Primary Maker: Unidentified maker  
Title: Spider skillet with lid  
Date: 1700-1800  
Medium: Cast iron  
Dimensions: Overall: 6 1/4 x 17 1/4 x 9 1/2 in. (15.9 x 43.8 x 24.1 cm)  
Credit Line: New-York Historical Society  
Object Number: 2477  

Object Name: Spider with lid  
Classification: BASE METALS  

Curatorial Remarks:  
A spider (also called a spider skillet, spider pan, or iron spider) was an iron vessel with three splayed legs and a long handle used for hearth cooking. The footed skillet or frying pan would be set over a small pile of coals pulled out onto the hearth from the fire. Additional coals could be placed on the lid of this particular example. The basic design of these cooking vessels originated in Europe and remained unchanged throughout the eighteenth century in North America. The use of the term "spider", presumably for its similarity in appearance to an arachnid, is distinctly American in origin. By the end of the nineteenth century, spiders—restyled without legs for the stove top—were still in use called by their old name.
Physical Description:
Cast iron spider (footed skillet) with a flat bottom, slat sides, three splayed legs (triangular in section) and a long, brazed handle; slightly domed lid with central D-shaped handle, triangular in section, and erect rim.

Related Objects: