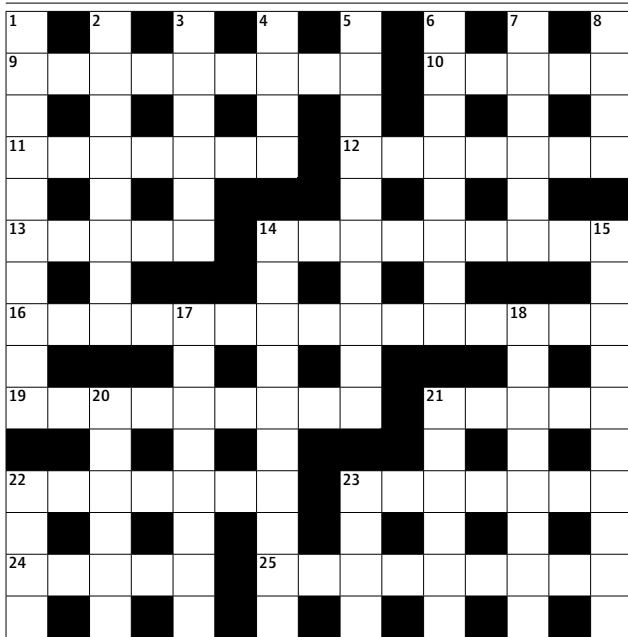


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 26,253 set by Nutmeg

Across

- 9** Distress at leaving embassy man following judge (9)
10 Worthless politician, boring yet ludicrous (5)
11 English writer hits cart track backing motor (7)
12 First lady protects clan, roaming isolated part of country (7)
13 Work of potter, dextrous, about 50 (5)
14 Messenger's chief innovation in American contact sport (9)
16 "No party"? 4, 8 or 24 would do (alternatives are here available) (3,4,2,1,5)
19 In trouble over time, student essentially shows guts (9)
21 Division ends without Liberal backing (5)
22 Old Tory leader gains weight (7)
23 French wine producers don't like a copper coming round (7)
24 Group of settlers cutting last section of canal (5)
25 Small banker getting bad service on jet (9)

Down

- 1** Star's very small part, theatre's last panto role (5,5)
2 Clement Attlee's initial cuts pursue justice (4,4)
3 Authoritarian detective's leaving the area (6)

- 4** Imperial measure about to go up and down (4)
5 Two versions of scene confused in old age (10)
6 Old soldiers entertaining staff at camp (8)
7 Second collision happened unexpectedly (6)
8 Car component subject to inflation (4)
14 Craft making false turns at sea (10)
15 Volume turned up recently in middle of bulletin, it should be said (2,3,5)
17 Old hand stripped dingy bar (8)
18 Source of crude artworks skilfully concealed (3,5)
20 Offensive Little Englander starts to cause irritation (6)
21 Prisoner supports opening of tunnel in it (6)
22 Part of oil lamp with twinkling top removed (4)
23 Archetypal Aussie briefly over limit (4)

Solution No. 26,252

B	U	R	G	E	S	S	A	D	M	I	R	E	R		
A	U	E	L	N	A	A	E								
C	O	M	P	L	A	I	N	T	C	O	P	A	L		
U	P	Y	P	H	H	T	I								
P	I	O	N	F	O	U	R	M	I	N	U	T	E		
			L	A	F	O	N	R	V						
			H	E	R	M	I	T	P	L	A	C	E	B	
					B	H	O	T							
			C	O	C	A	I	N	E	S	L	O	B	B	Y
			I	E	V	T	O	R	A						
			C	A	N	T	A	L	O	U	P	E	M	I	L
			A	T	L	N	H	D	L	A					
			D	R	I	V	E	G	U	I	D	E	P	O	S
			A	M	N	U	S	V	U	E					
			S	H	O	R	T	I	E	T	R	A	C	T	O