



The Death of the Prince Imperial, June 1st 1879, detail from painting by Paul Jamin.

## Letter from Zululand

The following letter has been received from a native of this neighbourhood, who is now with the Royal Engineers.

June 6th, 1879, Dear Mother and Father, and brothers and sisters,

I am once more in the Zulu country. I am with the 2nd column, under the command of General Newdigate, we have Lord Chelmsford with us. No doubt by this time you have got the news of the Prince Imperial, and how he met with his death. He was with our column. I made his coffin, and was up all night making it. It caused great commotion in the camp when we got the news. Of course, it was his own fault for leaving the column without a strong escort, which he could have had if he chose. We have seen nothing as yet, but the 17th Lancers went on to the front and knocked over a few. I daresay by the time you receive this it will be all over. It is rumoured in our camp that the old King sent to say that he didn't want to fight, but I think I should give him a good blow-up, whether or no. I have not much more to tell you, as everything is going on about the same. I get plenty of hard work, and very little spare time. I have scarcely time to write this, as the mail is going away at eight o'clock. I hope you are all well, and you must none of you think that any harm will come to me, for I feel quite safe, as I had a few bullets flying round my head when I was in the other column; but we are always at work now, with plenty of soldiers in front of us. I wish I had more time to talk to you, but never mind, the time will come, and now we must make the best of it. If any thing should happen, there is a few pounds in the bank for you as I have put it in our Regimental Savings Bank. I must now say good bye for the present.

From your ever loving and affectionate son and brother, J.M. – Company Royal Engineers.

**Western Gazette, 18 July 1879**

### **OPC Note:-**

The Prince, (only child of the Emperor Napoleon III of France ) was killed when he came off his horse, and was surrounded by 7 Zulus, who killed him with their spears. He ordered his patrol to stop for a rest in an abandoned Zulu village. He had ordered the few men in his patrol to remount, and his horse was frightened by the sound of gunfire, and he came off the horse.