

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD  
of the  
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft  
in Scheduled Air Carrier Operation

An accident, which resulted in minor damage to a Douglas DC-3 airplane, NC 18143, owned and operated by American Airlines, Inc., occurred at about 12.00 midnight on February 17, 1942, at La Guardia Airport, New York. None of the nine passengers or the crew of three was injured. The crew consisted of Captain Charles H. Rickards, First Officer Clyde H. Proper, both of whom were properly certificated and appropriately rated, and a stewardess, E. McNaul.

The flight, designated by American as Trip 18-39 of February 17, originated at Boston, Massachusetts, with New York, New York, as its destination. The trip was uneventful until the plane was nearing the ground for a landing at the completion of its trip. Just as it passed over the flood lights at the edge of La Guardia Airport at an altitude of about 60 feet and an air speed of approximately 100 m.p.h., it collided with a bird which broke the right center windshield about 3 inches from the center post. A portion of the bird's body came through the windshield and was later found on the cockpit floor. The captain was leaning over to operate the flap valve when the bird struck the windshield and the first officer, who was at the controls, saw the bird strike and had time to dodge. The vision of both pilots was unaffected and Proper completed the landing without further incident.

American Airlines has initiated a program of altering all windshields by installing glass of greater thickness. This installation is being made as rapidly as glass of the proper quality (ripple free) can be obtained.

PROBABLE CAUSE: Presence of a bird in approach path of plane.

CONTRIBUTING FACTOR: Windshield glass of inadequate thickness to resist the force of the impact.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Darwin Charles Brown

Secretary