

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person
 JOHNSON, NORMAN MILLER
 480 ADAMS AVENUE
 GLENCOE, IL 60022-1865
2. Date of Event Requiring Statement (Month/Day/Year)
 AUGUST 13, 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 to Issuer (Check all applicable)
 (X) Director () 10% Owner () Officer (give title below) () Other
 (specify below)
6. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Day/Year)

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	170,683	D	
	16,329	I	Spouse - Julie
	60,750	I	Co-Executor, Estate of Father: Norman H. Johnson

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

Explanation of Responses:
 SIGNATURE OF REPORTING PERSON
 Norman M. Johnson
 DATE
 August 14, 1996