

The Browse Command

To access your mail from the Lafite status window, click the left mouse button on the Browse command. A menu will appear listing all your mail folders (see figure 3). Your new mail is conventionally stored in your Active Mail folder, and additional folders are added to the menu when you browse them or move messages into them. The creation of mail folders is discussed in chapter 8, "Filing Messages."



Figure 3. A folder menu, showing that the user has only one mail folder (the Other Folder item is used to create new folders)

To read the mail contained in a particular folder, such as Active Mail, click on the name of that mail folder with the left mouse button.

The Browser Window

Clicking on the name of a folder in the Browse menu opens a browser window onto that folder (see figure 4). The main part of the browser window displays a table of contents, which gives a one-line summary of each message, and a horizontal menu above the table of contents that contains commands that apply specifically to that folder. The topmost part of the browser window is the *prompt region*. In the prompt region, the system prints status information related to the browser and sometimes prompts you for information. The black *title bar* just above the table of contents labels the window.

Reading table of contents... done.				
Display	Delete	Undelete	Answer	Forward Hardcopy Move To Update Get Mail
Mail browser for {ERIS}<GRIMBLE>MAIL>LAFITEFIG,MAIL;1				
1	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Displaying a selected message	[153 chars]
2	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Message marks	[135 chars]
3	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"Delete" and "Undelete"	[146 chars]
4	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Reshaping message display windows	[156 chars]
5	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Thumbing	[131 chars]
6	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"Move to" and "Browse"	[145 chars]
7	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"New Mail" and "Get Mail"	[148 chars]
8	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"Hardcopy"	[133 chars]
9	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Composing messages	[141 chars]
10	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Recipient names	[138 chars]
11	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"Deliver"	[132 chars]
12	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Public distribution lists	[147 chars]

Figure 4. A browser window, showing the prompt region, the menu of commands, the title bar, and the table of contents

The table of contents is an index of the messages in the mail folder being viewed. The first time you browse a folder Lafite has to construct the table of contents, which it reports in the prompt region

as “Parsing folder.” Each summary line in the table of contents is numbered (the numbers are unique to that table of contents) and contains the date sent, the sender’s name, the subject, and the number of characters in the message.

Each entry can also have a single-character *message mark*, which is an additional tidbit of information about the message displayed in the summary line. A message originally comes with a question mark, meaning it is unexamined. Some Lafite commands change the mark automatically. For example, displaying a message removes the question mark. You can change the mark directly by selecting with the mouse in the narrow area immediately to the left of the message number, where the mark is printed. Simply click in the mark position and type in the new mark. The message mark is the only piece of information in the table of contents you can directly modify.

The Get Mail Command

The table of contents in your folder does not display your new messages until Lafite retrieves them from your in-box. To instruct Lafite to move the contents of your in-box to your current mail file, point the cursor at the Get Mail command and click the left mouse button. The command then appears on a gray background and the prompt region reports on the activities of your mail server(s). When all the messages have been transferred, the gray background disappears and the prompt window tells you how many new messages you have. The table of contents is updated to include the new messages placed in your mail file; it is scrolled to display the first one.

Lafite automatically places a question mark next to each unread message in the table of contents (except for the ones you sent to yourself).

The Display Command and Selection Pointer

To read a message, you must first select its entry in the table of contents. After obtaining new mail from your in-box, Lafite automatically selects the first new message for you and places a *selection pointer* (a small black triangle pointing to the right) next to it. When you first browse a folder, Lafite selects the first unread message; if there are no unread messages in the folder, Lafite places the selection pointer next to the last message.

To display a selected message, point the cursor at the Display command in the browser window menu and click the left mouse button. A message display window will open and fill up with the message you selected (see figure 5). At this point, the question mark (if any) next to its entry in the table of contents disappears.

Message 584 from {ERIS}<GRIMBLE>MAIL>ACTIVE,MAIL;1 [1248 chars]
 Date: 18 Apr 85 12:17
 From: Frances Grimble;PARC:xerox
 Subject: GODZILLA (1984)
 To: Frances Grimble;PARC:Xerox

GODZILLA
 A film review by Mark R. Leeper

Way back in the early fifties, Toho Pictures of Japan made a serious monster film inspired by BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS. The film was called GOJIRA (pronounced GO-jee-RA) and was reportedly about how the Americans used a nuclear bomb to try to kill a centuries-old dragon or dinosaur that was worshiped by the natives of a local island. The enraged and now radioactive monster vented his wrath on Tokyo. The film became an allegory of the closing days of World War II. Japan was being hit by something incomprehensively powerful of unknown origin that just totally wiped out any place it appeared. Finally a courageous Japanese scientist uses his own powerful weapon against Gojira, but only after he has taken safeguards

Figure 5. A message display window, showing the title bar and the message display region. The message display window lacks the message composition window's prompt region, command menu, and TEdit pop-up menus; you cannot use it for editing

To examine the next message listed in the table of contents, click on Display again. The selection pointer will move to the next entry, and this message will replace the previous one in the message display window. Lafite will skip over deleted messages when advancing the selection pointer. To display a deleted message you must select it explicitly, then click on Display.

