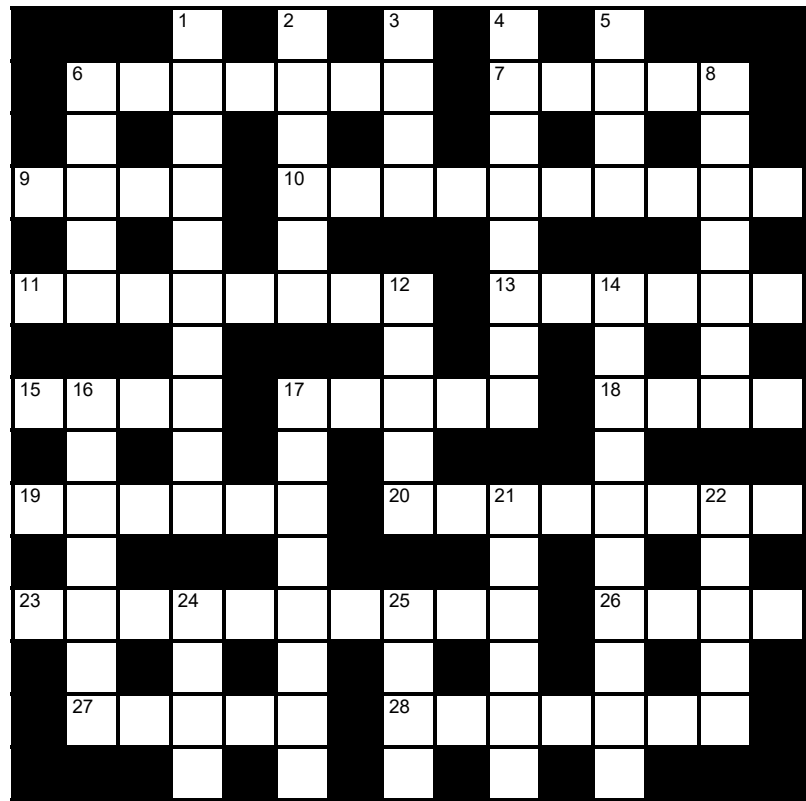


Across

- 6 Befuddled eloper taking in a person released conditionally (7)
- 7 Flog book on Irish church (5)
- 9 Little finger not at first stained with writing liquid (4)
- 10 Twisted old scrawls ranking above all others (5-5)
- 11 Purchase, we're told, jewelled figure of the dragon slayer: fancy that! (2,6)
- 13 Cause annoyance; colonise north instead of south (6)
- 15 Feebly flap piece of bunting (4)
- 17 Hinder husband with sharpness (5)
- 18 Casually investigate rejection of unserviceable ship (4)
- 19 Lamming sound; leaders of ragtime artists tentative talent and teamwork (3-3)
- 20 Girl you might pick in 17 down (8)
- 23 Large outdoor signposts; do they tell you William is getting on? (10)
- 26 Race son encountered coming back (4)
- 27 Greek fool's an informer (5)
- 28 No sense about unity (7)



Down

- 1 Ancient city to stay in readiness, one says, for this system of measurement (4,6)
- 2 Force to reduce level of river (6)
- 3 Starts paring each angular rim for an ovate brilliant (4)
- 4 Conformity of adult AC/DC ball (8)
- 5 Boundless optimism in speech (4)
- 6 Cooking utensils necessary ultimately for bit of a sissy (5)
- 8 Difficulties - possesses less, bottom to top (7)
- 12 The Spanish and the German ancestor (5)
- 14 Time to question teacher, one who enforces hard, continuous work (10)
- 16 Conveying heavy metallic element in grams (7)
- 17 Educate intensively to a precocious level in this tropical conservatory (8)
- 21 Scheme's unusually messy, involving leader of trouble-making (6)
- 22 On the radio learns about thin metal parts inserted into instruments (5)
- 24 The French with a fine pair of book pages (4)
- 25 Little marsupial with tense tooth part (4)