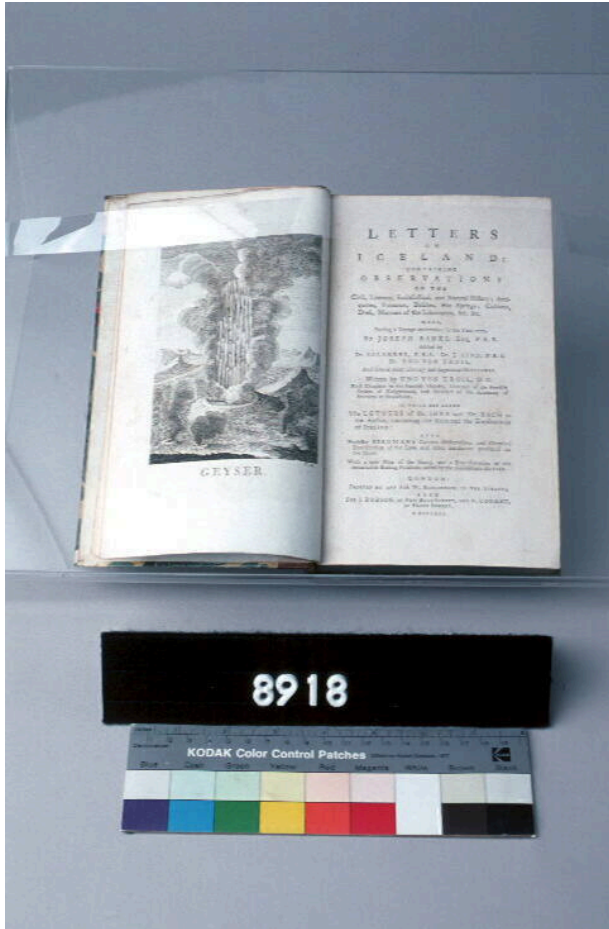


# Basic Detail Report

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**00008918**

**Title**

Letters on Iceland

**Date**

1780

**Primary Maker**

Uno Von Troil

**Medium**

Ink on paper, boards

**Dimensions**

Overall: 215 x 135 mm, 0.55 kg

**Name**

Book

**History**

In July 1772, Joseph Banks sailed from England as leader of a scientific expedition to the Orkneys and Iceland. In 1771, shortly after the return of the Endeavour to

England, the Admiralty announced it intended sending a second expedition to the southern hemisphere. Two vessels were purchased and Cook was given leadership of the expedition. Lord Sandwich (First Lord of the Admiralty) invited Joseph Banks to join the expedition. Banks was initially unhappy with the choice of expedition vessels but was assured that changes would be made to provide suitable accommodation. In the event, Banks wished to take a party of 17 supernumeraries on the voyage. The main expedition vessel (Resolution) was altered considerably, to the point that, when it left Deptford to proceed down river, it proved 'crank'. Indeed the Navy Board and Admiralty agreed that the problems with the vessel were the result of the changes made for Banks' party, and ordered that the vessel be returned to its original state. Banks was outraged by the decision and finally withdrew from Cook's expedition. Banks then set about organising an expedition to the Orkneys and Iceland. He took with him Dr Solander and Dr James Lind (who were to have sailed aboard the Resolution). The expedition pointedly left England on the same day that Cook sailed for the Southern Ocean. Sir Joseph Banks was man of science, of affairs, and of letters. He circumnavigated the globe with Lieutenant James Cook on H.M.S. Endeavour, 1768-1771, taking with him a team of naturalists, illustrators and assistants at a personal cost of £10,000. Later, after returning from Iceland, Banks settled in London, and assembled an enormous library and herbarium at 32 Soho Square. His collections were remarkable both for their size and for the unique material from the Pacific they contained. In 1778, Banks was elected President of the Royal Society, a position he held for over 41 years -

the longest anyone has served in that capacity. As President he fostered enlightened relations between scientists across Europe throughout a period of conflict and turbulent change. He was also Special Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, which flourished under his control. Voyages of discovery were mounted with his help to explore new lands, to obtain and move plants from one part of the world to another, and to further British interests abroad. He was also an influential privy councillor, and an advisor to George III and successive governments. Banks was at the scientific and social centre of Georgian life for more than five decades. As such he developed a global network of correspondence, using letters to further knowledge, and ultimately to shape events in the cause of empire. He suggested the possibility of establishing colonies on the east coast of Australia, and then he actively supported them for the remainder of his life. He has therefore been regarded by some as the 'Father of Australia'. During the Napoleonic Wars he acted to save the population of Iceland when its trade was seized by the British. The first account of the expedition was written by Dr Uno von Troil in Swedish and appeared in 1777. A German edition was published in 1779. The current work is an English edition, translated from the German by Johann Reinhold Forster.