The building which now houses the Aldie Country Store has been operating as a store for close to 100 years. Built in 1897 by E.B. Goode, the store was operated by Ira C. Carter until 1928. In that year, the store was purchased by Murrell Partlow for $2,400. (A store which Goode had owned nearby burned down. Along with his brother Nelson, Murrell also owned Partlow Brother’s Store in Ashburn from 1930. While busy with his businesses, Murrell also found time to serve as president of the Aldie Baseball Club. (Other officers included Thomas Francis (“Top”) Tyler; Philip diZerega; and R.C. Scott, who managed the team).

Murrell Partlow’s son, Murrel Lee (“ML”) Partlow was born that same year (1928), in the apartment upstairs, and spent much time as an infant in a cardboard box behind the counter and learning the business as he grew up. ML would frequently accompany his father on trips into Washington, hauling cattle, hogs and sheep to the city for local farmers and returning with supplies for the store. A big pastime for him and his friends was swimming at the Aldie Dam. By 1951, at age 23, the store belonged to him, and he operated it until 1983. ML, along with his wife Lillian, operated the store initially as had his father, as a full-service store. Customers would bring their lists, and Lillian or a stock clerk would gather the items at the counter. The store was known for its high-quality meats. Later they converted to self-service. The Partlow’s recall the store being a gathering place for the youngsters on Saturday nights, when they would hang out under the porch or in the parking lot in the summers. The Aldie Post Office was located in Partlow’s Grocery from 1929 until it moved to its current location about 1957.

ML, or “Butch” as he was known at the time, became smitten by Lillian Robertson, both attending Aldie High School. Lillian had been born in Grand Cascapedia, Quebec. Her father, a hunting and fishing guide, was asked by John S. Phipps to become caretaker of his estate near Middleburg, so they moved to Middleburg when she was very young. In high school, Lillian was an honor roll student, president of her sophomore class, sang in the Glee Club, was captain of the girls basketball and softball teams, and named best all-around girl athlete. ML drove the school bus his junior and senior years, and Lillian apparently had a reserved seat immediately behind the driver. They graduated in 1946 and 1947 and were married in 1948.

In addition to their long hours at the store, ML and Lillian were active in the community. ML was a founding member of Aldie Rutitan, and chief of the Aldie Volunteer Fire Department. Lillian was a founding member of the Aldie VFD Auxiliary, formed in 1955; and a long-time member of the Aldie Horticultural Society.

Mr. Partlow is particularly proud to be in the family of four veterans of the War Between the States. Two of his great-grandfathers and two great uncles served in the army of the Confederate States of America. He served as brigade commander and camp commander for the Sons of Confederate Veterans. In the picture at right, ML and Lillian are participating in the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the Monument to the Confederate Soldiers of Loudoun County, in Leesburg.

Today, the Partlows remain active in the Village, and live in the home they moved into, a few feet from where he was born. (“I didn’t get far,” he says). They retired from active management of the store in 1983. He still assists neighbor John Gulick in his hay-making operations each year. The store has transitioned into more of a convenience store in recent years, managed by another entity, and continues to serve Aldie residents and Rt. 50 travelers.