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the man who shaped the literature of a new nation with his countless poems, sonnets, stories, essays, translations, and whose renown was so wide-reaching that his deep friendships included Charles Dickens, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Julia Ward Howe, and Oscar Wilde. Basbanes writes of the

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shaping of Longfellow's character, his huge body of work that included translations of numerous foreign works, among them, the first rendering into a complete edition by an American of Dante's Divine Comedy. We see Longfellow's two marriages, both happy and contented, each cut short by tragedy.

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His first to Mary Storer Potter that ended in the aftermath of a miscarriage, leaving Longfellow devastated. His second marriage to the brilliant Boston socialite--Fanny Appleton, after a three-year pursuit by Longfellow (his "fiery crucible," he called it), and his emergence as a literary force and a man of letters. A

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