

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person  
 WICKERSHAM, MICHAEL D.  
 217 GREENVILLE AVENUE  
 WINCHESTER, IN 47394  
 USA
2. Date of Event Requiring Statement (Month/Day/Year)  
 November 12, 1996
3. IRS or Social Security Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)  
 ###-##-####
4. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
 FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION  
 FRME
5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)  
 Director  10% Owner  Officer (give title below)  Other  
 (specify below)
6. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Day/Year)
7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table I -- Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security	2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned	3. Ownership Form: Direct(D) or Indirect(I)	4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership
Common Stock	615	D	

Table II -- Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Derivative Security	2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	3. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities	4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	5. Ownership Form of Derivative Security: Direct(D) or Indirect(I)	6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership
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Explanation of Responses:  
 SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON  
 Michael D. Wickersham  
 DATE  
 November 13, 1996