Anthony DeShaw was born between 1898 and 1901 in the month of October in Burnsville, Minnesota. His parents were Charles DeShaw and Honora Ellen Fitzgibbons. Prior to his military service, DeShaw lived in Rosemount.

DeShaw enlisted in the Army on April 28, 1918. He may have lied about his age in order to enter the military prematurely. He served with the 357th Infantry, 90th Division of the A.E.F. His rank was Private. It is unclear when DeShaw was mustered out of service.

After the war, DeShaw married Ethel Hennessey, with whom he had a son, Benjamin. DeShaw worked as a laborer at Whole Sale Tea & Coffee. They lived with Louiza Hennessy (Ethel’s mother) in St. Paul or Burnsville. DeShaw may have been out of work by 1940. He died in January 1979 around the age of 81.