

# players



Trust buster:  
Pollard wants a  
higher return.

## Rich Man, Poor Man **Ted Pollard thinks it's time trust departments woke up.**

**I**N THE TOPSY-TURVY WORLD OF INHERITED WEALTH where Bertie Wooster defers to his man Jeeves, the typical heir quakes before his trust officer. But not 47-year-old Edward Ellsberg Pollard. Pollard has founded an unlikely special interest group called Heirs and Beneficiaries to wage a *jihad* against the nation's trust departments.

With his polka-dotted bow tie and dancing school manners, Pollard seems an unlikely fellow to lead an heirs' revolt. But he's lost more than a few bucks. He inherited three trusts from his grandfather in 1983 totalling \$1.5 million; the trust department at the Bank of New York whittled that sum down to \$1.3 million, and did so during a period when the S&P rose nearly three-fold. "My bank screwed up something fierce," he says.

His circumstances have been straitened accordingly. The paint is peeling and the chimney crumbling at his 22-room mansion in St. Davids, on Philadelphia's tony Main Line. He is behind on his son's college tuition. And he says that if his wife didn't work four days a week, "we'd be starving." But hold onto your hankies. His trusts still generate \$55,000 a year.

Pollard's impoverishment sent him over the edge two years ago, when, riding on bald tires, he was unable to keep from squashing a Dalmatian that had scampered in front of his '84

Lincoln. That night he telephoned the Bank of New York's chairman to vent his wrath, and last year he founded the organization that is now called Heirs and Beneficiaries. The group has more than 1,000 supporters on its mailing list and about 300 dues-paying members.

Pollard has organized a class-action suit against two banks for charging fees for sweeping spare cash from trusts into a money market fund, claiming that it should be a routine part of their service. Next, he's going after their two-week "float" and a dozen other revenue-enhancers he finds questionable.

Harder to address will be the wretched performance of all too many trusts. His own trust diversified little beyond the original downward-trending IBM stock it held, and when it did diversify, it went for such dogs as Maxicare Health Plans, which turned a \$4,700 investment into \$65. "If you'd sold short nearly everything my trust bought, you'd have made a lot of money." He believes beneficiaries should be free to switch to other banks if dissatisfied. "You can change your house, your job, even your spouse; why not your trust?" he asks.

Pollard says his militancy has made the banks jittery. And his own trust officer? "It's as if nothing has happened."

—JOHN SEDGWICK