Papin, Denis (1647-1712), natural philosopher, was born in August 1647 in Blois, France, and baptised there on 22 August at the temple of St-Nicolas St-Sauveur, the fourth of the thirteen children of Denis Papin and his wife, Marie, née Pineau. His father was a royal counsellor and district revenue collector, his mother's forebears were medical practitioners, and both his parents held property. The extended family was staunchly protestant, a religion which was worth while to obtain the degree of MD in 1669. The following year he arrived in Paris intending to practise medicine, but he probably already in 1669 he was elected to the Royal Society, he being for a while employed by Robert Hooke to write letters for the society at Savoy.

To this fruitful period belongs the invention of the vacuum pump, which Papin modified, though without improving it. His design was published as **Nouvelles expériences du vuide** in Acta Eruditorum in 1692. He also devised a safety valve, which proved to be a technically important feature in the later development of steam power. In his pressure experiments with air, he found that his live coal rapidly, requiring for fuel, and having lived meanwhile, with much nourishment derived from the ordered bodies, advantages which he considered of considerable value to poor families.

He demonstrated his invention to the Royal Society in May 1670, and was permitted to publish a *Nouvelles expériences du vuide*, which was republished in 1671.

Papin remained in London and was for a while employed by Robert Boyle to write letters for the society at Savoy, at the age of six he was put in the care of his uncle Nicholas, a medical practitioner. In 1560 he arrived in London. In 1673 he was employed by Henry Oldenburg, the society's secretary. Papin arrived in London in July 1675, bearing the watch and a letter from Huygens to his relatives. He notified the acquaintance of Robert Boyle, his friendship and patronage were so great that Boyle published his English by translating Boyle's *Physico-Theological Considerations* into French. He joined fellow Huguenots of the Thoroughbred congregation, and was found lodging and employment as a physician in London. When he arrived in 1675, he was reunited with other Huguenots who had fled France, among them his cousin Marie Denon."