You may explicitly select any entry in the table of contents by moving the cursor into the line desired and clicking the left mouse button. Any existing selection pointers will be removed, and a new one will be placed at the indicated entry. You can have several messages selected at once. If you want to add a message to the current selection, click the middle mouse button instead of the left. To remove a message from the current selection, hold down the shift key while clicking any mouse button.

If you want to select several entries in a row, place the cursor at the first message you want to read and click the left mouse button. Then move to the last message you want to read and click the right mouse button. Lafite will place selection pointers next to all the messages in between (deleted messages are not included unless the control key—Props on an 1108 or 1186 workstation—is down). You may then read them in succession by clicking on Display each time you finish reading a message.

If you have selected more than one message, clicking on Display after you read the last selected message will cause the cursor to cycle back to the first selected message. The only way to break this cycle is to explicitly select a single message.

If you want several messages displayed on the screen at once, you must create additional message display windows. To do so, click on Display with the middle mouse button. Lafite will prompt you to create a window. After you have done so, the message you selected to display will appear in the new window, and the previously displayed message will remain in the original message display window. You may create as many message display windows as you wish.

Text Scrolling

Lafite browser and message display windows may contain more text than you can see at any one time. (This is also true of message composition windows, which are discussed in chapter 9, "Writing Messages.") You can view this text by using a scroll bar to scroll the window's contents (see figure 6). The Lafite browser window has two scroll bars, one just beyond the left margin and one just below the bottom margin. The message display window has only the left scroll bar. The left scroll bar is used for vertical scrolling, and the lower scroll bar is used for horizontal scrolling.

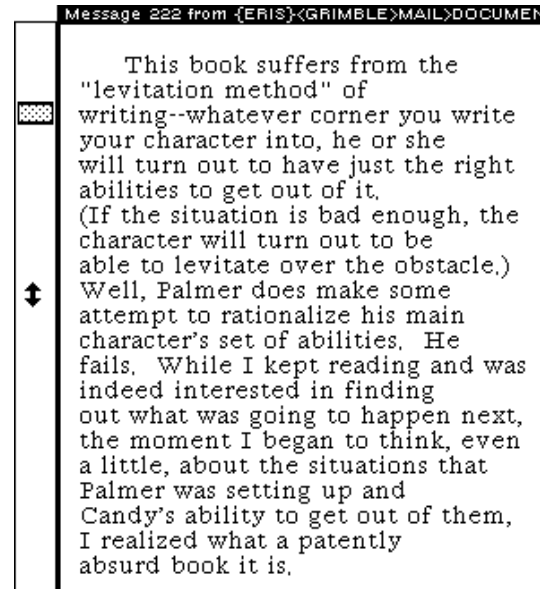


Figure 6. A message display window showing a vertical scroll bar. The gray area represents the position of the text being read in relation to the message as a whole; the double-headed shape of the cursor means that the message is not currently being scrolled

A scroll bar can be brought into view by moving the mouse cursor onto that area of the screen. The cursor appears as a double-headed arrow until you begin scrolling, when it changes shape to point in the correct direction. The gray rectangle within the scroll bar represents the position of the text you are viewing in relation to the file as a whole. Within a vertical scroll bar, the left mouse button scrolls the contents of the window up, and the right mouse button scrolls them down. Within a horizontal scroll bar, the left mouse button scrolls the contents of the window to the left, and the right mouse button scrolls them to the right.

You can control the amount of text that is scrolled by moving your mouse cursor to different positions on the scroll bar. Scrolling with the cursor at the bottom of the vertical scroll bar moves the text about one window length at a time. Placing the cursor at the top of the bar moves the text about one line at a time. There is less variation in the amount of text you can scroll using a Lafite browser horizontal scroll bar, but placing the cursor at the left end scrolls the text by smaller amounts than placing it on the right. To produce continuous scrolling, hold down the mouse button; release it when the part of the file you want to read is shown.

Text Thumbing

If you want to skip to a distant part of the text quickly, *thumbing* is better than scrolling. Thumbing is analogous to opening a book by placing your thumb at the approximate position of the section you want to read and pulling the book open at that point. To thumb the contents of a Lafite window, place the cursor in the part of the scroll bar that represents the part of the file you want to read. For instance, to reach the top of a file, place the cursor at the top of the vertical scroll bar. Then press the middle mouse button. The cursor will become a gray triangle pointing toward the window. When you release the mouse button, the text will move to show the part you want to read. If you haven't thumbed to quite the right place, you can find the text you want by scrolling.