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EXETER IS TALKING ABOUT THE A.T.S.

More than 200 A.T.S. attached to the Royal Army Pay Corps in Exeter are now the temporary guests of a Training Centre in the West Country. When they went there two nights ago recruits came out to meet them, gave them a cheer, carried their bags into the Centre and then sat down to clean their tunic buttons and shoes for them.

Exeter is talking about these A.T.S. The whole of the previous night they had been helping the Civil Defence workers of the cathedral city during the German "Baedeker" raid, fighting fires, running out hoses for firemen, tending the injured, helping to evacuate hospital patients, cooking for the N.F.S. and the civilian population. All had had to be evacuated from their billets in the city, and are now being convoyed daily to the Pay Office in Exeter in War Department transport. They arrived at the Training Centre in the West Country on Monday evening complete with pets - nine dogs and one kitten.

Fifty of them had helped to fight a fire in a house opposite their billet with buckets of water. When the roof of one of Exeter's historic buildings caught fire, three ran to the roof with stirrup pumps and were still playing on the flames when firemen turned hoses on to the roof not knowing they were there. Others, attracted by screams of children, tried in vain to enter a blazing house. They were beaten back by the flames. A sergeant-major and a corporal were working on the roof of a blazing house when it fell in. They extricated themselves and carried on.

Three others, working as messengers for the N.F.S., helped to run out hoses and when they returned to their billets late in the morning they took with them a letter from an N.F.S. officer apologising to their officer for having kept them out all night.

When the raid was over, A.T.S. cooks stationed in the city, built field kitchens from bricks from demolished buildings, and putting into practice for the first time under active service conditions what they had learned at Emergency Cookery Training Centres, provided breakfast for A.T.S., N.F.S. and many of the civilian population.

By two o'clock in the afternoon all were back at work with the exception of three minor casualties who are now in the Reception Station at the Training Centre in the West Country.