**Macfie Keith - Johnston**

Robert and Jessy Keith-Johnston lived at ‘Sparrows Herne Lodge’, a sizeable house later re-named ‘Upton Lodge’, which stood just above Bushey Library, where Upton Lodge Close is today.

Flight Sub-Lieutenant Macfie Keith-Johnston, aged 17, their youngest son, was killed in a flying accident at Eastchurch. His plane was in a collision with another machine at a height of several hundred feet. It is stated that the wingtips of the two machines met and one of them collapsed at once. The other apparently made some attempt to get down with a broken extension, but caught fire at about 200 feet and fell. Both pilots were killed on the spot. The accident occurred on 12 September 1915, just a month after Flight Sub-Lieutenant Macfie, Keith-Johnston’s brother had been killed in Belgium. They are both commemorated on the Bushey Memorial and at St Peter’s Church Bushey Heath

**Fatal flying accident**

Early in the week Mr & Mrs R. Keith-Johnston received the sad news that their youngest son. Flight Sub-Lieutenant Macfie Keith-Johnston had been killed at Eastchurch while flying. Only a month ago Mr & Mrs Keith-Johnston lost their eldest son, Flight Lieutenant David Keith-Johnston, who was killed while on active service off Ostend. To the bereaved parents, whose long residence in Bushey Heath has made them well known in the village, the greatest sympathy has been extended.

The fatality by which Flight Sub-Lieutenant Macfie met his death was the extremely rare occurrence of a collision between two aeroplanes. How this occurred does not admit of explanation. Flight Sub-Lieutenant Keith-Johnston was flying on the day of the accident, last Sunday, for a pilot’s certificate. While in the air, he collided with another machine, whose pilot was Flight Sub-Lieutenant James Morrow Alexander, a Canadian. Both men were instantly killed and the machines wrecked.

An impressive funeral service took place at Sheerness on Wednesday, the bodies being interred in the Naval cemetery there. Full Naval honours were paid to the memory of the deceased officers; the flag-draped coffins were born on gun carriages with officers of their own rank acting as pall-bearers. Many lovely wreaths from their brother officers were laid on the grave. The funeral service was conducted by Rev F D Windsor, who was Flight Sub-Lieutenant Keith-Johnston’s housemaster of Felsted School.

The deceased officer was born at Lee, Kent, on 8 June 1898. He was educated at Temple Grove, Eastbourne and at Felsted. He joined the Royal Naval Air Service under two months ago. At first, on account of his youth his application was not accepted, but the representation of those who knew the excellent qualities of his elder brother, secured him admission, and he quickly shaped into a fine airman. The three sons of Mr & Mrs Keith-Johnston , two of whom they have lost, were well known in Bushey Heath.

*Watford Observer*, September 1915