

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

SCHEDULE 13G

Under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934
(Amendment No. 7)

FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION

Common Stock, No Par Value

CUSIP Number: 320817109

*The remainder of this cover page shall be filed out for a reporting person's initial filing on this form with respect to the subject class of securities, and for any subsequent amendment containing information which would alter the disclosures provided in a prior cover page.

The information required in the remainder of this cover page shall not be deemed to be "filed" for the purpose of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act") or otherwise subject to the liabilities of that section of the Act but shall be subject to all other provisions of the Act (however, see the Notes).

(CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE[S])

Page 1 of 4 Pages

1. Names of Reporting Persons; S.S. or I.R.S. Identification Nos. of Above Persons:

GEORGE AND FRANCES BALL FOUNDATION

2. Check the Appropriate Box if a Member of a Group.

(a) / / (b) / /

3. SEC Use Only

4. Citizenship or Place of Organization:

INDIANA

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------|
| Number of Shares Beneficially Owned by Each Reporting Person With | 5. Sole Voting Power: | 293,720 |
| | 6. Shared Voting Power: | -0- |
| | 7. Sole Dispositive Power: | 293,720 |
| | 8. Shared Dispositive Power: | -0- |

9. Aggregate Amount Beneficially Owned by Each Reporting Person.

293,720

10. Check if the Aggregate Amount in Row 9 Excludes Certain Shares.

11. Percent of Class Represented by Amount in Row 9

4.4%

12. Type of Reporting Person

EP

ITEM 1(a) NAME OF ISSUER.

First Merchants Corporation

ITEM 1(b). ADDRESS OF ISSUER'S PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICES.

200 East Jackson Street
Muncie, IN 47305

ITEM 2(a). NAME OF PERSON FILING.

George and Frances Ball Foundation

ITEM 2(b). ADDRESS OF PRINCIPAL BUSINESS OFFICE OR, IF NONE, RESIDENCE.

P. O. Box 1408
Muncie, IN 47308

ITEM 2(c). CITIZENSHIP.

Indiana

ITEM 2(d). TITLE OF CLASS OF SECURITIES.

Common Stock, No Par Value

ITEM 2(e). CUSIP NO.

320817109

ITEM 3. Not Applicable

ITEM 4. OWNERSHIP.

As of December 31, 1996, the reporting person beneficially owned 293,720 shares, or 4.4%, of the Issuer's 6,603,319 outstanding shares of common stock, all of which the reporting person has the sole power to vote and dispose.

ITEM 5. OWNERSHIP OF FIVE PERCENT (5%) OR LESS OF A CLASS.

If this statement is being filed to report the fact that as of the date hereof the reporting person has ceased to be the beneficial owner of more than five percent of the class of securities, check the following [X].

ITEM 6. OWNERSHIP OF MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT (5%) ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER PERSON.

Not Applicable.

ITEM 7. IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE SUBSIDIARY WHICH ASSIGNED THE SECURITY BEING REPORTED ON BY THE PARENT HOLDING COMPANY.

Not Applicable.

ITEM 8. IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF MEMBERS OF THE GROUP.

Not Applicable.

ITEM 9. NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF GROUP.

Not Applicable.

ITEM 10. CERTIFICATION.

Not Applicable

SIGNATURE

After reasonable inquiry and to the best of my knowledge and belief, I certify that the information set forth in this statement is true, complete, and correct.

Date: February 1 , 1997

GEORGE AND FRANCES BALL FOUNDATION

By: /s/ Douglas J. Foy

Printed Name: Douglas J. Foy

Title: Treas.
