Mitchell Vasile Choban

He was born 30 Jun 1898 in a town that was then in Austria-Hungary and is now called Sannicolau Mare, Romania to George Cioban and Espirca Purcari. He emigrated in 1913 when he was only 14 years old and went to work in a pea canning factory in Wisconsin and in meat packing at Swift & Company in South St. Paul. Finding that hard labor and low wages for 16 hours a day. He left the meat packing industry and studied English and telegraphy.

He enlisted in the National Guard as soon as he turned 18 and was sent to Texas in 1916 with the Mexican Expedition against Pancho Villa's revolution. Upon return, Choban was drafted and entered the Army, but was discharged in 1918 because he was an alien. The unit he served in became part of the Machine Co. D., 20th Infantry U.S. National Guard. Choban served as a second lieutenant.

As a result of his education and knowledge of many foreign languages, he became successful in the banking business. He became a naturalized citizen in 1921. In 1923 he returned to Romania to visit his family in Sannicolau Mare, a story that was related in the journal of Drover's State Bank president, Otto Schumacher, who accompanied him on the 2-1/2 month business venture. Mitchell V. Choban married Eleanor Barbu in Chicago. They raised their family of four daughters in South St. Paul, Minnesota. Their daughter Ella was married to the priest who served St. Stefan's Romanian Orthodox Church for over fifty years. He died 29 October 1975 and is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in South St. Paul.