This popular Quebec folksong is a combination of words from the Normandy and Champagne regions of France and a melody born in the New World, which is quite different from its French counterpart.

A La Claire Fontaine was known to the men of Samuel de Champlain’s Order of Good Cheer as well as to the coureurs de bois who used it as a paddling song. As well, early inhabitants of French Canada sang it as they cleared their land along the St. Lawrence River.

Notes by Donald Coakley

This work should be played in a lyrical flowing style. All parts should be balanced in order that the melodic material, as well as inner musical lines, are heard.