

COMMUNICATIONS.

AN INCIDENT OF THE CAPTURE OF LIVERPOOL IN 1644.

WILLIAM WILLIAMSON of Liverpool, mariner, in July, 1646, complained to the Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster (Christopher Banastre) that one John Woodcocke, formerly of Dublin and now of (blank) in Shropshire, gent., had about 3 years previously entreated him to carry over to Liverpool his children and servants and two trunks (corded and mailed up), agreeing to pay 30s. carriage. He was to keep the trunks in his house at Liverpool till further orders. He did so until the town was taken by Prince Rupert's forces, when the trunks were broken open and the contents dispersed. At the same time complainant's own goods in his house were also despoiled to the amount of £400. Woodcocke had not paid the freight, but at Christmas last had caused him to be arrested in London, claiming £300 damages. After being some time in prison, to his great loss, he gave a bond for the £300. He now asks to be discharged from it.

Woodcocke replied that no freight was due from him, and as he believed the trunks had been rifled through some default on complainant's part he had claimed compensation.

Depositions were taken at Liverpool on 29 Sept., 1646, before Thomas Bicksteth, William Dwarrihouse and Robert Mercer, gentlemen, who (with Jirehiah Aspinwall, absent) had been commissioned for the purpose.

It appeared that the two trunks had been kept by Williamson and still remained in the house in Liverpool when the town was taken by Prince Rupert's forces. Some of these troops broke the trunks open and carried off the contents. During the siege Williamson had endeavoured to secure them by getting them to his ship *Samuell*, but the Parliament forces guarding the town would not allow that, ordering them to be taken back to the house.

Margery Middleton, wife of Richard Middleton of Liverpool, aged 21, servant of complainant, deposed to the spoiling of the trunks. Some letters and papers were left in them and she took these to the wife of Richard Bennett of Claughton, kinswoman of defendant or his wife. It was complainant's wife (the husband being from home) who had tried to get the trunks taken to the ship.

Richard Widdowes of Liverpool, beer brewer, aged 30, said that when the town was taken he was made prisoner by Capt. Patience, one of Prince Rupert's officers and was taken to complainant's house. Here the captain and others broke the trunks open and took divers goods, including beaver hats, linen, a woman's gown, etc. He was compelled to help in carrying them away into the country. (Pal. of Lancaster 6/17, no. 181; 7/22, no. 38; 10/42).