

THIRD MAN IN SPACE.

The Mercury Redstone rocket was fuelled once again. The nerve-racking postponements had come to an end and Captain Virgil Grissom made his way towards the capsule in which, if all went well, he would become the third man in the world, to be hurled into space. Thirty-five years of age Grissom is married, with two sons. Slightly cloudy weather prevented the blast off when it was first scheduled.

Meteorologists declared conditions perfect. Nothing less would induce those in command to put Grissom to one iota of risk that could be avoided. This man was pitting his life against great odds in a hazardous venture for his country and perhaps mankind. The authorities for their part, had taken infinite pains against every danger they could imagine. Still, everyone at Cape Canaveral knew that the safety margin was terribly small. The blast off was perfect.

The Capsule containing Captain Grissom shed the rest of the rocket and proceeded on its way to 118 miles above the earth. The aircraft carrier "Randolph" learned that Grissom had dropped into the sea as planned, but water had entered the capsule. He was swimming when the helicopter arrived to pick him up. And what a welcome arrival that must have been. It was a big misfortune that the photographic record of the space man's reactions, and the movements of the instruments on the pilot's panel, went down in 2,800 fathoms. But all that was forgotten in the general elation over Virgil Grissom's safe recovery.

One more stage in the American conquest of space was concluded. Next on the programme will be an attempt to send a rocket 685,000 miles into space. Captain Grissom helped to pave the way to greater things.