



On August 14, 1945, Alfred Eisenstaedt - a photographer for *Life* magazine - was doing what he did best ... taking candid photos of people who didn't know he was watching them. While celebrating soldiers and sailors were grabbing girls on the streets of New York City, "Eisie" (as he was known to friends) had his camera ready. In his book - *Eisenstaedt on Eisenstaedt: A Self-Portrait* - he recalls the moment when he took this picture:

I saw a sailor running along the street grabbing any and every girl in sight. Whether she was a grandmother, stout, thin, old, didn't make a difference. I was running ahead of him with my Leica looking back over my shoulder but none of the pictures that were possible pleased me. Then suddenly, in a flash, I saw something white being grabbed. I turned around and clicked the moment the sailor kissed the nurse.... It was done within a few seconds.

There wasn't time for Eisenstaedt to get the names of the people in his picture.

Thirty-five years later, he received a letter from Edith Shain who said she was the nurse. Although Eisie himself couldn't be sure, Edith was. She could never identify the sailor, however.

Edith died in Los Angeles, on June 20, 2010. She was 91.

Eisenstaedt died in his cottage, on Martha's Vineyard, on August 24, 1995. He was 96.

The sailor was identified decades after the picture—which *LIFE* published on August 27, 1945—was taken. His name is Glenn McDuffie, although his identity wasn't confirmed until 2008 when Lois Gibson (a forensic artist with the Houston Police Department) verified his claim.

After taking around 100 pictures of the then-elderly man, holding a pillow, she matched his muscles, his ears and other features to the young sailor in Eisenstaedt's photo.

McDuffie died on March 9, 2014. He was 86 years old.

Click on the image for a better view.

Credits:

August 14, 1945 photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt, online courtesy *Life* magazine and the U.S. National Archives.

Quoted passage from Eisenstaedt's book, *Eisenstaedt on Eisenstaedt*.

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Edith Shain - Nurse in the "War is Over" Picture

Clip of an interview with Edith Shain, recorded on April 19, 2010 at the Veterans Home of California in Yountville. The event was part of a Celebration of the "Spirit of '45." Video online, courtesy Napa Valley Museum.

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