

BIGAMY ADMITTED BY NAVAL OFFICER

Lieutenant Commander Ian James McNeil, R.N., aged 48, now stationed at Rosyth, pleaded Guilty at the Central Criminal Court yesterday to bigamously marrying Elsie Maud Taylor at St. Mary's Kenton, Middlesex, on January 4, 1947, and was bound over for 12 months.

Mr. John Mathew, for the prosecution, said the accused had served in the Royal Navy for more than 32 years, rising from boy seaman to his present rank. In 1940 he married Irene Cross, but shortly after the birth of a son in the following year he separated from his wife. Since then she had brought up the boy and had been receiving a marriage allowance from her husband.

In January, 1947, McNeil went through a form of marriage with Miss Taylor and there were three children now aged 15, 13, and nine years. In December, 1961, the accused left the bigamous wife, but she and the children continued to live in a house in Portsmouth which he was buying on mortgage. He also contributed £40 a month towards their maintenance.

The bigamy came to light when McNeil's father tried to trace his son. Apart from this matter the accused was a man of the highest character, counsel said.

Mr. John Jenkins, for the defence, said that apart from this one lapse McNeil had a creditable and honourable career. He was due to retire in two years and provided he were not sent to prison he would be allowed to complete his naval career.

Judge Asquith, the Common Serjeant, said to McNeil: "What good would it do if I were to send you to prison? It would make you suffer as you caused your bigamous wife to suffer, but revenge is not a very attractive thing. I propose to go on allowing you to behave so far as your financial responsibilities are concerned, as you have done in the past."