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Good people read these verses,
Which I have written here,
And when you have perused them,
You can't but shed a tear.

In Eighteen hundred and forty-two,
April the eleventh day,
Two little girls from Preston Road,
Into the woods did stray.

Their father and their mother
Both sick in bed did lay,
While these two little children
About the door did play.

And hand in hand together
They seen them leave the door.
The eldest was but six years old,
The youngest only four.

Jane Elizabeth and Margaret Mahar
Were their two pretty names
Two of the fairest creatures,
That e'er did Nature frame.

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They walked along together
And cheerfully did play;
But mark what followed after,
How soon they lost their way.

There in the lonely wilderness
They spent a dismal day.
They night came on, they thought of home,
Their streaming eyes give way.

The frosty gale blew very hard,
Not a star to yield them light,
The beasts of prey they feared all day,
The screaming owls at night.

They might have been discovered,
But for that simple race,
Ye Preston niggers [Niggers: Use of racist terminology.], wash your hands
And wipe off your disgrace.

You cruel Brown, that heard them cry,
And did not take them in,
May God reward or punish you,
According to your sin!

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But when the shocking news
Did reach the neighboring town,
Each manly heart with pity swelled,
And then for grief atoned,
Saying "Poor Mahar, your babes are lost,

And you are left forlorn,
 So true it is, it bears remark
 that 'Man was made to mourn' [2'Man was made to mourn': In reference to poem by Robert Burns by the same name written in 1784.]
 ."

Early the next morning
 Went out one hundred men.
 They found poor Mahar and his wife
 Searching the lonely plain.
 First casting their eyes to heaven,
 And then upon the ground,
 With prayers and groans and dying cries
 Distracted as they roamed.
 'Twas all that week they hunted,
 But alas it was in vain,
 For in the lonely wilderness,
 Their infants did remain.

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Though oft they stopped to listen,
 They never could hear a sound,
 At twelve o'clock on Thursday,
 A bloody rag was found.
 Think, gentle reader, what a sight,
 If we could them behold [3them: Written in pencil on in the margins is the word 'them'.],
 Dying in the wilderness,
 With hunger, fright and cold.
 Not a mother by to close an eye,
 Or friend to wipe a tear.
 A Pharaoh's heart would surely melt [4A Pharaoh's heart would surely melt: Phrase used in reference to the biblical story of Moses, where the Pharaoh did not to relent to the releasing the Israelites, despite many trials inflicted by god.],
 Their dying cries to hear.
 On the 14th day of April,
 Went out a valiant crew,
 To search the woods and dreary plains,
 As hunters used to do.
 'Twas Halifax and Dartmouth,,
 Preston and Porter's Lake,
 Twelve hundred men assembled,
 A final search to make.

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'Twas Peter Curry found them
 At twelve o'clock that day,
 On Melancholy Mountain,
 But lumps of breathless clay.
 Their hair was dragged from their heads,
 Their clothes in pieces torn,
 Their tender flesh from head to foot
 The prickly thorns had gorn.
 The frost it stole upon their hearts,

Their blood began to chill,
 Their tender nerves could not obey,
 With all their art and skill.
 Headlong they fell, they felt their souls,
 Unwilling, take their way,
 And left their tender bodies
 On dismal rock to lay.
 No longer did they leave them
 For the birds and beasts to tear.
 On decent biers they laid them
 And graced with odors fair.

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To the father's house they carried them
 Their mother to behold.
 She kissed them both a thousand times,
 Though they were dead and cold.
 Their father quite distracted was,
 And overcome with grief.
 The neighbours tried to comfort him,
 But gave him no relief.
 The cries of their poor mother
 Were dismal for to hear,
 To think that death had her bereft
 Of those she loved so dear.
 On the 17th of April
 They were in one coffin laid,
 Between Elmsvale and Elms Farm,
 The little grave was made,
 Where thousands did assemble,
 Their last farewell to take,
 Both rich and poor lamented sore
 For the poor children's sake.

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The rain was fast a-falling,
 And dismal was the day,
 When, gazing on Elizabeth,
 Methinks I heard her say:
 "Farewell, my loving neighbours,
 Return, dry up your tears,
 Let us two lay in this cold clay,
 Till Christ himself appears."
 Five pounds reward was offered
 To the man that did them find,
 But Curry he refused it,
 As a Christian, just and kind.
 May God forever bless him,
 And grant him length of days,
 The humble poet, D. G. Brown

(SD. G. Brown: Written in pencil in the margin 'G.B.D Dan Blois was the author'. Who authored the ballad is a contented issue as explored in an article in the Dartmouth Free Press, by Dr J P Martin, April 12, 1962.)

Shall ever sing his praise.
Ye gentle folks of Halifax
That did turn out so kind,
I hope in Heaven hereafter,
A full reward you'll find.

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Not forgetting those of Dartmouth
Who turned out rich and poor,
Likewise those of Preston
And round the Eastern shore.

Now to conclude and make an end
Of this my mournful song,
I beg you will excuse me
For writing it so long.

That I another thing like this
May never have to pen.
This is the first, I hope the last.
God grant it so, Amen!

Finis.