



The scale of the disaster unfolds, main picture, after the crush in which children, top right, were passed over the crowd. Above, Moyers lays flowers at the grave of her father and grandfather while, above left, Alf Ashworth still recalls the confusion that prevailed. Marland kept a programme from the game that his grandfather had attended

**British football's darkest days**

**APRIL 5, 1902, IBROX PARK, GLASGOW**  
Fifty-one minutes into a match between England and Scotland the West Tribune Stand collapsed after heavy rain the night before. Twenty-five were killed and 517 injured.

by a stairway near the end of a match against Celtic, some slipped and the force formed a crush. Sixty-six people died, including 24 children.

**MAY 11, 1985, VALLEY PARADE, BRADFORD**  
A fire broke out at an end-of-season match between Bradford City and Lincoln City. Fifty-six people died and more than 265 were injured.

**APRIL 15, 1989, HILLSBOROUGH, SHEFFIELD**  
Thousands gathered at Anfield yesterday to mark Britain's worst sports disaster, in which 96 people died and more than 700 were injured. Liverpool fans were crushed in overcrowded sections of the Leppings Lane End as their team played Nottingham Forest in an FA Cup semi-final.

something terrible had happened at the match. I went to a neighbour's house and waited for them to come home. We watched bus after bus pulling up, but they didn't get off. It got dark and we still kept looking out. I can still feel the pain today of realising Dad wasn't coming home again."

Her father, an engine designer for Rolls-Royce, hadn't been a football fan in particular but wanted to see Matthews play. "My grandfather hadn't wanted to go and told my dad he'd prefer to work on his allotment. My dad said he'd help him fit some new drains on it if he'd accompany him to the match," June said.

The deaths had a devastating effect on her family. Ellen Roby, her grandmother, died within two years and her mother suffered later in life. "They say my grandmother died of a broken heart, losing her son and husband in such a way," June said. "My mum spent the last years of her life in a locked ward in a hospital where she was still talking about the disaster — she'd never come to terms with it."

Almost £51,000 was raised for a fund, mainly through charity football matches. Every child who lost a father received ten shillings a week until they were 21. A five-day inquiry was held into the disaster and safety recommendations were made that stood for all English football grounds.

For many years the disaster was hardly noted in Bolton. "I think at first people wanted to move on and forget it," Marland said. "I know my grandad didn't like talking about it. When we first sold the land for supermarket development, however, it didn't feel right building over a place where a catastrophe had happened."

Since then, each significant anniversary has been commemorated and regular memorial services held. The disaster did not deter Alf Ashworth from supporting his beloved Bolton. He has had a bad leg but is determined to make the trip to Wembley tomorrow with his two sons and grandson. "I've told them, if need be they'll have to give me a piggy back there," he said.