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6A-The Mount Airy News Frida 12-20-96

## **Visit On** Saturday

By ANGELA LEONARD **Staff Writer** 

A Surry County native and parttime Carroll County, Va., resident will be back in Mount Airy Saturday, signing copies of his Christmas book, The Angel Doll.

Jerry Bledsoe, better known for his true-crime books, wrote "The Christmas Angel" based on events from his childhood in Thomasville, where he moved when he was

small.

"This book came about because of my dear friend Mutt Burton," said Bledsoe. He said that Burton was an actor and a columnist, "and one of the great celebrators of Christmas. He loved it better than

anybody I ever knew.

"He died last year just before Christmas, and I decided then I would do a Christmas book to commemorate his life and dedicate it to him. I started right after Christmas; it was going to be collection of Christmas columns, called In Search of Christmas.

Bledsoe said when he began work on the collection he remembered the story of the angel doll which he had written some decades earlier. "I dug it out of the micro-film," he said. "I remembered it as being good, but it was not quite as well written as I remembered."

He said he made two or three atlempts at redoing the column, then decided he would abandon that column. "Then one morning in the shower, a way to begin came to me. All of a sudden it came to me, and I jumped out and put it down. From there, that story started to grow and pretty soon I was doing nothing but that. It was almost like it was forcing itself on me, like it had to come out.

"When I found a way to end it properly as an uplifting story, then I knew the story had power. I knew it was a story whose time had come. It had to stand by itself, and it became the Mutt book.

The small book, released just in time for Christmas, has been selling well, but Bledsoe said it is not his first non-crime book nor the first

non-crime title to do well.

"Always between the crime books (which include Bitter Blood and Before He Wakes), I do these lighter works," he said. "When you write things like that, it weighs you down psychologically, so I try to do these lighter kinds of books.

"They are life enhancing; a way to save myself psychologically."

His other works have included books about traveling the Blue Ridge Parkway, humor, and other topics, several of which have done

"I've had great reaction to The Angel Doll," he said, adding that he is looking forward to sharing the book with Mount Airy readers. The book tells the story of a 10-year-old boy, his best friend, their shared paper route, and a little girl who hopes for an angel doll for Christmas.

The book signing will be held at Atticus Books in Mayberry Mall from 2 to 4 p.m. At past book signings, he has reportedly signed as many as 1,000 copies in two sittings with some people buying as may as

10 copies each.

Before turning to books, Bledsoe was a columnist and reporter at The Charlotte Observer and Greensboro Daily News & Record. He and his wife live in Asheboro and Carroll County, where he does most of his writing. They have one son, Erik, who teaches at the University of Tennessee.

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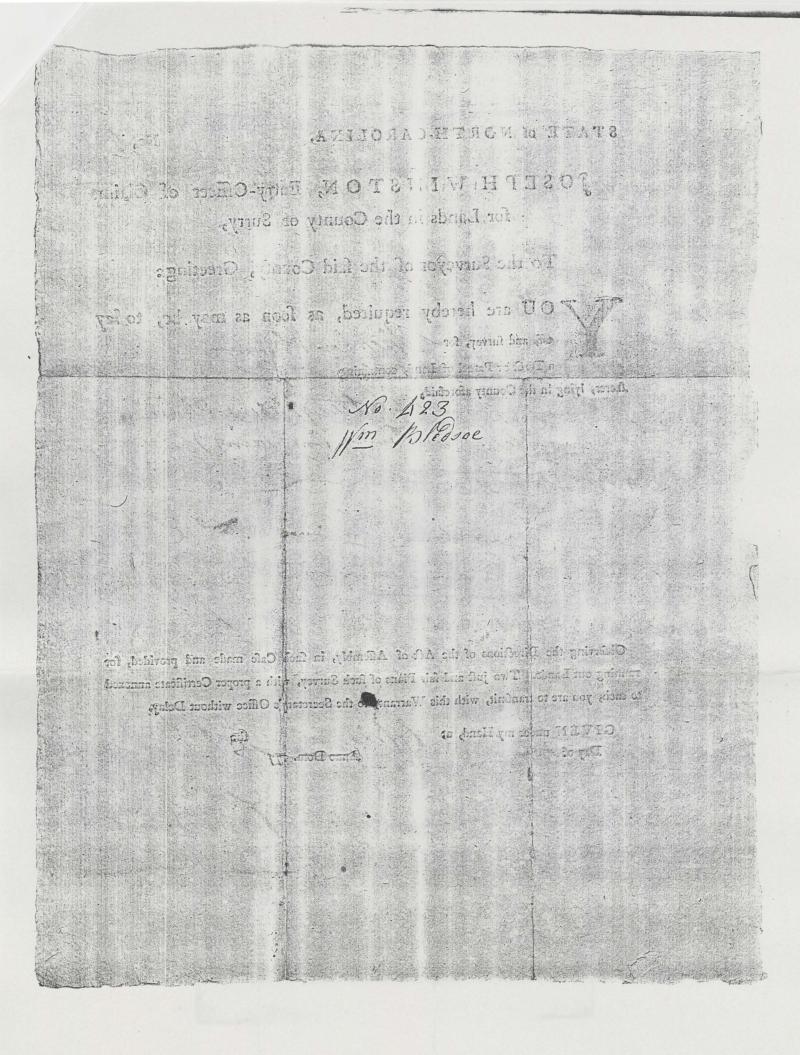
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Observing the Directions of the Act of Assembly, in such Case made and provided, for running out Lands. Two just and fair Plans of such Survey, with a proper Certificate annexed to each, you are to transmit, with this Warrant, to the Secretary's Office without Delay.

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Anno Dom. 177

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STATE of NORTH-CAROLINA;

No; 1220

JOSEPH WINSTON, Entry-Officer of Claims for Lands in the County of Surry,

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