What makes a good tag?

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. In this first example,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

https://catalog.archives.gov/id/558249

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
Glasses
bowtie

In this next example, the title of this photograph is: Deck of Gun Boat, probably "Mendota"
https://catalog.archives.gov/id/524548

What tags can be found in the title or scope and content note?
Deck
Gun Boat
Boat
Mendota

What tags would enhance this description even more?
Crew
cannon
sailor
Ropes

Now let's look at a poster with the title, "Remember Your First Thrill of American Liberty. Your Duty- Buy United States Government Bonds. 2nd Liberty Loan of 1917."
https://catalog.archives.gov/id/512676

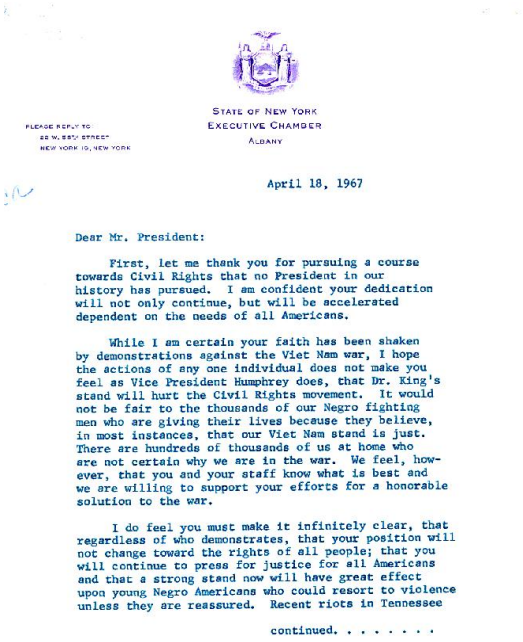
What tags can be found in the title or scope and content note?
American
Liberty
Bonds
Loan
United States Government

What tags would enhance this description even more?
Statue of Liberty
Immigrants
Ship
Children
Boat
World War I

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 two page letter titled, Letter to President Lyndon B. Johnson from Jackie Robinson https://catalog.archives.gov/id/7329806



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY

PLEASE REPLY TO:
22 W. 55TH STREET
NEW YORK 19, NEW YORK

April 18, 1967

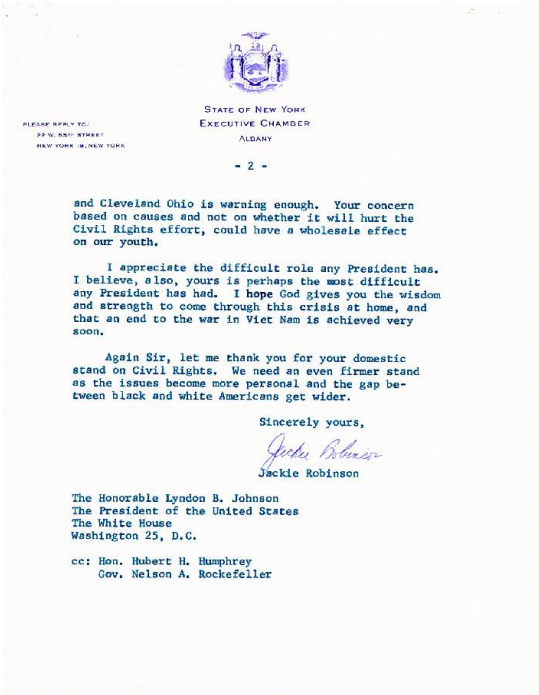
Dear Mr. President:

First, let me thank you for pursuing a course towards Civil Rights that no President in our history has pursued. I am confident your dedication will not only continue, but will be accelerated dependent on the needs of all Americans.

While I am certain your faith has been shaken by demonstrations against the Viet Nam war, I hope the actions of any one individual does not make you feel as Vice President Humphrey does, that Dr. King's stand will hurt the Civil Rights movement. It would not be fair to the thousands of our Negro fighting men who are giving their lives because they believe, in most instances, that our Viet Nam stand is just. There are hundreds of thousands of us at home who are not certain why we are in the war. We feel, however, that you and your staff know what is best and we are willing to support your efforts for a honorable solution to the war.

I do feel you must make it infinitely clear, that regardless of who demonstrates, that your position will not change toward the rights of all people; that you will continue to press for justice for all Americans and that a strong stand now will have great effect upon young Negro Americans who could resort to violence unless they are reassured. Recent riots in Tennessee

continued. . . . . .



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY

PLEASE REPLY TO:
22 W. 55TH STREET
NEW YORK 19, NEW YORK

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and Cleveland Ohio is warning enough. Your concern based on causes and not on whether it will hurt the Civil Rights effort, could have a wholesale effect on our youth.

I appreciate the difficult role any President has. I believe, also, yours is perhaps the most difficult any President has had. I hope God gives you the wisdom and strength to come through this crisis at home, and that an end to the war in Viet Nam is achieved very soon.

Again Sir, let me thank you for your domestic stand on Civil Rights. We need an even firmer stand as the issues become more personal and the gap between black and white Americans get wider.

Sincerely yours,

Jackie Robinson

The Honorable Lyndon B. Johnson
The President of the United States
The White House
Washington 25, D.C.

cc: Hon. Hubert H. Humphrey
Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller

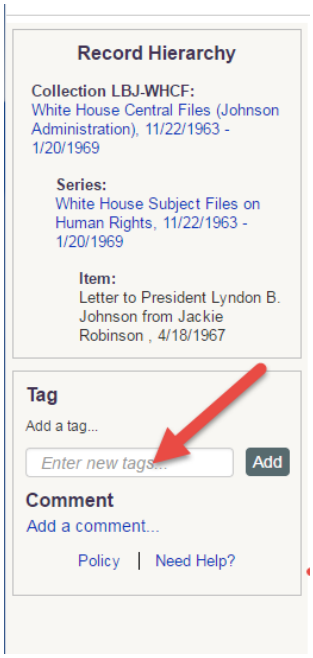
What tags can be found in the title or scope and content note?

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?



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

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.