

ACROSS

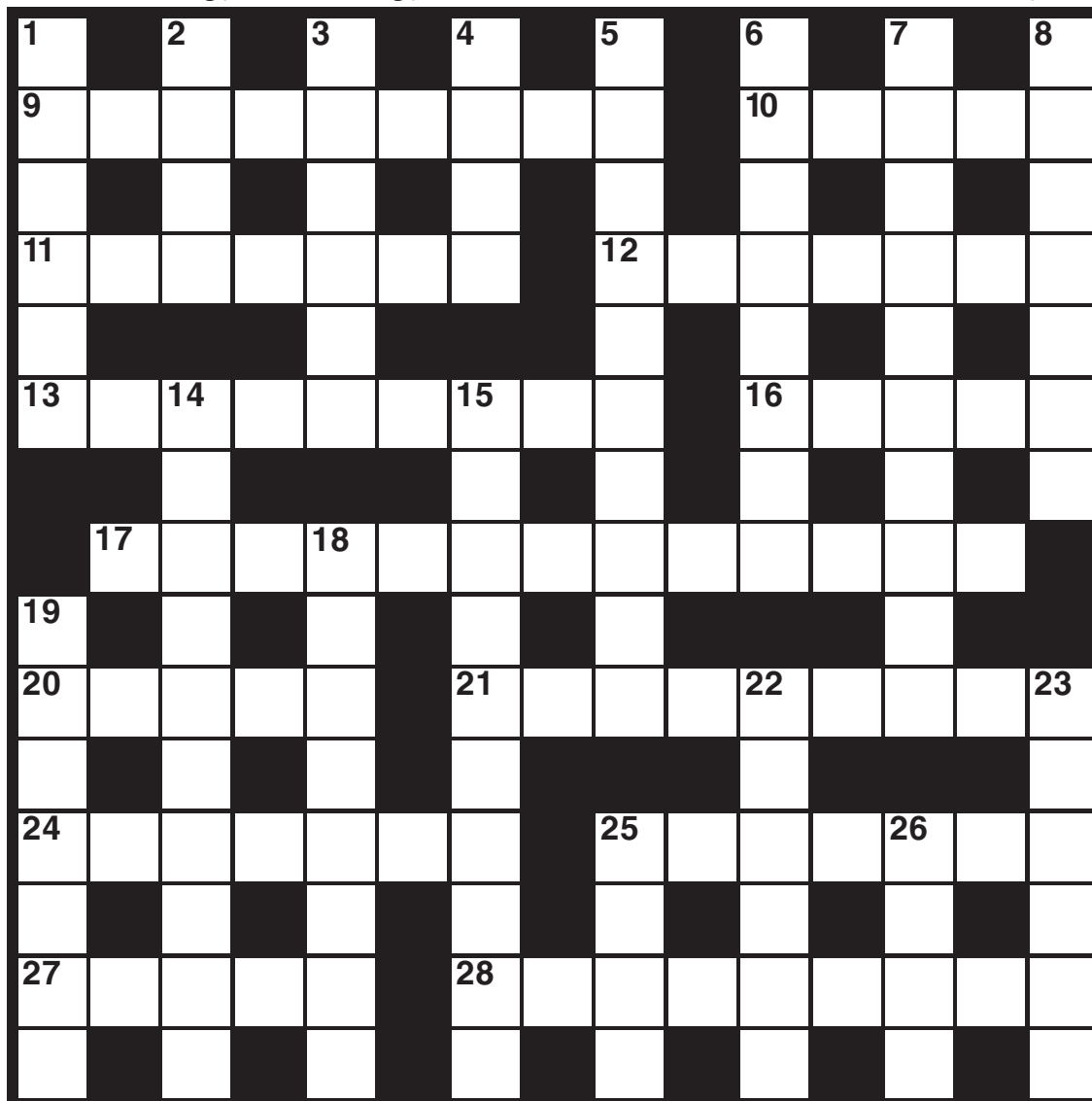
- 9 People questioning pitmen after cutback (9)
 10 Flower in myrrh, in essence (5)
 11 Sign of venomous creature losing tail (7)
 12 Fitting gold plug in front of electrical device (7)
 13 Light flan prepared at the end of the day (9)
 16 Lacerates eye secretions (5)
 17 Zone covering wild man-eater beyond net (9,4)
 20 Doctor, for example, first to sit in grounds (5)
 21 Horrible stain on head causes spite (9)
 24 Excuses about a male child, succeeding initially (7)
 25 Bleak Australia felled trees (7)
 27 Dodge nowadays taken in by first lady (5)
 28 Easily roused and once could have been quoted (9)

DOWN

- 1 It's said, school period to abate (6)
 2 Old ruler reported Algarve city (4)
 3 Inferior metal cooking vessel (6)
 4 Nothing on limb but building bricks (4)
 5 Idiot will feel sick, leading workers to attackers (10)
 6 Macerate new scones and jam etc (5,3)
 7 Item seven, a transfer from Asia (10)
 8 Female entitled to succeed (7)
 14 Central American from Managua let off (10)
 15 Notice member of the clergy is to run (10)
 18 US general keeps order – he's always right! (8)

Wednesday, 31st July, 2024

No. 16,742



- 19 Loved taking in top of nightgown to be decorated (7)
 22 Embeds in collections, perhaps (6)
 23 Country garden adjoining south-west (6)
 25 Cunning curved construction (4)
 26 Competent return to island (4)