

CANAL PLEASE

Atherstone in Warwickshire is astir early. Through the streets moves the largest lead ever taken by road in England. An American-type walking excavator - hoisted on a 32-wheel vehicle is hauled and pushed from Tamworth in Staffordshire to an open cast coal site at Heanor in Derbyshire. A distance of fifty miles - the operation is carried out at 5 miles an hour and takes 3 days to complete.

24 feet wide - 100 feet long - the 110 ton monster turns out the police force of three counties. For the driver, the Derby stretch of the journey is like road transport's Grand National. With 18 hump bridges ahead it's lucky for him that he doesn't have to bring his lead back again.