Haden and Alyson met in an undergraduate history class at Utah State University in 2015 and in addition to falling in love, saw the practicality of marrying a fellow major to save on textbook costs. They decided after completing their undergraduates that they both wanted to delve deeper into history, and Utah State’s graduate program provided a path for them both to continue to learn, work, and pursue their passions.

In his graduate studies, Haden explored Islam in a global context, which included continuing to study the Arabic language, producing a paper on the lived experiences of the partition of India and Pakistan, and interning with Dr. Ahmet Izmirlioglu to help teach about women in Islam. His graduate project consisted of a digital exhibit and paper based on oral histories collected from Somali Muslim men from the Salt Lake area, which was only possible with support and help from the Somali community. He also interned with the Utah Historical Quarterly in the spring of 2020, where he felt he finally grasped the rules of The Chicago Manual of Style.

Alyson focused her graduate studies on the experiences of children and youth during the Second World War, including how it is portrayed and remembered (and forgotten) today. She interned with the USU Collections & Archives and helped produce two digital projects for classes and Special Collections that explored the history of Brigham City’s Main Street restaurants, Old Ephraim, and Zane Grey’s trip to Rainbow Bridge (exhibit forthcoming). Her graduate project included two more digital exhibits, one on the experience of Japanese American youth internees at Topaz, and an exhibit exploring the experiences of Japanese and Filipino youth during World War II (forthcoming).

In August, Haden and Alyson will move to the Boise area where Haden has accepted a job as a high school social studies teacher. Alyson continues to work with USU Special Collections and has accepted an additional project helping with the digital side of a project documenting the pandemic in Southern Utah and hopes to continue helping with and producing public history for non-scholarly audiences.