memorials in various countries.

I visited the Republic of San Marino last year, and in the Palazzo Pubblico, the seat of government for the republic, there is a bust of Abraham Lincoln.

During the Civil War, San Marino proposed a republican alliance with the United States, and the government made Abraham Lincoln an honorary citizen. He accepted the offer in a letter dated May 7, 1861, addressed a letter to the Regent Captains of the Republic of San Marino:

*Great and Good Friends*

*I have received and read with great sensibility the letter which as Regent Captains of the Republic of San Marino you addressed to me on the 29th of March last. I thank the Council of San Marino for the honor of citizenship they have conferred upon me.*

*Although your dominion is small, your State is nevertheless one of the most honored, in all history. It has by its experience demonstrated the truth, so full of encouragement to the friends of Humanity, that Government founded on Republican principles is capable of being so administered as to be secure and enduring.*

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*Wishing that your interesting State may endure and flourish forever, and that you may live long and enjoy the confidence and secure the gratitude of your fellow citizens, I pray God to have you in his holy keeping. Your Good Friend.*

*Abraham Lincoln.*

[From San Marino, With Love - The New York Times](#)





In F., C., & L.,

John Conrad, PDC  
Department of the Southwest



Lincoln bust unveiled

Clipped By:  
luca\_zonzini  
Sep 25, 2022



BENCHE' IL VOSTRO DOMINIO  
/IA PICCOLO, NONDIMENO IL  
VOSTRO /TATO E' UNO DEI PIU'  
ONORATI IN TUTTA LA /TORIA  
ALTHOUGH YOUR DOMINION Y/  
/MALL YOUR /TATE Y NEVER!  
THELE// ONE OF THE MOST  
HONORED IN ALL H/STORY

ABRAHAM  
LINCOLN



ABRAHAM  
LINCOLN  
FUNDATION  
APR 1981

MELCHIOR  
DOMINICO

SENATVS - F  
AMIC  
CVM - VI

REI - PVE

DIGNITAT

ALOISIVS - C  
DOMINICVS - CAR





BENCHÉ IL VO/STRO DOMINIO  
/IA PICCOLO, NONDIMENO IL  
VO/STRO /TATO È UNO DEI PIÙ  
ONORATI IN TUTTA LA /TORIA  
ALTHOUGH YOUR DOMINION /  
/MALL YOUR /TATE / NEVER  
THELE// ONE OF THE MO/T  
HONORED IN ALL H/STORY

ABRAHAM  
LINCOLN



1809-1865





BENCHE' IL VO/STRO DOMINIO  
/IA PICCOLO, NONDIMENO IL  
VO/STRO /TATO E' UNO DEI PIU'  
ONORATI IN TUTTA LA /TORIA.  
ALTHOUGH YOUR DOMINION /  
/MALL YOUR /TATE /' NEVER  
THELE// ONE OF THE MOST  
HONORED IN ALL H/STORY

ABRAHAM  
LINCOLN



1947-1952

DONATO



PERCHÉ IL VOSTRO DONATO  
HA PIÙ DI 100 ANNI DI  
ESPERIENZA IN TUTTI I TIPI DI  
CANTIERI, SARETE SODDISFATTI  
DALLA VOSTRA TAVOLA DI LAVORO  
TUTTA LA VOSTRA FIDUCIA  
SARÀ SODDISFATTA IN TUTTI I TIPI DI  
CANTIERI.

Donato  
Cattaneo



Donato  
Cattaneo

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