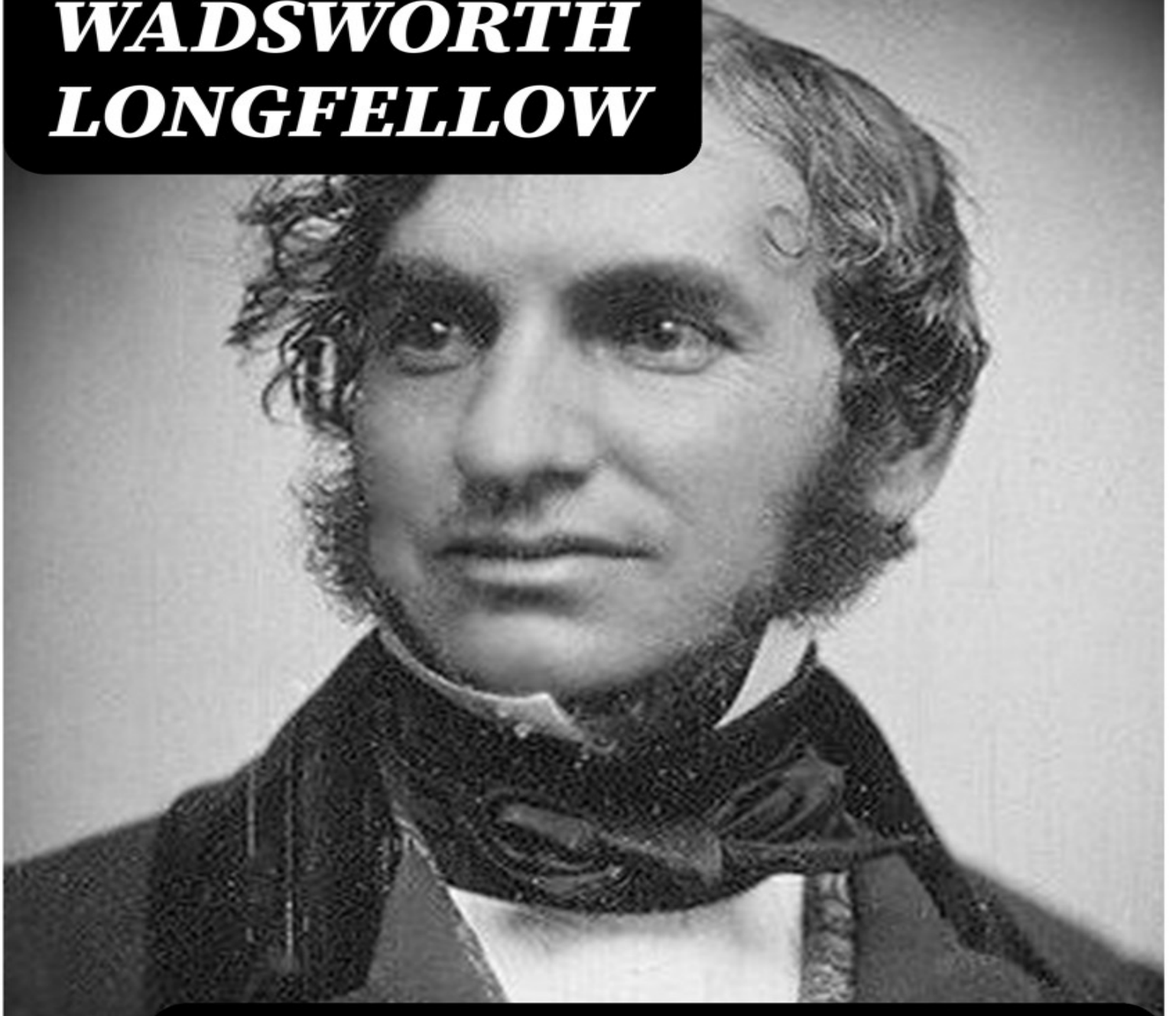
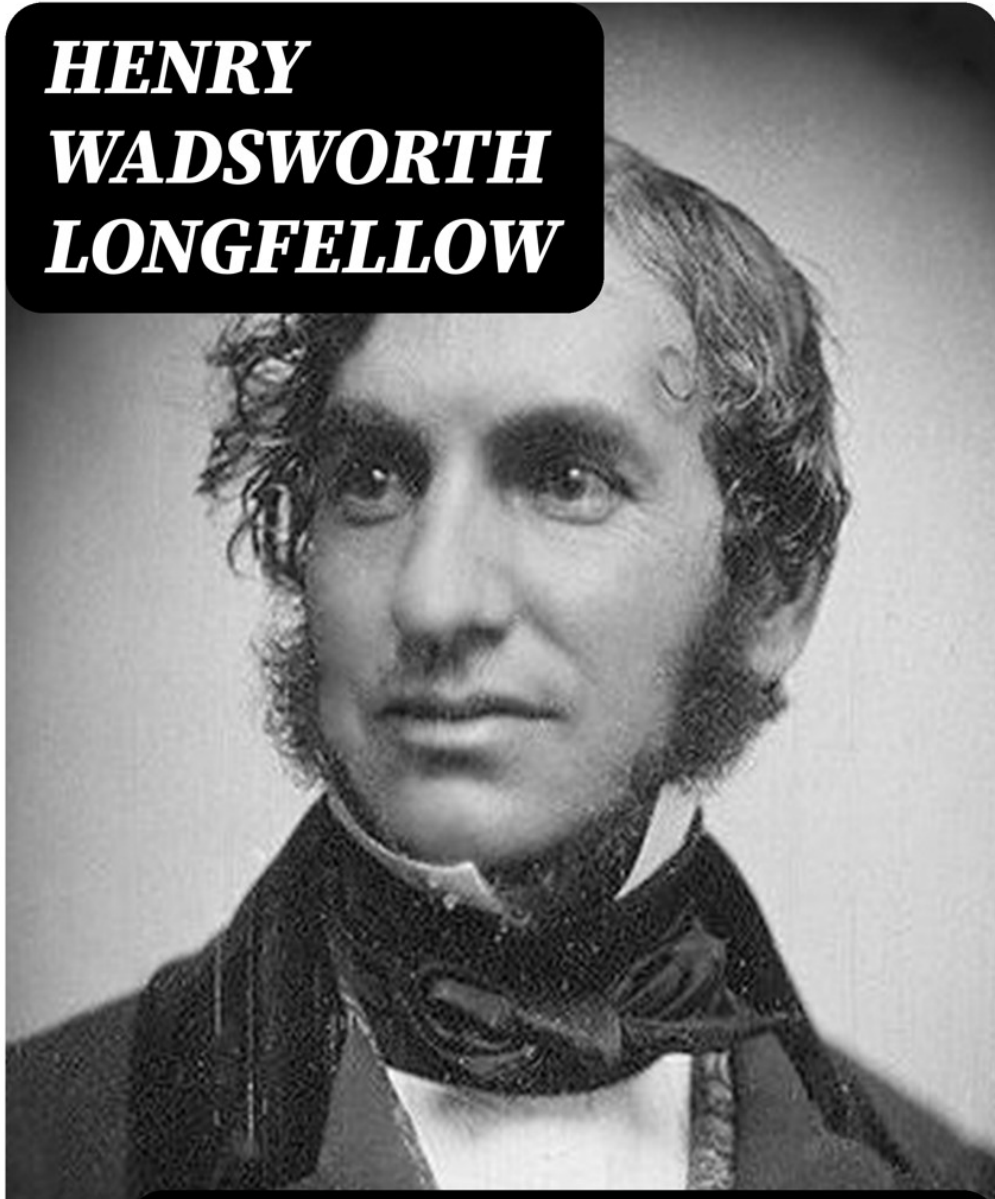


***HENRY
WADSWORTH
LONGFELLOW***



***EVANGELINE:
A TALE
OF ACADIE***

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Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART THE FIRST.

I.

II.

III.

IV.

V.

PART THE SECOND.

I.

II.

III.

IV.

V.

PART THE FIRST.

[Table of Contents](#)

I

[Table of Contents](#)

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the
eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without
number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor
incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-
gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the
meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and
cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the

northward

Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains

Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic

Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of chestnut,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables projecting

Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.

There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles

Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden

Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors

Mingled their sound with the whirl of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children

Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless

them.

Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,

Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.

Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank

Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,— Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;

But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,

Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré, Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.

Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;

White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.

Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,

Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an