Crossword 16,087 Set by Redshank

ACROSS
1 Various snakes crush lion, like most mammals (10)
6 It's hard work uprooting northern network (4)
9 Sad city opted to retain extremely rocky motorway (10)
10 Retired tycoon last to leave northern port (4)
12 Nancy's tall kitchen which may attract stars (5,7)
15 Best remaining stalag inmate very content (9)
17 Principle of the customised integrated circuit (5)
18 Withdrawn rabbi unnecessarily masks depression (5)
19 Draw with this local in heart of Kolkata (6,3)
20 Europeans finish (6,6)
24 Prominent feature of short service? (4)
25 Secure line in factory producing explosive (10)
26 Avoid neglecting duke and foreign magistrate (4)
27 Complete drunk conned user (10)

DOWN
1 Very old officer offers little force (4)
2 Contest involves Charlie gripping tool (4)
3 Puerto Rican rebels seizing quiet capital nearby (4-2-6)
4 Perhaps watch over authority (5)
5 Blue Berets broadcast about dog on the loose (9)
7 Refuse to go there to criticise bishop at home (7,3)
8 Dark river bar's fruity confection (6,4)
11 Harry speculates about writer's buried souvenirs? (4,8)
13 Royal pair occupy stern, getting perfect air for 23 (5-5)
14 Drift across the German Serpentine? (10)
16 Triumph over more modern dog-handler (7-2)
17 Liberty in factory producing explosive (10)
21 Liberal primate admits second sin (5)
22 Just the place for a roundabout (4)
23 Briefly inspect Playboy (4)

Copies of The Meaning of Everything: The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary by Simon Winchester, published by Oxford University Press, will be awarded to the senders of the first three correct entries opened on Wednesday February 20. Entries marked Crossword 16,087 on the envelope, should be sent to Weekend FT, One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL. Solution on February 23.

Jotter pad