The time at Nuffield allowed Matthews and his wife, Julia, to travel abroad on mathematical business. In 1968, he went as Shell Professor of Mathematics Education to the Centre for Science Education (CSE). In due course, the CSE became part of King's College, London and we read of many of Matthews' young colleagues, including Kath Hart and Margaret Brown. It was Margaret who took over Matthews' Chair when he retired in 1977.

There follows a brief account of how retirement is filled with activities which included art and sculpture. There is little mention of Parkinson's disease which now afflicts him but the proceeds of sales of this book are given to Parkinson's Research. In a home-produced book of this nature, typos are inevitable but do not detract from the flow. One slip which I particularly liked occurred in the part dealing with his slightly early departure from Marlborough in which we read 'He even tried to tempt me [to stay on] by promising that I should become a perfect ...'

Can I recommend this book to you? Well, the answer very much depends on who you are and what is important in your life. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it although there was some sadness not entirely due to the wartime stories, grim though they (although not unrelentingly so). I think the main sadness is coupled with the thought 'they don't make them like that any more'.

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These books are 'designed to help you achieve your best possible grade in the Edexcel/AQA Higher GCSE examination' (they differ only in the examination questions sections). Their approach to this task is to present a reasonably full treatment of the GCSE curriculum through explanation of topics, worked examples, exercises, topic summaries, topic-specific summary exercises and exam questions. The layout is in full colour, and is very clear and attractive. Colour is used to key the purpose of the various parts of the busy-looking pages, which might otherwise have been confusing. The structure and layout of each topic section is consistent throughout the book. There are 25 of these, and the order seems sensible. Indexing is through a 'Wordfinder' at the start of the book and a full index at the back: both are good. One nice idea is the four 'Skills Break' sections, which present miscellaneous questions around a common theme, such as The City of Paris or The Titanic Disaster. Near the end are two useful sections on coursework, both the investigation and the statistical project (the books follow the latest Curriculum 2000). These have sound advice on what the examiners are looking for and how the work is assessed, though the example investigations are simpler than most real ones.

With exams getting nearer, the 'in focus' topic-centred revision exercises may prove useful, and the actual examination questions sections are a major resource, adding considerably to the value of the books. The two books differ considerably in this section, that for AQA having nearly twice as many questions in number, algebra and shape and space (accounting for the extra pages), and also having these further subdivided into up to 8 topic based subsections each. Perhaps because it has drawn on both SEG and NEAB papers the AQA book ends up with over 300 questions to the Edexcel book's 180. The questions have been laid out to remove all the blank space present in the original exam papers (and are not to be answered in the book!), but the original mark assignments have been removed. There are also a couple of
examination style papers’, one for use with and one without a calculator.

So what did I think of these books? I’ve already said that I found them attractive in appearance, with colourful pages and many clear diagrams (and no distracting irrelevant clip art). The exercises contain much good material, and the bank of exam questions is just the job. I ended up with some reservations, however, mainly to do with the quality of the explanatory text. This is partly because it wasn’t clear to me what job the books are supposed to do. Are they a textbook for the whole of key Stage 4, or just a revision book for year 11? Are they aimed at independent learners, or is it assumed a teacher will do most of the explaining? Not all topics are explained from basic principles (e.g., trigonometry, Pythagoras) and there is rarely more than one worked example of a given type of problem (and these focus more on what to do than why do it). Key facts to remember are not always as well highlighted as they might be, and even such a useful mnemonic as SOHCAHTOA is missed out. The quality of the explanations left me dissatisfied more often than I like in a textbook, erring on the superficial side, though much was good. There was too little emphasis on non-calculator technique, and virtually none on ICT. A persistent niggle was the peculiar printing of the unary minus as a superscript like this: ‘2. I don’t know if this is a convention followed in the rest of the Oxford scheme, and it may have something to recommend it, but it irritated me.

So overall the books are very good as an exam question bank and have many other points to recommend them, but look hard before being seduced by the attractive appearance. They are quite expensive (and heavy!) and would need some protection from the depredations of pupils.

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Also available in the series: Decision mathematics D1; and the full range of pure mathematics, statistics and mechanics.

This set of books has been written especially for the Edexcel modular examinations at AS/A level each corresponding to one or two modules. This particular book is written for the second Discrete module D2.

The book is divided into chapters on transportation problems, allocation problems, the travelling salesman problem, game theory and dynamic programming. There are two appendices covering the dual of a linear programming problem and other ways of formulating a game as a linear programming problem. Exercises include questions of ‘examinable’ standard provided by a current Edexcel examiner. At the end of each chapter or section there is a shaded box summarising the key points.

Each section starts with a clear description of the ‘problem’, the data we will have to work with and the objective of the exercise followed by a worked example. It is all very clear and clinical although I doubt a student could work through it alone as the worked examples go in at the deep end with fairly complex notation and little illumination. For example, on page two, introducing the transportation problem we meet ‘The decision variables $x_{ij}$ are the numbers of tons transported from plant $i$ to each site $j$ . . . . Each term in the objective function $Z$ represents the cost of tonnage transported on one route. For example for the route $2 \rightarrow C$ the term is $9x_{2c}$. Mmmmmm.

For me, the whole point about discrete mathematics is its excitement, modern