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As I Went Down to Port Jervis

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As I went down to Port Jervis, one morning in July
A mother with two soldier boys, the tears were in her eye,
Saying, "God be with you, my two sons, as you are going to war
You'll face the bloody battles along the Southern shore."

"Why do you weep, dear mother? Why do you weep and mourn?
Why do you weep, dear mother, for the loss of your two sons?
For when our country calls us, and after our blood is shed,
And after we're dead and buried, we're numbered with the dead."

"Johnny, I've gave you good schooling, also a trade likewise;
You needn't have joined the army if you had took my advice.
You need not go to face the foe where cannons loud did roar
You'd escape the bloody battle along the Southern shore."

"Yes mother, you gave me good schooling, also a trade likewise;
I needn't have joined the army if I had took your advice.
I need not go to face the foe where cannons loud did roar
I'd escape the bloody battle along the Southern shore."

I joined the fourteenth infantry, it was a bloody score,
I traveled on those sandy plains, my feet were blistered sore
(We fought through many a battle along the Southern shore,)
And I wish to God that I was dead, my brother was no more.

From Folk Songs of the Catskills, Cazden, Haufrecht, Studer
Collected from George Edwards (missing line in parentheses from
Marvin Yale)

tune: sl. variant of Tramps and Hawkers, Paddy West etc.