

NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG

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What makes a good tag?

We've previously discussed why we tag records in our Catalog, but have you ever thought about what makes a good tag? Since adding tags enhances the National Archives Catalog search capabilities, we find that the best tags are the ones that add new information to a record that isn't already available. If you can find the word in the record's title or scope and content note, add it as a tag - but don't stop there! You can further improve access to that record if you identify an object, person or action in a record that is not already in the description.

Photographs and Graphic Materials

In order to tag these records, take a good look at the image. What do you see? What's happening in the image? Is there an overarching theme or feeling? Do you see any people? What kinds of people? What are they doing? What objects do you see?

Let's take a look at a photograph that can be enhanced with descriptive tags.

The title of this photograph is long and detailed:

[Adults Looking Over Bargain Merchandise Placed in the Street on the Sidewalks by Merchants in New Ulm, Minnesota, during their Annual Street Crazy Days Sale, the Town is a County Seat Trading Center of 13,000 in a Farming Area of South Central Minnesota, It was Founded in 1854 by a German Immigrant Land Company that](#)

[encouraged its Kinsmen to Emigrate from Europe, the bulk of the Business District is on Minnesota Street which has been Revitalized with Community Effort, 7/1974](#)



What tags can be found in the title or scope and content note?

Adults
Merchandise
Street
New Ulm
Minnesota
German
Immigrant
Business district
sidewalk

What tags would enhance this description even more?

Shoppers
Shirts
Awning
Sign
Glasses
bowtie

Textual Records

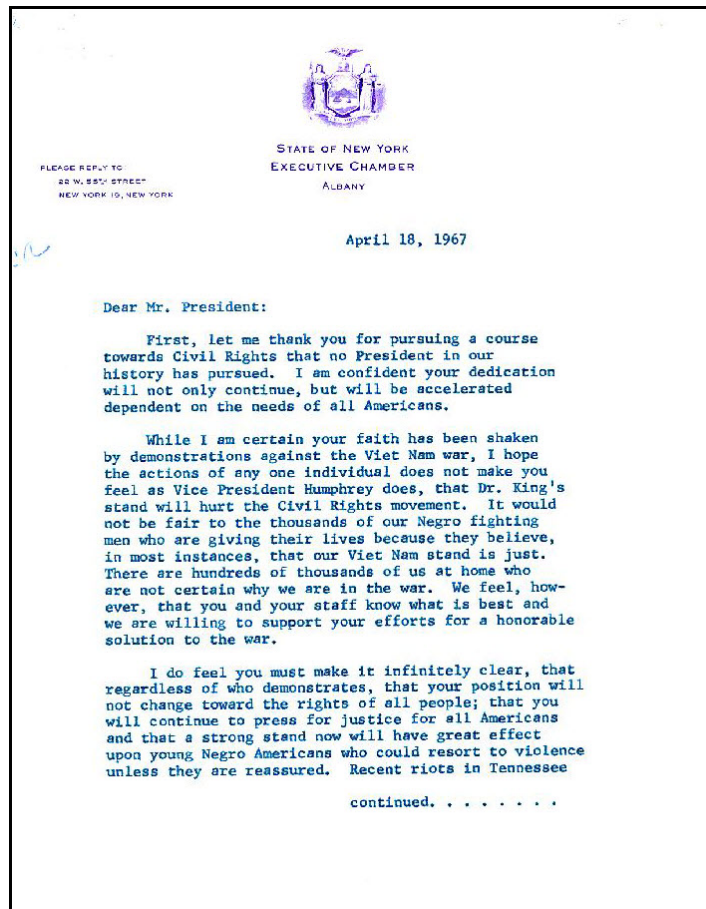
Textual records aren't as straightforward as photographs and posters. What is most helpful is tagging the names of key people in the record - those who are not listed in the title or scope and content note. You can also add subjects, locations, and anything else you can identify.

Let's look at this letter titled, [Letter to President Lyndon B. Johnson from Jackie Robinson](#)

What tags can be found in the title or scope and content note?

