A Short History of Rock Cave
Upshur County, West Virginia

Rock Cave was formerly known as Flatwoods, Bobtown, Rude's Mills, and Centreville before gaining its present name in 1858. It was originally part of Lewis County and settled during the years 1830 to 1849, primarily by pioneers from Virginia counties to the east. In 1849, a post office located there was known as Rude's Mill, for Edwin Rude, first postmaster. In 1858, the name was changed to Rock Cave, although the settlement was still known as Centreville, a name which was refused by the Post Office Department because it would cause confusion with other towns of the same name.

In 1849, a Methodist Sunday school and a Baptist church were organized, and Fidler's Mill was built. The community was primarily based upon agriculture as most of the timber had been cut and burned before any railroads were built through the area by which lumber could be carried out. In 1886 the town had 200 residents, and the town was incorporated. Joe Vincent was the first mayor. The town had, in addition to the mill, a wagon shop, cabinet and undertaking shop, saddle and harness shop, jewelry shop, hotel, blacksmith, shoemakers, confectioner, dressmakers, sawmills, two doctors, a Masonic lodge, a tannery, and four general stores. That same year the famous Centreville Cornet Band was organized.

Note: The city fathers wanted the town called Rock Lava, but postal authorities in Washington misread "Lava" as "cave."