

6. Deleting Messages and Updating the Mail Folder

The Delete Command

After examining the messages in your mail file, you may wish to delete some of them. Select the messages you want to delete, then invoke the Delete command by pointing the cursor at it and clicking the left mouse button. Lafite will draw a black line through each deleted entry in the table of contents (see figure 7).

Display	Delete	Undelete	Answer	Forward	Hardcopy	Move To	Update	Get Mail
Mail browser for {ERIS}<GRIMBLE>MAIL>LAFITEFIG,MAIL;1								
7	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"New Mail" and "Get Mail" [140 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:	"Beliver" [132 chars]					
12	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	Public distribution lists [147 chars]					
13	17 Apr	Frances Grimble:	"Get," "Put" and "Save Form" [151 chars]					

Figure 7. A browser window showing a table of contents from which three messages have been deleted

When processing newly arrived mail, you may wish to delete a message immediately after displaying it. In this case, Lafite will automatically select and display the next message (assuming you have not examined or deleted it).

The Undelete Command

Messages marked for deletion are not actually removed from your mail file at the time the Delete command is given. If you discover that you have inadvertently deleted a message you want to keep, select it, point the cursor at the Undelete command, and click the left mouse button. The line drawn through the table-of-contents entry of the selected message will be removed. You can select several messages and delete or undelete them all at once; see chapter 5, "Reading Messages," for instructions on selecting messages.

The Update Command

With the exception of retrieving new mail, any change you make to a folder being browsed, such as deleting a message or changing a message mark, is not made permanent until you issue the Update command. That is, if you were to boot your machine, start up Lafite, and browse the same folder again, you would find it in the same state as when you last updated (or as when you last browsed

it if you never updated). The Update command ensures that your mail file accurately reflects the contents of the browser, so that you could return to the same state if for any reason your machine failed and you had to start up again from scratch. It also provides the opportunity to reclaim the space occupied by deleted messages. Thus, it is important to regularly update your browsers.

When you click on the Update command, a menu appears listing your options: Write Out Changes Only or Expunge Deleted Messages (see figure 8). Ordinarily, you want to choose Expunge Deleted Messages, which, in addition to writing out all changes, permanently removes all deleted messages and renumbers the remaining ones. However, Expunge can take a long time if your folder is large and there are many “holes” in it caused by deleting messages, since Expunge has to compact the file. Thus, if you are processing a lot of mail and just want to be sure periodically that your changes are saved, with the intention to expunge the folder later, you can choose the Write Out Changes Only option, which writes out your changes without compacting out the deleted messages. This option is usually faster than Expunge.



Figure 8. The update options menu

Other Ways to Update

When you attempt to close or shrink a browser window, using the Close or Shrink commands from the standard right-button window menu, Lafite will check whether you have made any changes to the folder, and if so, prompt you with a menu giving your updating options: Write Out Changes Only, Expunge Deleted Messages, or Don't Update File. Choosing either of the first two options is the same as clicking on Update and choosing that option, followed by closing or shrinking the window, as you requested. If you choose Don't Update File, then no update occurs—your changes are not saved.

If the only change you made to the folder was to retrieve new mail to it, or move messages into it from another folder (see chapter 8, “Filing Messages”), then you are instead offered the options of Update Table of Contents or Just Close. The former is, in this case, all the updating that the folder requires.

You may find it convenient to keep the browser for your Active Mail folder always on your screen, shrinking it down to an icon to save screen space when you are not reading your mail (see figure 9). If you do this regularly, you may never need to use the Update command directly, instead combining the update with the shrinking of the window.



Figure 9. The icon for a shrunken mail folder, in this case Active Mail. You can shrink any Lafite window by placing the mouse cursor on the title bar of the window, pressing the right

button, and selecting Shrink from the menu of window commands that appears