

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  
 October 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) Amount	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at End of Month A/D Price	6. Direct (D) or Indirect (I)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership
Common Stock				1988.7826(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) Amount	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date A/Exercise Date	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities Title and Number of Shares	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
Non-Employee Director Stock Option (Right to Buy)								1,800	D	

Explanation of Responses:  
 (1) includes 5.3456 shares acquired in September 1998 (pre-split) under the First Merchants Corporation dividend reinvestment plan. On August 11, 1998, the Board of Directors of First Merchants Corporation authorized a 3-for-2 split of the Corporation's common stock. One additional share of common stock for each two shares held by the reporting person on the record date, October 16, 1998, was distributed October 23, 1998. Fractional shares were distributed in cash. The options previously reported were also adjusted to reflect the stock split.

SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON  
 Michael D. Wickersham (Confirming Statement on File)  
 DATE  
 November 2, 1998