

## SNOW

The English word is from the Anglo Saxon snaw, the Danish snee, the Gothic snaivs.

There are, they say, as many as 20

Eskimo words for snow:

big fat flakes like bread for dressing;

hard, icy corn snow, like something at the bottom of a shot glass;

tiny bb's of hail;

soft flakes curved like goose down or soap shavings;

barely visible snow -- a rippling cellophane curtain between eyes and trees;

snow that hides the ptarmigan and hare;

that shows clear game tracks;

snow that cuts well into igloo blocks;

drifted snow that hampers sled runners;

snow so deep the moose starve standing up;

rime that dresses birch limbs in diamonds;

clean snow for tea water;

termination dust;

glaring white snow that blinds;

insidious snow that blows between unchinked logs.

In Larsen Bay Aleut it's an'yuk, with

the stress on the second syllable;

u as in book; a as in father.

In Diomedes Island Yupik it's avun.

Qangvin is "a ventilating hole in a snow house."

Auplitiving is "a vault back of the snow house."

Igdlu is "snow house."

Quaning is "falling snow."

Arauta quaning is "snow beater" in the Aivillik dialect.

Sometimes the builders of the igdlu insert a piece of fresh water ice in the qangvin, as "glass." Qingang is "a window in a snow house."

Qimissung is "a snow drift."

Snowflakes, like poems,

no two exactly alike.

-- Ann Chandonnet

Chugiak, AK

Note: "Termination dust" is an Alaskanism stemming from the fact that most summer construction workers can mark their final pay check by the appearance of the first snow on the mountain peaks. The Larsen Bay (Kodiak) word was supplied to me by Mrs. Weston Fields of Kodiak. The Diomedes one I saw in a news item. Others come from The Central Eskimo by Franz Boas (1964).