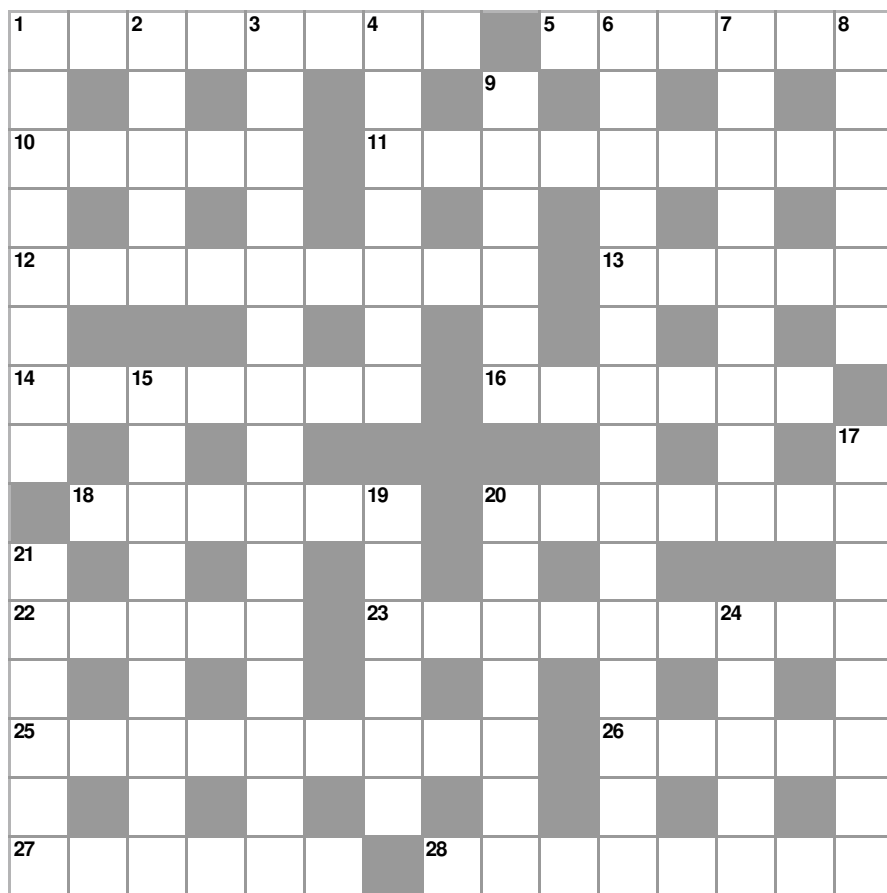


Times Cryptic No 26976



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A £20 WH Smith voucher will be awarded for the first five randomly selected correct solutions. To enter, complete the crossword and submit your entry. 18+ only. Closing date is midnight on the first Wednesday after publication. Full T&Cs apply. Printed entries can be sent to: The Times Crossword 26976, PO Box 2164, Colchester, Essex CO2 8LJ. For terms and conditions please visit <http://bit.ly/1V90hgY>

ACROSS

- 1 Excessively recoiling part of blowtorch-cum-revolver (8)
- 5 Maximum separation of parallel pins (6)
- 10 Finger a sod, on investigator's lead (5)
- 11 Translated message to Alice before later books showing adaptation (9)
- 12 A diabolical fire felt to be one's eternal existence? (9)
- 13 Large company's earth mover crossing road (5)
- 14 Pipe down in harvester reduced mould (7)
- 16 Turned like beef from Pacific islands (6)
- 18 Musician's soft bed (6)
- 20 Lacy flounces round garment's edge, attempting elementary alterations (7)
- 22 Trimming the margins, what oiks cut a few lines? (5)
- 23 Crossing finally over, with maniac on board (9)
- 25 Marine hunter's shortly to garrison displaced occupants of quads (9)
- 26 Half of Iroquois backed by a related group (5)
- 27 How shocking vote against withdrawing is for northerner in Civil War (6)
- 28 Pale pink periodical, certainly not one that misleads endlessly (8)

DOWN

- 1 Who's the host from Hell, or hardly relaxed? (3,5)
- 2 What's missing from vision? Yes, group having a row (5)
- 3 Clumsy introduction of English sailor, hilarious in French, where Jack parts hair (2,6,3,4)
- 4 Is unable to enjoy last of autumn leaves with stealthy grace (7)
- 6 Sabotage teased those who tease? (3,3,7,2)
- 7 Pickle brine I foolishly consumed (9)
- 8 Forward is upward in scout's intelligence? (6)
- 9 Rash, heartless and hollow (6)
- 15 Persevere to end resistance in brief farewell (7,2)
- 17 Problem with optical character recognition? (8)
- 19 Pull one of Glastonbury's attractions after raising bad spirits (6)
- 20 A priest protecting a bishop's state (7)
- 21 Fat, cold, old man (6)
- 24 School ably showing its alternate form? (5)