The Shtiebel of Otwock Chassidim

My memories are from my childhood and up to when I left Częstochowa in 1919.

The Otwock shtiebel was at the house of my grandfather, Reb Aba’le Shoichet (Kaufman), at ul. Targowa 8 (the meat-market street). The members of that shtiebel were:

- my great-grandfather, Reb Mojsze Shoichet;
- my grandfather, Reb Aba’le Shoichet, and his sons: Reb Józef Majer and my father, Reb Menachem Mendel hy”d;
- Reb Binem;
- Reb Aleksander Ziskind;
- Reb Gronam and Reb Mordche Nechemie, his son-in-law, Reb Leibisz Sztajnfeld, who led the morning prayer and read the Torah on the High Holidays;
- Reb Zajnwel (Shoichet) Borzykowski, who led the Mysef prayer on the High Holidays and his son Reb Mordche Jankew, who blew the shofar;
- Reb Majer Kaufman and his son Reb Mendel Kaufman;
- Reb Ze’ev Wolf Kaufman and his son Burech Duwid;
- Reb Srul Duwid Okladek (Warszawer), who had travelled to the “Middle Rebe” of Vurke¹, and his sons: Reb Aron Alter, Reb Icze Majer and Reb Leizer, and his son-in-law, Reb Szlojme Grosberg, the renowned mohel, and Reb Berl Pelc.

At first, the [rabbinical] judge Reb Józef Prokosz (who was nicknamed Reb Józef Kira) also worshipped there, with his son Reb Joel, [as well as] Reb Gecel Ajdels; Reb Ber Rysocki; Reb Berl Horowicz and his son Reb Nachman Aron; Reb Duwid Shoichet and his sons Reb Chaim Ber and Reb Wolf; Reb Chaim Shoichet (Reb Duwid Shoichet’s son-in-law); Reb Berisz Berliner, the owner of the matzo bakery, and his son-in-law Reb Gerszon Szwarcbaum; Reb Chaskel Rozencwajg; Reb Awrum Rozenblat HaCohen and his son Chaim.

In later years, about 1904, my grandfather Reb Aba’le Shoichet left his flat on ul. Targowa and moved to Nowy Rynek 13 and, at approximately the same time, the shtiebel was also moved from No.8 to No.69 on the same street, to the house of Reb Mendel Pelc. Above it was the Radomsko shtiebel and there was also another minyan in the same building (at the house of the melamed Reb Benjamin Litwak).

¹ [TN: Rebbe Mordechai Menachem Mendel Kalisz, 1819-1868.]