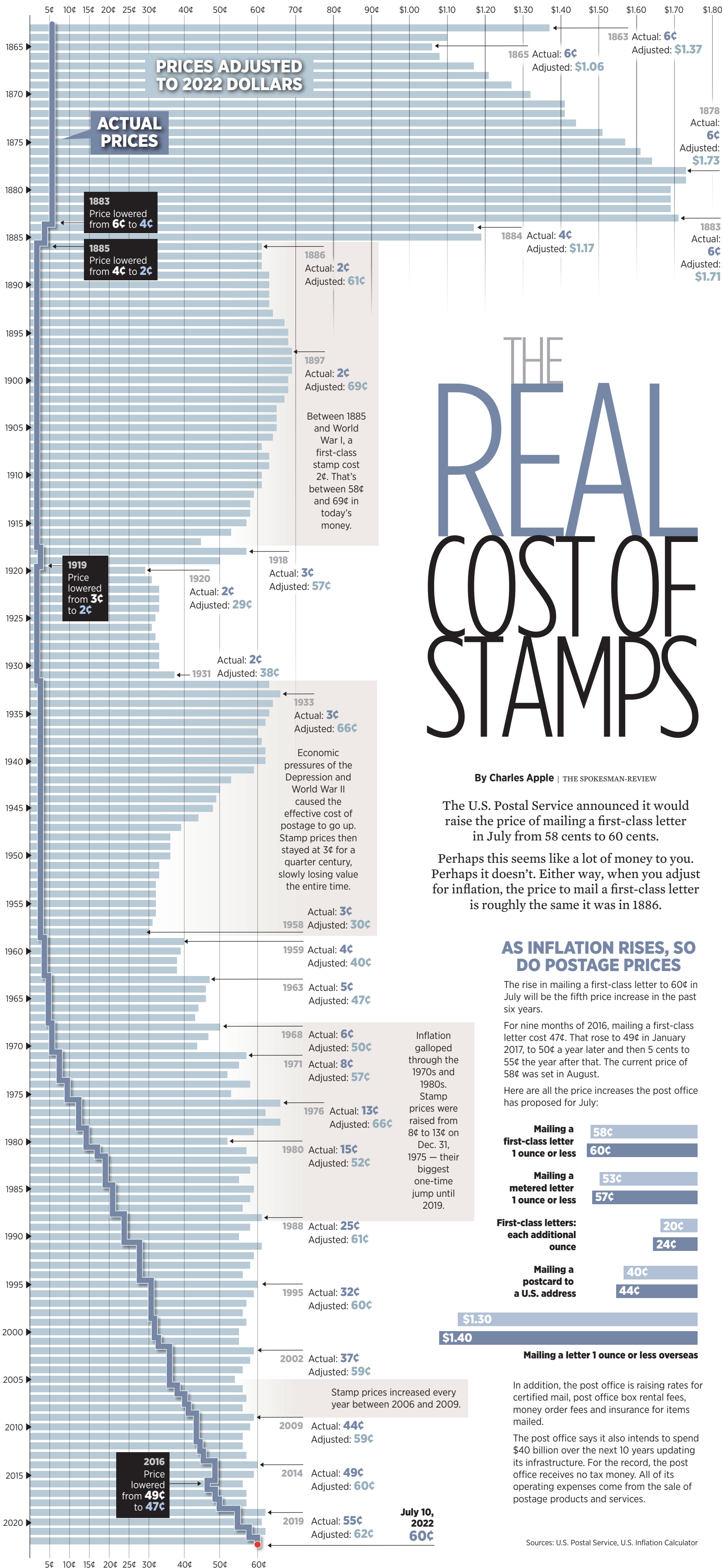


FURTHER REVIEW



THE REAL COST OF STAMPS

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The U.S. Postal Service announced it would raise the price of mailing a first-class letter in July from 58 cents to 60 cents.

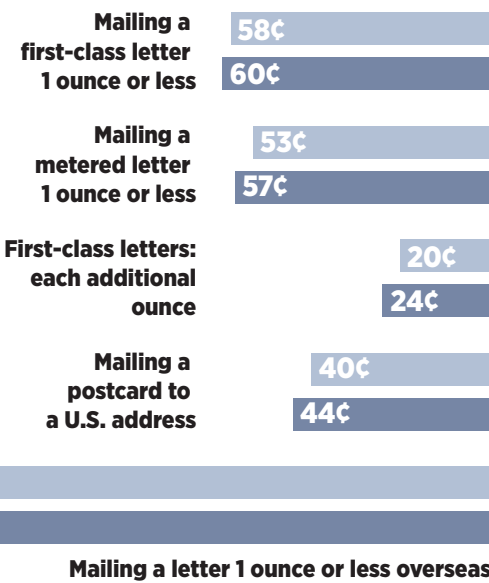
Perhaps this seems like a lot of money to you. Perhaps it doesn't. Either way, when you adjust for inflation, the price to mail a first-class letter is roughly the same it was in 1886.

AS INFLATION RISES, SO DO POSTAGE PRICES

The rise in mailing a first-class letter to 60¢ in July will be the fifth price increase in the past six years.

For nine months of 2016, mailing a first-class letter cost 47¢. That rose to 49¢ in January 2017, to 50¢ a year later and then 5 cents to 55¢ the year after that. The current price of 58¢ was set in August.

Here are all the price increases the post office has proposed for July:



In addition, the post office is raising rates for certified mail, post office box rental fees, money order fees and insurance for items mailed.

The post office says it also intends to spend \$40 billion over the next 10 years updating its infrastructure. For the record, the post office receives no tax money. All of its operating expenses come from the sale of postage products and services.

Sources: U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Inflation Calculator