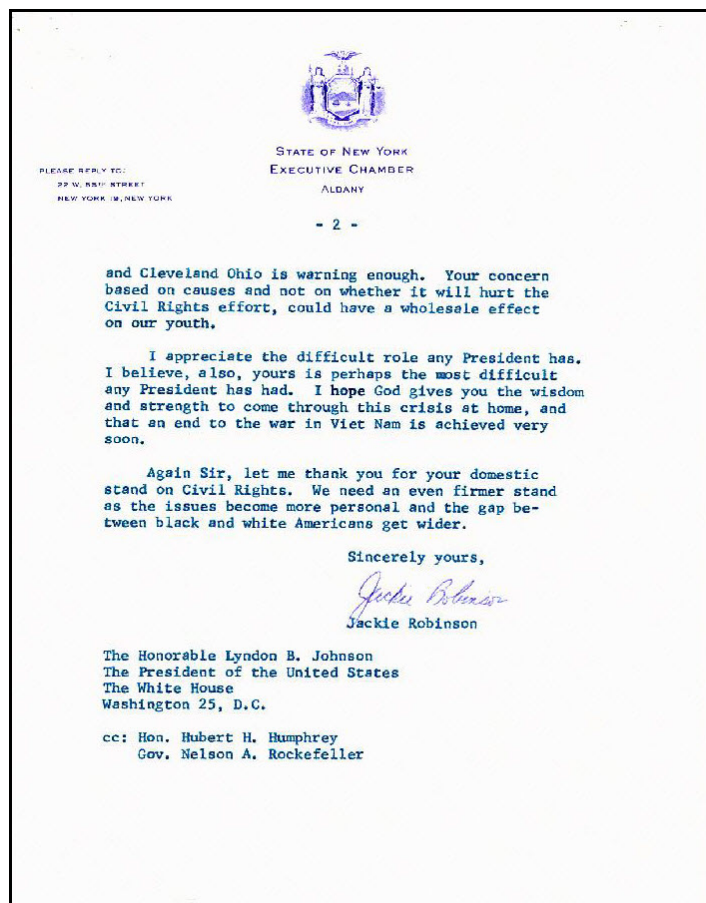
Lyndon B. Johnson

Jackie Robinson
Letter



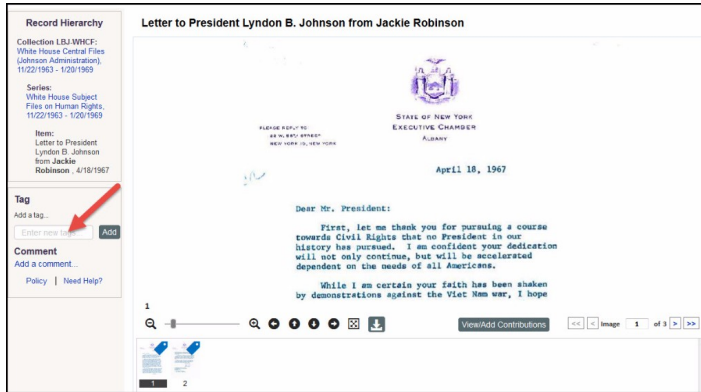
What tags would
enhance this
description even more?

- Civil Rights
- Vietnam War
- Baseball player
- Herbert Humphrey
- African Americans
- Riots
- Tennessee
- Cleveland
- Ohio



Where should you add these tags?

There are two places to add tags to a description.



1. Tags can be added to the field on the left of the description.



2. Or if you'd like a tag to identify something on a particular page, click *View/Add Contributions* and add the tag below the correct page.

Ready to try out tagging? Visit our [Citizen Archivist Dashboard](#) and start a tagging mission.



Looking for experts and enthusiasts

Do you have expertise about **planes** or **trains**? We can use you! Come and add details as tags into our descriptions.

[Tag Planes](#)

[Tag Trains](#)

The Winding Journey of Bill Genaust's Flag Raising Footage



When the National Archives investigated the true identity of the flag raisers in Bill Genaust's footage of the first and second flag raisings on Iwo Jima and the iconic photograph by Joe Rosenthal, staffers discovered that the agency never received the original film shot on February 23, 1945. In this program, Supervisory Motion Picture Preservation Specialist Criss Kovac provides information about Bill Genaust and how the film was shot, developed, assembled, and used during the World War II and throughout history. **Watch this program on [YouTube](#).**

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.



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