Crossword 15,970 Set by Alberich

ACROSS
1  I'll enter to fasten Nancy's black gown (8)
6  Billion netted by old firm (6)
9  Daughter's accepted by university - spread the latest news! (6)
10 Brush him off? Risk's involved with that (8)
11 Capture wild animal in South Africa close to cape? That's sweet (10)
12 Portion of apple crumble is greyish-brown (4)
13 Spot the female music-maker (6)
15 Discharge duty with energy (8)
18 Prince periodically is entertained by King's students (8)
20 Designated journalist is next to pen line (6)
21 Cockney listens - using these (4)
23 Noteworthy character crucial to play missing first of cues (10)
25 Shut up about Penny performing with love rival (8)
26 Pass by a porky footballer (6)
27 In extremes of necessity male resorted to wit (6)

28 Edward's back in race, dead set (8)

DOWN
2  Stress when one supports English speed limits in Shropshire (9)
3  Boss retains area with a fruit tree (5)
4  Excessively big deliveries mailman's core rage, possibly (9)
5  Gentleman returned fish dish (7)
6  One's pointed to lace (5)
7  I'll mess about after a year without purpose (9)
8  Failure is more imminent without leader (5)
14  Henry Cooper so confounded predictions (9)
16  Wife interrupts popular performer's ball (9)
17  Worker has to choose clothing a long time before I have (9)
19  Nick hastily got together cash, having no handicap (7)
22  In Greece, a river with origin in Athens (5)
23  Ruth nurses Earl, showing devotion (5)
24  This country's announced an edict (5)

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 October 3. Entries marked Crossword 15,970 on the envelope, should be sent to Weekend FT, One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL. Solution on October 6.

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Jotter pad