#### De Bellis MS (1615)

#### Editor’s Notes

This was one of the hardest editing jobs I have yet encountered, because the source was very light and low-contrast, as well as covered with artifacts. As in many MSS, however, there are relatively few actual errors, which makes life simpler. The MS was evidently written by three or more scribes, in different parts of the MS. Scribes 1 and 3 have made painstakingly thorough left and right hand fingerings, written as dots above and below the notes, respectively. It was often hard to distinguish editorial dots from artifactual ones. I have represented the left hand fingerings as Arabic numerals. In other parts of the MS, there are no left-hand fingerings, but right hand fingerings persist throughout.

The music ranges in difficulty from beginner to medium. It is evidently directed toward a relatively unskilled player or players.

Apart from the fingerings, there are three other types of notations:

1. In the notation of scribes 1 and 3, there is a little cup of dots under some of the notes. Scribe 2 represents this ornament by a U under the notes. This evidently represents an appoggiatura,.
2. In only 5 of the pieces, there is a # sign near a note of the 5th or 6th fret. This may represent a lower mordent or fall from below. Because of the fingering, it is unlikely that these represent mordents or falls from above.
3. Throughout the pieces are tenuto marks. Scribes 1 and 3 represent these as x’s to the right of the note to be held. Scribe 2 represents these as diagonal lines. The x’s indicate holds in left-hand fingering, not necessarily musical tenutos, as they are often found in those passages where it is advantageous to keep one finger in place on the fingerboard, even when the note is not actually held musically.