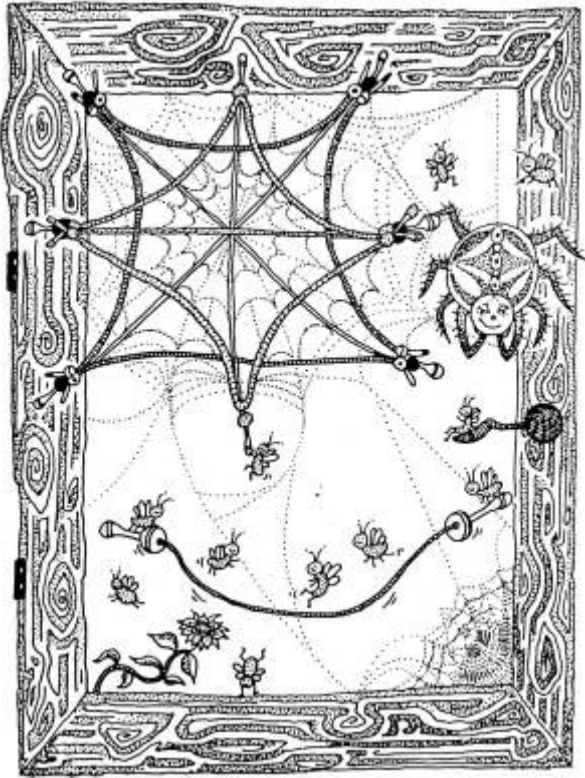
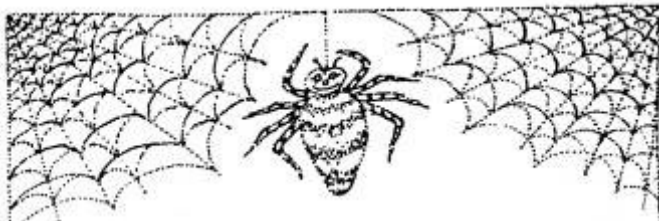


*'MY MERRY
MENAGERIE'*



*A spider by the name of Fred
Found that he'd run out of thread
All the shops were closed that day
And so he found another way...
Now his web is looking great
And Fred with glee sits down to wait,
Keeping watch with hooded eyes
For any unsuspecting flies...
But is a fly some kind of dope?
Who'd be fooled by skipping rope?!*

*Rhymes by Richard Jameson
Illustrations by Susan Saunders*



IRON HORSE

In the 'twenties, when as a small boy staying with Grand'ma Bedwell and 'Gran'dad', I remember a rusting Victorian iron hoop. It always seemed to be faithfully waiting for me, propping up the back garden fence, in all weathers at "Minard", Carshalton Park Road, Surrey...

Only yesterday,
I ran the streets
A hoop of Iron
Within my reach –

A stick of wood
And off I'd go
A heavenly bliss
Few got to know...

This Hoop of Iron
Now red with rust
The sort of horse
That I could trust.

I led him here,
He drove me there
We rode the lanes
Without a care...

This ageing hoop
Had seen its best
A tired old horse
In need of rest.

My Hoop of Iron
Would rattle by
-a Surrey fringe
-A Carshalton sky.

Those days have gone
Alas to say,
Some sixty years
To the day...

Streets such as these
Might laugh with joy,
To see a hoop –
Chased by a boy!

Paul Clarke
New Years Day, 1988

