

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

() Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16.
 Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instructions 1(b).

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person
 WICKERSHAM, MICHAEL D.
 217 GREENVILLE AVENUE
 WINCHESTER, IN 47394
 USA
2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
 FIRST MERCHANTS CORPORATION
 FRME
3. IRS or Social Security Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)
 ###-##-####
4. Statement for Month/Year
 July 31, 1998
5. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Year)
6. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)
 (X) Director () 10% Owner () Officer (give title below) () Other
 (specify below)
7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)
 (X) Form filed by One Reporting Person
 () Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table I -- Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security	2. Transaction Date	3. Code	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D)		5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Month	6. Direct (D) or Indirect (I)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership
			Amount	A/D			
Common Stock					654.1761 (1)	D	

Table II -- Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Derivative Security	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date	4. Code	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D)		6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities	8. Price of Derivative Security	9. Number of Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Month	10. Direct (D) or Indirect (I)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership	
				Amount	A/D	Exercise Date	Expiration Date						Title and Number of Shares
Non-Employee Director Stock Option (Right to Buy)	45.6563	07-01-98	A	V	600	A	01-01-99	06-30-08	Common	600		D	

Explanation of Responses:
 (1) includes 5.7053 shares acquired in September 1997 and 4.9742 shares acquired in December 1997 and 4.4675 shares acquired in March 1998, and 4.3195 shares acquired in June 1998 under the First Merchants Corporation dividend reinvestment plan.

SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON
 Michael D. Wickersham (Confirming Statement on File)
 DATE
 August 3, 1998