

Texas man faces felony gun charge

By MARTIN TOOMBS

WATERLOO — A man from Houston, Texas, was charged with possession of a machine gun after he was stopped by state police on Washington Street Saturday afternoon.

The British-made World War II gun was allegedly found in a van driven by Stephen Ross, 34. He allegedly also had a loaded 32-round clip for the gun, which is capable of firing at 550 rounds of 9-mm ammunition per minute.

Ross, who did not resist arrest, was charged with third-degree criminal possession of a weapon, a felony charge which carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in jail.

State Police Investigator Richard Chapin said police received a tip Ross had an illegal weapon. They also knew he did not have a driver's license.

Trooper Steven Kelly spotted Ross driving a battered 1977 van on Washington Street at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, and stopped him. During the course of arresting him for second-degree aggravated unlicensed operation, Kelly asked Ross for permission to search the van and Ross agreed and even pointed out the case holding the disassembled machine gun, he said.

The barrel in the case with the gun was plugged, making the gun inoperable and therefore not an illegal weapon. But later Kelly found a workable barrel elsewhere in the van.

The Sten MK II machine gun was made in England for use by British forces during World War II. According to information Ross had stored with the gun, they are now available through mail order as kits, lacking some of the parts necessary to make them work.

Also stored with the gun was a book with detailed drawings on how to make the parts missing from the kits. Ross' gun was complete.

Besides the loaded clip, Ross had four other clips for the gun and copies of "Soldier of Fortune" and "Gung Ho" magazines.

He also was found to be in possession of 15 capsules of a controlled antibiotic, Duricef; a hypodermic needle and a small amount of marijuana.

As a result, he faces charges of criminal possession of a hypodermic instrument; seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled



World War II vintage

Trooper Steven Kelly displays the Sten gun confiscated from the driver of a van after he was stopped by state police in Waterloo, Saturday. Police charged the driver, Stephen Ross of Houston, Tex., with the illegal possession of a machine gun and marijuana. (Times photo by Martin Toombs)

substance and unlawful possession of marijuana.

Ross was arraigned before Village Justice Robert Krupcznski and sent to Seneca County Jail without bail pending grand jury action.

Chapin said Ross was working for Northern Telcom, a Canadian

firm, installing telephones. He worked for a time at the Seneca Army Depot and more recently at the Watervliet Arsenal near Albany, he noted.

Ross was in the area Saturday to visit friends.

The investigation is continuing, Chapin said.