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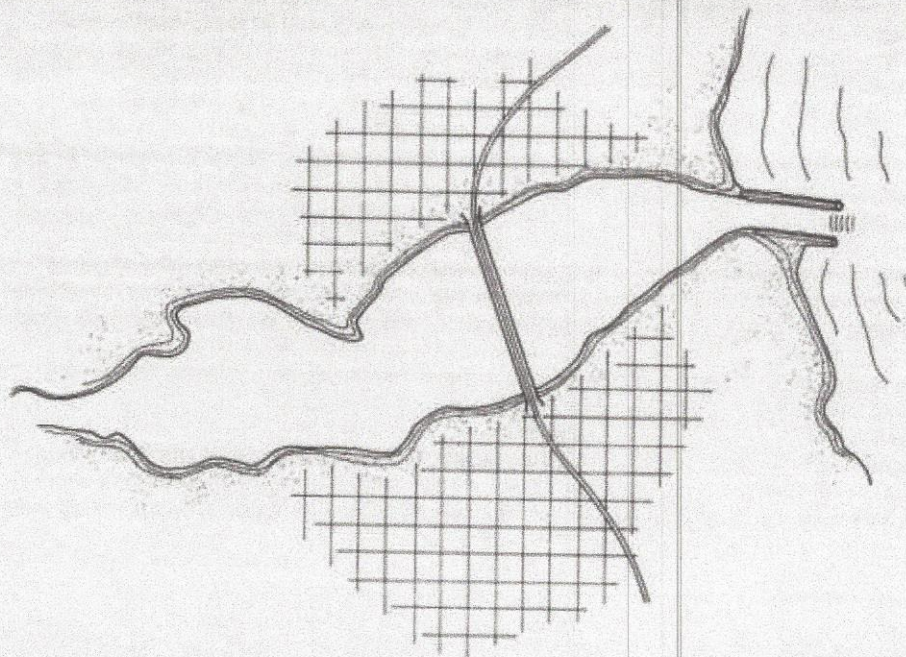


Figure 2a.—At the mouth of almost every sizeable river . . . is a town. If the harbor offers any shelter at all, there will likely be heavy boat traffic in and out. So safe bar crossings are a matter of great importance to many people.

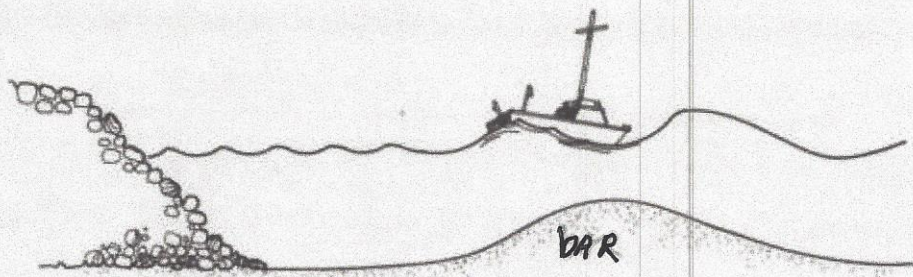


Figure 2b.—What a bar would look like in cross section: rather steep-sided, with much less water above it than either to seaward or upriver.



Figure 3.—The breaking waves over a bar can really be dangerous—especially for skippers who have not paid sufficient attention to weather forecasts and local conditions.

sediments settle to the bottom. Where this occurs, a bar forms (see figure 2a). The bar is a relatively steep-sided mound (figure 2b) that reduces water depth to less than the depths immediately to seaward or upriver.

What makes bars dangerous?

Surf crashing on a beach on a windless day is the result of *swell* reaching the beach from a storm that occurred probably hundreds of miles to seaward, hours and days earlier.