

c Dec 10 1895

The "Earliest" Likeness of Lincoln.

To the Editor of the Tribune: - Without chal-
lenging the authenticity of the picture
of Abraham Lincoln made public
for the first time in Leisure's Maga-
zine for November, one could have
wished a more definite and direct
account of its origin and custody.
If "taken when Lincoln was about
forty," it gives us his personal ap-
pearance as a member of Congress,
for he completed his fortieth year
ten or eleven months before the close of his
term, March 3, 1849.

Compared with the photograph which
confronts it, taken nine years later, and
with the earlier one on p. 493, the change
is startling. In some details, as a "da-
guerrotype," it is inexplicable. If in his
son's possession when Lincoln's papers
were put in our hands by his biographers,
Messrs. Nicolay and Hay, how came

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this "earliest picture" to be neglected? And when its publication would have at once corrected the prevailing impression, all over the world, as to his "native ugliness," how happens it never to have seen the light until more than thirty years after his death?

Facts are in these days regarded as an essential element of history, and the scholar is more exacting as to evidence than in some other times. If possible this particular matter ought to be put beyond question by a responsible statement of dates and circumstances, and not left to the cavils of another and perhaps yet more skeptical generation.

Ohio, Dec. 10, 1895.

J. H. B.
[corrected]

