

Robert Handicott

WIND SOCK

Long John Silver has his washing out to dry.
Busier and gentler than an elephant's trunk

It's cousin to the weathercock
But pointer to the future.

It fluttered as the Hindenburg
Nudged toward flashpoint, as the Challenger

Thrust toward benumbing pyrotechnics—
Faithful in its corner

As wholesome advice;
Doing one thing well.

It signals from the hand-tinted
Harbours of biplanes (Croydon, München-Riem, 1930—

Lost with such books
As came down from great-aunts)

But also from the airports
Of actual youth:

Hands pressed to our ears,
Noses pressed to the wire.

To glimpse one through gums,
Despite golf course and track,

Is a giveaway and gift—
"All Clear" for heart's take-off—

Limp-peaked as the nightcap on Wee Willie Winkie
Or sleek as the Concorde

Stretched by the wind's happy toes.

