Docherty *et alii* have “noted that several sociolinguistic accounts have shown a sharp distinction between the social trajectories for glottal replacement as opposed to glottal reinforcement, which have normally been treated by phonologists as aspects of ‘the same thing’. It may therefore not always be appropriate to treat the two phenomena as manifestations of a single process or as points on a single continuum (presumably along which speakers move through time). From the speaker’s point of view (as manifested by different patterns of speaker behaviour) they appear as independent phenomena” (1997: 307). In particular, “while the glottal stop is spreading rapidly in mainstream English, glottal reinforcement (especially of /p/ and /k/ in intervocalic positions) is possibly recessive. It is characteristic not only of Tyneside male speech but also of rather conservative rural varieties, such as those of south-west Scotland and much of Northern Ireland” (o.c.: 306). This supports my view that the “reinforcing” glottal closure of [ˈʃ], [ˈt], [ˈk] is ancient, in spite of the recent spread of the replacing glottal stop in mainstream English (cf. Kortlandt 1997b).  

The two types of glottal variant are clearly distinct in Newcastle English, where they moreover exhibit quite different sociolinguistic patterns. The replacing glottal stop “is variably substituted for non-initial pre-vocalic /v/ (e.g. in *set off*, *water*) by younger speakers, especially middle-class females, and as such appears to be a non-local form entering Newcastle English” whereas the preglottalized variants “by contrast, are largely the preserve of older males” (Docherty & Foulkes 1999: 54). It appears that the preglottalized stops “differ from the ‘pure’ glottal variants in terms of the presence of movement of the second formant in the previous vowel: formant transitions are caused by gestures involving the supralaryngeal vocal organs. 79% of our tokens contained F2 transitions, the exceptional cases sounding clearly like glottal stops” (o.c.: 57). It turns out that “older males appear to be producing glottalised tokens with a different articulatory co-ordination than other members of the speech community: they have a greater tendency to time the oral gesture such that it lags behind the accompanying glottal articulation” (o.c.: 61f.). Thus, preglottalization is disappearing from the language while the
replacing glottal stop is spreading in the speech of the younger generation.

While the “increasing space given by phoneticians from about 1920 onwards to the treatment of the glottal stop” (Andrén 1968: 34) can be explained by the phonemic character of the glottal replacement, the earlier preglottalization of /p/, /t/, /k/ went unnoticed because it was not distinctive. Glottalization is pervasive in pre-1930 audio recordings of people born in the second half of the 19th century, even in formal delivery (cf. Kortlandt 1997b, with ref.). It follows that glottalization was well-established in upper-class English speech in the 19th century and must have been widespread in the standard language of that time. The lack of attention to this phenomenon can be explained not only by the subphonemic character of preglottalization but also by its loss in pre-pausal position. While “glottal variants are widespread in various phonological contexts in Newcastle, they are almost categorically prohibited in pre-pausal position. Tokens before a pause are instead – from an auditory perspective – clearly ‘released’ voiceless alveolars” (Docherty & Foulkes 1999: 62). It appears that either the glottalization or the buccal features could be lost in pre-pausal position: “In Derby glottal stops in pre-pausal position are far more widespread, but in the self-conscious context of word-list readings most speakers produce what sound like ‘released’ [t]s, just as in Newcastle” (l.c.). This suggests that pre-pausal [t] is due to restoration and that the spread of the replacing glottal stop in mainstream English may have started from pre-pausal positions.

This brings the original distribution of the English glottalization closer to its Danish counterpart, the so-called vestjysk stød, which is found immediately before the plosives /p/, /t/, /k/ “wherever these stand in an original medial position, following a voiced sound in a stressed syllable” (Ringgaard 1960: 195). The vestjysk stød cannot possibly be connected with the Jylland apocope because it is also found in the northeastern part of the vestfynsk dialects, where the apocope did not take place. The vestjysk stød in these isolated dialects suggests that it is a retention rather than an innovation. Moreover, Hansson has drawn attention to the fact that vestjysk stød is found on original monosyllables and polysyllables alike in the most remote and isolated villages on the island of Als, where it coexists with true pitch accents representing the original accents 1 and 2 from which the Common Danish stød opposition developed (2001: 166). We must conclude that outside these archaic dialects the vestjysk stød was lost in monosyllables, as was the case with preglottalization in Newcastle English.